

Prairie Lakes Regional Arts Council, Inc.

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FY 2018 BOARD MEMBERS

Blue Earth County – Liz Miller, Good Thunder. Liz has a BFA in Painting and MFA in Drawing & Painting and is an Art Professor at Minnesota State University, Mankato. In her own work she is focused on mixed media and site specific installations. Liz is currently teaching Installation Art at MSU, Mankato and is connecting the campus community with the broader arts community in the region. She has served as a panelist for the Minneapolis Institute of Arts and the Minnesota State Arts Board for their Artist Initiative Grants, and been a juror for exhibits. Liz has also received several Artist Grants from the Minnesota State Arts Board, and grants from the Jerome Foundation, McKnight Foundation and the Joan Mitchell Foundation. She has exhibited her work throughout Minnesota, the United States and abroad. Term began 8/1/17.

Brown County – Denice Evers, Springfield. Denice has a BA in Elementary Education/Special Education and is vice president of the Springfield Community Theatre. She has been a judge for speech competitions and has been involved for over 30 years acting and directing theater productions. She is the Trustee of St. Paul Parish, Comfrey as well as the President of Area Faith Community. Denice previously served on the PLRAC board from 1999-2005 and 2008-2013. Term began 8/1/14. Denice serves as Treasurer.

Faribault County – Carol Soma, Kiester. Carol has a Master's in Library Media Education and BA in English and Spanish. She is a retired teacher from the Blue Earth Area Public Schools, where she was a media specialist K-12; previous teaching included Language Arts and Spanish there and in the Southcentral and Kiester Public Schools. At BEA Carol co-directed plays with the Peer Helping program and at KHS she was the One-Act play director. She has served on the board of directors of the Kee Civic Theatre in Kiester since its inception as a non-profit in 1990 and is a patron of the Blue Earth Town and Country Players. She also serves on the local library board and other community and church committees. Term began 8/1/15.

LeSueur County – Randy Mediger, Waterville. Randy has a BS in Elementary Education and Minor in Music, MS Curriculum & Instruction, and Education Specialist: Administration. He previously served as Elementary Principal at Waterville-Elysian-Morristown Public School and classroom teacher in Waterville, Henderson and Belle Plaine schools. He's participated in a variety of music and theater performances in the past, and was a charter member of LeSueur Community Theater. He received the 2002 Arts Education Leadership Award from the Minnesota Alliance for Arts in Education. Term began 8/1/14. Randy serves as Vice-President.

Martin County – OPEN

Nicollet County – Diane Harms, St. Peter. Diane has a Double Major in Music Performance in Voice and French Horn with Minors in Piano and Biblical Studies and an Associate Degree in Applied Science. She is an active singer with the St. Peter Choral Society and the Minnesota Valley Chorale and board member. She sang with the Twin Cities Catholic Chorale and continues to sing a few times a year. Notable choirs that she has sung with include the Minnesota Chorale, Plymouth Music Series and the Oratorio Society of MN. She played French Horn for 40 years as a professional and with numerous non-profit community orchestras including the St. Paul Civic Orchestra. As manager of the Golden Valley Orchestra she produced and edited orchestra videos for "Music da Camera". She also played Alto Horn, specifically in the Salvation Army Divisional Band and Trumpet in various brass ensembles throughout the Twin Cities. Term began 8/1/14.

Sibley County – Dennis Van Moorlehem, Arlington. Dennis has a degree in Secondary Education and has taught Auto Mechanics. He is a board member of the Sibley County Fair, MN Federation of County Fairs, and the Arlington Chamber of Commerce. Term began 8/1/13. Dennis serves as Secretary.

