

Arts Council celebrates Arts Week

By LYNN RAE POVEC
Staff Writer

National Arts Week (Sept. 22-28), proclaimed by President Reagan, marks the 20th anniversary of the National Endowment for the Arts. Locally, Brazos Arts Week, proclaimed by mayors Gary Halter and Marvin Tate, marks the Endowment's anniversary as well as the 15th anniversary of the Arts Council of Brazos Valley.

The Arts Council is the agency in Brazos County which develops, promotes and supports arts organizations, artists and activities. It does so through a variety of administrative, financial, educational and cultural programs.

"For people in the arts community ... there's something going on every day," says Bonnie Yarbrough, executive director of the council. "My calendar's never empty."

Whether it's an exhibit, a class or a performance, something is happening in Bryan-College Station. In 1984, the Arts Council of Brazos Valley brought several exhibits to our area. In February, the council co-sponsored the Second Annual International Arts Festival with the Brazos Valley Art League. In November, Bryan-College Station, selected as one of 10 stops in Texas, hosted the Artrain, the nation's only traveling rail art museum. About 8,000 people toured the exhibit during its week-long stay.

The arts mean a great deal to the quality-of-life in a community, and Yarbrough says new residents to the community frequently ask about this area's cultural resources. Yarbrough, who has been council director for two years, scoffs when she hears the twin cities called a cultural wasteland.

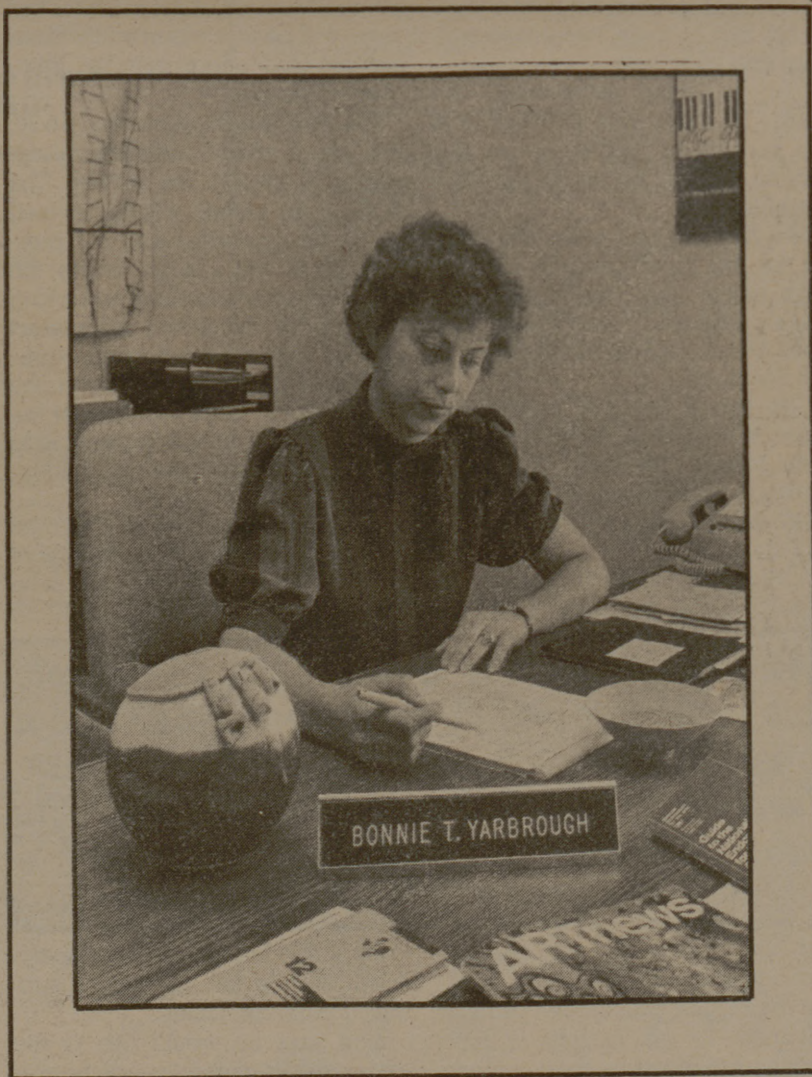
Bryan-College Station ranks 113th in the arts out of 227 metro areas. The "Places Rated Almanac" rates metro areas of 50,000 or more in population, and scoring is based on the number of cultural activities available. Our area ranks higher than many Texas cities about our size (Laredo, Midland, San Angelo, Temple) and even higher than many larger cities (Abilene, Odessa, Waco, Wichita Falls).

