



SPRINGFIELD AREA ARTS COUNCIL

Spring / Summer 2026

# ACCOLADES FOR THE ARTS

## A YEAR OF CREATIVITY

### POETRY OUT LOUD CENTRAL ILLINOIS REGIONAL CONTEST

February 12 | 4:00 PM  
Hoogland Center for the Arts

### POETRY OUT LOUD ILLINOIS STATE CONTEST

March 2 | 10:00 AM  
Hoogland Center for the Arts

### DIAMOND BALL

April 11 | 6:00 PM - 10:00 PM  
The Pasfield House

### ARTIST IN THE PARK

Fridays, May 29 - July 31  
12:00 PM - 1:00 PM  
Union Square Park

### LEVITT AMP SPRINGFIELD MUSIC SERIES

Thursdays, May 28 - July 30  
6:00PM - 9:30 PM | Y-BLOCK

### MUSIC AT THE MARKET

May 16 & 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturdays from  
June - October | 10:00 AM  
Old Capitol Farmers Market,  
Downtown Springfield

### SHAKESPEARE IN THE PARK

July 24 | 6:00PM  
Enos Park

### TRIVIA NIGHT

Sept 25, 2026 | Doors: 5:30 PM  
Pole Barn Chice

### MAYOR'S AWARDS FOR THE ARTS

October 2026 | More to come...

### FIRST NIGHT SPRINGFIELD 40<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

December 31 | 12:00 PM - 8:00 PM  
Downtown Springfield

Visit our website for event details and updates.

## MEMBERS MAKE THE ARTS POSSIBLE

Membership fuels everything we do. Because of our members, young people gain hands-on arts experience, families attend free events, and local artists, schools, and organizations receive critical funding. So, thank you from the bottom of our hearts!

If your membership is due for renewal, or you're not a member yet, we invite you to continue your commitment. Additional gifts help us expand programs and deepen our impact.

# DANCE FOR MUSIC & THEATER EVERYONE

Summer in Springfield comes alive with free and accessible arts programs for the whole community.

**Shakespeare in the Park** brings classic theater to outdoor stages, offering a magical experience under the summer sky.

**Artist in the Park** showcases local artists, performers, and musicians in a lively outdoor space, paired with delicious bites from your favorite food trucks during Food Truck Friday.

**Music at the Market** fills the air with live music at our downtown farmers market, creating a festive backdrop for shopping and community connection.

These programs highlight the creativity, talent, and energy that make Springfield's art scene vibrant. Join us and experience the arts all summer long!

## LEVITT AMP SPRINGFIELD MUSIC SERIES

Free music returns this summer, and the Arts Council is proud to once again host this beloved community tradition. Join us in downtown Springfield for 10 weeks of free, family-friendly concerts every Thursday evening beginning May 28.

From nationally touring acts to standout regional talent, each show brings a mix of sounds and a shared sense of community. Come early, grab a bite from local food vendors, and enjoy the energy that fills downtown all summer long.

Thanks to the support of our volunteers, the Levitt AMP Springfield Music Series Presented by PNC continues to bring people together through music. We can't wait to welcome you back for another unforgettable season. See the full lineup on our website or social media.



# 50 YEARS OF THE ARTS

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Dear Friends,

This year marks an incredible milestone for the Springfield Area Arts Council as we celebrate 50 years of enriching our community through the arts. Since 1976, we have worked to support artists, invest in arts education, and create meaningful, accessible experiences that bring people together.

Over the past five decades, that work has grown in ways we could have never imagined. From public festivals and performances to regranting funds that support local organizations, schools, and artists, the impact of the arts can be felt throughout Sangamon and Menard counties every day.

This moment belongs to all of you. Our members, partners, artists, and supporters are the reason the arts continue to thrive in the Springfield area. Your belief in this work has shaped the past 50 years and will carry us into the future.

Thank you for being part of this journey. We cannot wait to celebrate with you and continue building what comes next.

