

# Bee Vradenburg Foundation Report to the Community 2011

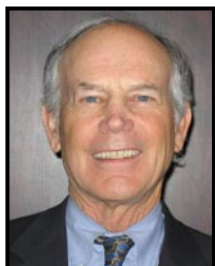


## DEAR FRIENDS



It was a year of change and inspiration.

A new music director was named for our city's Philharmonic, new projects brought us everything from holiday jazz to a community art installation involving hundreds of chairs (and hundreds of volunteers); several arts organizations found new homes, enabling them to serve new and different audiences; and longtime institutions celebrated their past while breaking new ground in artistic exploration.



2011 reminded us that the arts not only build community, they help us to see the world in different ways and explore challenging subjects and fresh perspectives.

Bee knew the power of the arts. She embraced new projects and new challenges, new ways of ensuring that the arts are accessible to all. We know that Bee's spirit of discovery lives on in the Pikes Peak region, thanks to the artists and arts organizations that don't settle for the status quo, but rather take on challenges with gusto. Bee believed passionately that the arts belong to everyone, and that the work of engaging the community with art is never done.

We are so very grateful to the many artists and arts organizations that, in good times and in challenging times, continue providing provocative, joyous, and life-affirming performances, exhibits and festivals. You inspire us daily.

*George A. Vradenburg III, Board Chair  
Phillip A. Kendall, Board President*

## BEE'S LEGACY

Bee Vradenburg was larger than life, endlessly optimistic and profoundly successful at anything she set her mind to do. And she set her mind to realizing the vision of a vibrant and collaborative arts community.

Bee was an incredible life force, a woman who began a 37-year commitment as the manager of the Colorado Springs Symphony in her living room. Retirement from the Colorado Springs Symphony simply gave her the time and excitement to nurture emerging artistic endeavors. Bee's private generosity mirrored her public commitment.

Members of the community retell personal stories of Bee helping them in ways both large and small: paying for music lessons or a musical instrument; underwriting high school projects; or giving money to get through a hospital stay. But she also took on herculean projects such as raising the capital needed to build the Pikes Peak Center, or making sure community members had a chance to experience "Pops on Ice" at The Broadmoor every Christmas. Bee died in 2000, and our foundation, formed by her family, honors her legacy.



## FOUNDATION INITIATIVES

### Staff & Board

The foundation expanded its reach in the community in 2011 by adding two new board members who are both Colorado Springs natives with deep and passionate commitments to the community: Noel Black, a producer at KRCC and co-creator of “The Big Something”; and

*Our mission: Advancing Bee Vradenburg’s vision of a thriving and diverse cultural community by investing in the excellence, innovation and sustainability of the arts in the Pikes Peak region.*

Susan Pattee, an educator, community activist and philanthropist. In addition to its grantmaking, the Bee Vradenburg Foundation is deeply committed to researching and supporting efforts to strengthen the sustainability of the arts community and expand awareness and appreciation of its cultural assets. Many foundation board members serve on boards of arts organizations in the region, and Executive Director Susan Edmondson serves the arts community in a variety of ongoing ways, including:

- Cultural Office of the Pikes Peak Region (COPPeR) board member
- Final year of service on the board of Experience Colorado Springs, the Convention & Visitors Bureau
- Named board chair of the Downtown Development Authority
- Board chair of the Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum
- Co-chair of the new Philharmonic Advisory Council
- Colorado Springs World Arena (and Pikes Peak Center for the Performing Arts) board member
- Pikes Peak Community Foundation Fund for the Arts committee member

### Bee an Arts Champion Award

The Bee an Arts Champion Award honors the legacy of Bee Vradenburg by recognizing individuals who have demonstrated sustained, passionate and innovative leadership toward advancing the arts in the Pikes Peak region. In 2011, the trustees honored Jan Johnson, founder of Ormao. It was just over 20 years ago that Jan set in motion something amazing for our community: a contemporary dance school and company. Since then, the dancers of Ormao have graced stages large and small across the community, and through Jan’s leadership Ormao has been a willing, enthusiastic and beautiful collaborator on many projects and performances. Jan’s spirit is wholly inclusive, never preachy, and she effortlessly uses dance as a way to create dialogue about the value of arts in community. Pictured with Jan above are foundation trustees Phil Kendall, Kathleen Collins and Susan Pattee.