Yarbrough is pleased about that. It demonstrates the partnership between public and private support for the arts.


She encourages active participation and community involvement so the broad spectrum of the arts in the Brazos Valley may best be served.

"The imperative of artistic excellence requires that we cultivate, nurture and protect the creative spirit and develop a climate that engages our citizens in the cultural experience," she says.

Yarbrough says the Arts Council of Brazos Valley has three goals: to develop an increased level of broad, local commitment to the arts in Bra-



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art speaks
to our
capacity for
delight and
wonder,
to the
sense of mystery
surrounding
our lives,
to our
sense of pity
and
beauty
and
pain"

Joseph Conrad

CELEBRATE THE ARTS AMERICA

Let's

CELEBRATE THE ARTS BRAZOS

20
1963-1983
NATIONAL ENDOWMENT
FOR THE ARTS

15
1968-1983
ARTS COUNCIL OF
BRAZOS VALLEY

For membership information please call the Arts Council office 268-ARTS

zos Valley; to serve as a resource center for arts activities by compiling registries of artists — performing, visual and literary; and to develop a plan for a major community cultural arts facility for the Brazos Valley.

The Arts Council gives much attention to educational programs in the area. Through these programs, presentations at schools are expanded to include classroom activities such as lectures and demonstrations.

At Southwood Elementary School in College Station, about 600 children attend a 30-minute art class every day. The children learn about the visual, performing and literary arts, Yarbrough says.

The council also offers classes in art, drama, drawing, painting, pottery and weaving.

The council operates on federal grants and contributions, Yarbrough says. Bryan-College Station's hotel-motel tax accounts for a little more than half of the council's funds. The remainder is made up by the Texas Commission on the Arts, Brazos County, memberships, private foundations and donations.

The council offers both individual and corporate memberships, and students also are invited to join. Volunteers are encouraged to help with bulk mailings, clerical work and monthly calendar distribution, she says.

The Arts Council of Brazos Valley plans an anniversary party Sept. 22 that will begin the many events planned to mark Brazos Arts Week.

The celebration will begin at 7 p.m. at the Hilton Ballroom in College Station, and the North Texas State University One O'Clock Lab Band will entertain. Admission is free to Arts Council members and \$10 for guests.

Later in the week, a children's theater company out of Austin, Zachary Scott Project Interact, will perform "Razzmatazz," a musical and comedy revue. Performances will be at Lamar Elementary School in Bryan on Sept. 26.

A vaudeville show is scheduled Sept. 19-21 by Stage Center at the Palace Theater. The Community Singers of Brazos County will set up a booth in Post Oak Mall in College Station, and the Brazos Valley Art League will give the public a chance to participate in a free workshop, to be held in October.

"Culture has become a very large part of the quality of life," Yarbrough says, "and people are looking for ways to bring it into their lives."

The Arts Council of Brazos Valley prints and distributes a calendar listing arts events and activities in the area. The calendar is mailed out before the first of the month to members and corporate sponsors, and to the 95 other arts councils in Texas.

For a copy of the calendar or further information about the Arts Council of Brazos Valley, drop by 111 University Drive East, Suite 217, in College Station, or call 268-ARTS.