Yours Truly,  
Bella Szabo

# 23RD MAYOR'S AWARDS FOR THE ARTS GET YOUR KICKS: AN ARTFUL FIX

This partnership program between the Arts Council and the City of Springfield honors creatives across Sangamon and Menard counties. This year's celebration is especially meaningful as it also serves as the Arts Council's 50th anniversary celebration.

With a theme inspired by Route 66 and its 100th anniversary, the evening celebrates the artists, educators, organizations, and advocates who shape our cultural landscape just as the Mother Road shaped the landscape of our nation. From visual, literary, and performing artists to dedicated volunteers, businesses, teachers, and students, the awards recognize those who keep creativity moving forward.

As we look ahead, we also look back. A featured photo from our 25th anniversary celebration at the 13th Mayor's Awards for the Arts reflects the legacy we continue to build together.

Nominations will be accepted in the following categories: Visual Artist, Literary Artist, Performing Artist, Arts Organization, Business Supportive of the Arts, Arts Volunteer, Arts Educator, and Exceptional Arts Student.

Join us this October as we celebrate excellence, history, and the future of the arts in our community. We are seeking a 3D artist who can design this year's awards. You can contact us to learn more. More details and nomination information will be announced soon.



## DIAMOND BALL

Each Spring, the Arts Council hosts a lively fundraiser that highlights our local art community while offering a fun and unique way for local residents to participate in the arts. Last year, it was a Roaring 20's style 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of the Great Gatsby at the Dana-Thomas House.

This year, guests stepped into a Bridgerton-inspired evening at the Pasfield House filled with music, dancing, and a little friendly competition. Live performances and a packed dance floor carried the celebration from start to finish. During the festivities, Her Royal Highness the Queen named the Diamond of the Ball, and Lady Pasfield revealed her true identity.

Thanks to the generosity of our guests and sponsors, the Diamond Ball raised nearly \$4,300 to support the Arts Council's initiatives.

If you missed the event or want to keep the momentum going, you can still be part of the impact. Your support helps bring more opportunities, more performances, and more creativity to our community. Donate today and help us carry this energy forward.



SPRINGFIELD AREA ARTS COUNCIL

420 S 6th Street  
Springfield, IL 62701



*The Springfield Area Arts Council enriches the community by promoting and supporting all art forms and providing creative opportunities to participate in and enjoy the arts.*

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Sarah Beuning <i>President</i>	Corrine Hinton	Jane Roth
Douglas Yul Holt <i>Vice President</i>	Jace Kim	Tiffani Saunders
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The Springfield Area Arts Council is partially supported with funding from the Illinois Arts Council.

## FUNDING THE FUTURE OF THE ARTS

The Arts Council is proud to award grant funding to artists, organizations, and public and private K-12 schools. These awards support creative projects that bring life across our community and the arts into our schools.

**Regional Arts Partner** grant awarded 14 organizations in Sangamon and Menard counties funding for community art projects.

**Arts in Education** grant awarded 9 schools in Sangamon and Menard counties funding to bring the arts to life for their students.

**City Arts** grant awarded 2 Springfield artists, Tim Crawford and Jace Kim, funding for community projects in performing arts.



## 21 YEARS OF POETRY OUT LOUD

The Arts Council coordinates the Central Illinois Regional Poetry Out Loud competition and Illinois State Poetry Out Loud competition, encouraging high school students to engage with poetry through memorization and performance.

This year's participants demonstrated exceptional skill and confidence. On February 12, Jillian Garcia of Decatur Eisenhower High School placed 1st at the Central Illinois Regional Contest.

Garcia moved on to represent our region in the Illinois State Poetry Out Loud Competition on March 2, competing against 14 other students. Jaden Conley of Niles West High School won the title of Illinois State Champion, advancing to the National Recitation Contest in Washington D.C. Out of a field of 54 champions from across the nation, Conley won 3<sup>rd</sup> place in the National Finals on April 29.