### Interns gain experience

The foundation entered its second year of offering a summer internship program designed to provide college students who were involved in the arts locally as children the opportunity to gain skills for future professions in the arts. Two interns were selected from a competitive pool of applicants. Laura Christensen, far right, studying music education at Luther College, worked with the Colorado Springs Conservatory and the Colorado Springs Philharmonic, and even continued work with the Philharmonic long-distance when she returned to school in the fall. Mollie Wolf, pursuing degrees in dance and ethnic studies at CU Boulder, worked with Ormao dance company during a very busy summer when the organization moved into new studio spaces.



### Free for All Summer Symphony

The *Free for All Summer Symphony: A Celebration of Charles Ansbacher and Bee Vradenburg* honored the legacy of two dear friends who shared a love of Colorado Springs and the desire to make orchestral music accessible to all. The first of this three-year special program was made possible by a gift from the Charles Ansbacher Foundation to the Bee Vradenburg Foundation, which in turn is supporting a free orchestral concert each year for the community. The project kicked off with a September concert on the lawn west of the Fine Arts Center. The Chamber Orchestra of the Springs joined with the Gospel Music Workshop of America for a magical evening of music from the heart. Charles' widow, Swanee Hunt, and many of his family members traveled from afar for this special evening, and Colorado Gov. John Hickenlooper sent a special greeting. This program returns in 2012 with a free outdoor concert by the Colorado Springs Philharmonic.

## A banner year in the arts

Despite the ongoing challenges of the economy, the arts in the Pikes Peak region had a banner year, with numerous notable achievements. In addition to the *Free for All Summer Symphony* concert noted above, here are just a few highlights:

- The Colorado Springs Philharmonic had a banner year, highlighted by the brilliant debut of new conductor and music director Josep Caballe-Domenech. After a rigorous season-long search, Josep was the overwhelming top choice by musicians and the search committee as the ideal musical leader for this pivotal time in the orchestra's life. The Philharmonic's continued revitalization was noted by the Colorado Springs Economic Development Corporation, which presented it with the Chairperson's Award for "unique and exceptional community contributions."
- The Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center marked its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a range of provocative programming. Highlights of the year included the riveting Martha Graham Dance Company performance and the stunning Birger Sandzen exhibit. New Performing Arts Director Scott RC Levy took the helm, sending the theater season in fresh new directions.
- The Colorado Springs Conservatory found a new downtown home ideally suited for providing high-caliber performing arts education to the more than 400 young people it serves through its core program and partner programs.
- The Conservatory wasn't the only arts organization with a new home. Ormao dance company secured a beautiful new home with two ample studio spaces, which has allowed for new multidisciplinary projects and even more community outreach. Springs Ensemble Theatre and Theatre 'd Art also secured new spaces.



- The MAT is no longer Manitou Art Theatre: Now it is Millibo Art Theatre, a fitting change honoring two extraordinary people who had a passion for the magic of live theater, Millie Harrison and Bo Freese.
- Hundreds of chairs snaked down the center of Manitou Avenue in Manitou Springs on a chilly autumn morning as artist Sean O’Meallie’s Chair Project public art installation came to fruition. The result was beautiful and buoyant, augmented by musicians, a dance flash mob, yoga, puppets and much more.
- The Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum thrived in 2011, through the dedication of director Matt Mayberry, his staff, numerous community volunteers and donors, and vital support from the city and private donors. The year saw an increase in attendance, a successful first-ever fundraising breakfast, and the provocative exhibit “Framing Community, Exposing Identity.”
- The list of newsworthy and unique highlights could go on and on. KRCC brought a live taping of “Prairie Home Companion” to the World Arena, enabling 4 million people across the country to hear Garrison Keillor sing about the beautiful charms of our city. MeadowGrass Music Festival marked its third year with the best of local and national acts under Colorado sunshine in the spectacular setting of La Foret. Concrete Couch brought us the Off the Couch conference, a week of collaborative artmaking projects across the region, plus a day of learning from creative community-building experts. Smokebrush at Marmalade hosted the new monthly Story Project, produced by Sharon Friedman and featuring everyday people sharing true-life stories that are sometimes humorous, sometimes harrowing, always heart-felt.

