



## CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM

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Date: February 5, 2014

To: Brian Kischnick, City Manager

From: Mark Miller, Director of Economic & Community Development  
Cindy Stewart, Community Affairs Director

Subject: 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Regional Arts & Culture Awards

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### Background

Planning is underway for Paint Creek Center for the Arts' (PCCA) 4<sup>th</sup> annual Regional Arts & Culture Awards. The event will be held once again at the Royal Park Hotel in early June. The Regional Arts & Culture Awards encompass eight municipal awards honoring those who are fostering arts & culture in their local communities and one distinguished Regional Arts Award by PCCA to an individual or organization fostering arts & culture in the greater southeast Michigan area. The City of Troy nominated the Belian Art Center and Gallery Director Zabel Belian for this award last year.

PCCA will work once again with the original eight municipalities in its service region including Rochester, Rochester Hills, Oakland Twp., OrionTwp., Auburn Hills, Troy, Shelby Twp. and Washington Twp., to coordinate the selection of an award recipient representing each of these communities. The awards are intended to recognize those who are fostering arts & culture in meaningful and impactful ways. Award recipients could include: an individual who has committed their time, resources, leadership and expertise to advance an arts related mission; an individual, family or business who has made a significant financial contribution to the arts; an arts educator; an individual who has demonstrated leadership in founding, reenergizing or sustaining an arts organization; a group, individual or organization creating awareness or support for the arts or an artist or arts organization serving the community in broad and impactful ways.

### Recommendation

It is our recommendation that the City nominate the Ridgedale Players to represent Troy. During the Great Depression on October 31, teacher Minna Miller Smith of Lincoln High School formed a group of 27 aspiring thespians using funds provided by the Federal Emergency Relief Administration. The group gave people something to do during a time of widespread unemployment and low morale.

Ridgedale Players, as it was named for the combination of its original Pleasant Ridge and Ferndale location, has now been performing plays for 81 years. Their first production was *The House with the Twisty Windows*, a one-act presented at Lincoln High School for tickets of 35 cents. In January 1935, its newsletter, *Backstage*, went to print and for its rate of success, Ridgedale Players deemed it time



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to construct their own playhouse. Harry Henry was placed in charge of the project and the job was completed January 12, 1949 at 205 W. Long Lake Road in Troy.

Ridgedale Players welcomed child actors for their first play in 1950 and season tickets were introduced in 1957. *Bells are Ringing* was performed as the company's first musical for the 1966-67 season, much to the delight of its audiences.

Ridgedale Players serves as a valuable asset to both the community and interested thespians by helping people to enjoy theater through meaningful, memorable, and creative productions. They also hold fundraisers for our local nonprofit organizations during a number of their productions. The Ridgedale Players most definitely foster arts & culture in the City of Troy as well as the greater southeast Michigan area.