Waseca County – Karen Krause, New Richland. Karen has a BS in Comprehensive Art and MS in K-12 School Counseling. Karen recently retired as School Counselor for Waterville Public Schools. She has served on the Board of the Waseca Arts Council and been a member of the organization since 1978. In the past she has been an Elementary and Jr. High Art Teacher and she currently teaches art classes for youth at the Waseca Arts Council. She has taught art classes for community education, been a Trustee for Church of All Saints in New Richland, and served on the Waseca County Fair Board. She has also been a judge for the 4-H Fair in southern MN and at the MN State Fair in arts and crafts. Term began 8/1/17

Watowwan County – Steve Davis, Madelia. Steve has a BA in Computer Science and is a Software Developer working from his home office in Madelia. He is a violist with the Mankato Symphony Orchestra and Minnesota State University Mankato/Community Orchestra; and volunteers with the Mankato Area Youth Symphony Orchestra and the New Ulm Suzuki School of Music. Currently he is a member of the Madelia Rotary and Lions Club. Previously he volunteered with the Madelia Community Theatre to run the lighting and sound boards for performances. Term began 8/1/16.

City of Fairmont – OPEN

City of Mankato – Margie Larson. Margie has a BS in Art Education. She is a member of the Arts Center of Saint Peter, Carnegie Art Center, and Twin Rivers Council for the Arts; and has volunteered at the 410 Project in Mankato. Margie is currently painting with oil and cold wax in an abstract and expressive style. She has taken a variety of art classes and workshops over the years, exhibited her artwork in Mankato and throughout Southern Minnesota, and received awards in several juried art exhibitions. Margie has received four Artist Grants from Prairie Lakes Regional Arts Council. Currently Margie is the co-manager of the gift store at Saints Peter and Paul Church, Mankato and previously served on their board; also previously worked as the Study Abroad Coordinator in the International Students Office at Minnesota State University, Mankato. Term began 8/1/17

City of New Ulm – Charles Luedtke. Charles has a BS in Education (English, German, Mathematics); MA English; MFA Music; and DMA Organ Performance and Church Music. Charles was a Professor of Music at Martin Luther College, New Ulm for 41 years. He is a Board Member of the MN Music Hall of Fame and Museum, New Ulm; member of the Sioux Trails Chapter, American Guild of Organists and the New Ulm Area Civic Orchestra; and a church organist. Charles also served as the keyboard accompanist with the St. Cloud-based Minnesota Center Chorale during its three European tours of 1997, 1999, and 2001. Term began 8/1/14.

City of North Mankato – Dana Sikkila. Dana has a MA and BFA in Printmaking, and Non Profit Leadership Certificate from Minnesota State University, Mankato. She concentrates on making her art work as well as being Executive Director of the 410 Project Art Gallery, a volunteer managed art space as well holding an arts adjunct professor position at MNSU, Mankato. Since 2014 Dana has served as a Grant Review Panelist and Artistic Evaluator for the Minnesota State Arts Board. In 2015 she was voted by Minnesota Monthly Magazine as one of Minnesota's Up and Coming Artist under the age of 30. Her art work combines printmaking, sculpture, and performance with an impressively anarchic sense of scale and playfulness. Dana has received numerous awards including Mankato Free Press 2016 "Outstanding Woman in Business", 2015-2016 Art Educators of Minnesota "Distinguished Service Outside the Field" Recognition, 2015 Mankato's YWCA Young Woman of Distinction, 2015 Woman of Courage and Vision from MNSU Mankato, featured artist on Post Cards, Pioneer's PBS Art TV Program, and KEYC's Jefferson Good Person Award. Term began 8/1/14.

City of St. Peter – Lauren Shoemaker. Lauren has a BS in Music Education and a MA in Liberal Studies. Lauren is the Band Director for St. Peter Schools (2002-present); Adjunct Professor at Gustavus Adolphus College (2005-present); and Costumer for the Mankato Ballet Company (2010-present). Previously she taught at Sibley East Schools and Glencoe-Silver Lakes Public School. Lauren previously served on the PLRAC from 1995-2003. Term began 8/1/13. Lauren serves as President.