**GRANTS**

*Total grants awarded:*  
**\$182,936**

**Amateur Pianists International**  
General operating support, \$1,000

**Business of Art Center**  
General operating support, \$10,000  
Manitou Chair Project, \$1,000

**Chamber Orchestra of the Springs**  
Free for All Summer Symphony, \$17,500

**Colorado Springs Children’s Chorale**  
General operating support, \$7,500

**Colorado Springs Chinese Cultural Institute**  
Chinese New Year Festival, \$1,000

**Colorado Springs Conservatory**  
General operating support, \$5,000

**Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center**  
General operating support, \$5,000

**Colorado Springs Philharmonic**  
General operating support, \$27,000

**Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum**  
Museum Experience, \$2,500

**Colorado Springs World Arena**  
Pikes Peak Center Charles Ansbacher memorial, \$897



**Colorado Springs Youth Symphony Association**

General operating support, \$5,000

**Concrete Couch**

Off the Couch conference, \$3,500

**Cultural Office of the Pikes Peak Region**

General operating support, \$4,000  
Business & Arts Lunch sponsorship, \$1,500

**FutureSelf**

General operating support, \$2,500

**Imagination Celebration**

General operating support, \$2,000

**KCME**

General operating support, \$4,000

**La Foret**

MeadowGrass Music Festival, \$5,000

**Leadership Pikes Peak**

Arts Day and scholarships, \$1,800

**Millibo Art Theatre**

Discretionary grants, \$250

**Opera Theatre of the Rockies**

General operating support, \$5,000

**Ormao**

Bee an Arts Champion Award, \$1,000

**Peakharmonic**

Musical instruments purchase, \$3,000

**Pikes Peak Community Foundation**

Independent GIVE Campaign, Arts Category, \$2,500  
United Arts Fund initiative, \$10,000  
Sheer Audacity, Bending Towards the Light  
Jazz Nativity, \$1,500

**Rocky Mountain Women's Film Festival**

General operating support, \$1,000

**Springs Ensemble Theatre**

Capital improvements, \$2,500

**Theatre 'd Art**

General operating support and facility needs, \$2,500

**Theatreworks**

General operating support, \$5,000  
Discretionary grant, \$50

**Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts**

General operating support, \$5,000

**UCCS Gallery of Contemporary Art**

Season support, \$3,000  
Discretionary grant, \$100

A total of \$1,862 was provided to Colorado Springs Children's Chorale, Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum and Opera Theatre of the Rockies for capacity-building work with FRESC, Front Range Executive Service Corps.

\$25,977 was provided to the Colorado Springs Philharmonic through the Symphonic Music Fund.

## GRANTMAKING

### Our Goals

Through its granting and other activities, Bee Vradenburg Foundation is keenly interested in the health of the arts community of the Pikes Peak region, especially the performing arts. Our grants touch many parts of the cultural sector, with particular interest in:

- Growing and sustaining cornerstone arts organizations that are part of the cultural fabric of the region.
- Supporting smaller, new and emerging arts organizations and artistic endeavors.

We measure the effectiveness of our grants by their ability to achieve one or many of five primary goals:

- Building the capacity and effectiveness of arts organizations.
- Broadening, deepening and diversifying arts audiences.
- Encouraging employment in the arts sector and recognizing and advancing the talents and skills of individual artists.
- Supporting arts education and youth participation in the arts.
- Fostering diversity in artistic employment, art forms and arts audiences.

### Guidelines & Eligibility

Please note that we highly encourage first-time applicants to call or email the foundation in advance of applying.

Organizations may apply for funding once per calendar year, regardless of whether a request is approved within that year. All organizations applying to the foundation must:

- Be a nonprofit, tax-exempt 501(c)3 organization; or be an arts-oriented project or organization under the fiscal agency of a 501(c)3 organization.
- Be based in and serve the Pikes Peak region, defined as El Paso County and the Ute Pass corridor of Teller County to include Woodland Park but not beyond.
- Have an active employment nondiscrimination policy approved by the board that is inclusive of race, creed, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender expression, age, physical or mental handicap, veteran status and marital status.

### Ineligible for Funding

The following activities or organizations are ineligible for funding from the foundation:

- Individual artists or art students.
- Organizations that are not legal nonprofits or under the fiscal agency of a nonprofit. Please note that merely “incorporating” as a nonprofit is not the same as securing 501(c)3 status from the IRS; organizations must demonstrate IRS nonprofit status.
- Performances or arts events designed primarily as fund-raisers for non-arts organizations or to advance causes unrelated to the arts.
- In general, the foundation does not provide funding directly to public or private schools. Our focus is instead of supporting arts nonprofits that work directly in schools to enhance the school arts experience.



## **Grant Sizes and Structures**

Grants are structured based on the size of organizations.

- Bee Grants – Organizations with prior-year or current-year revenues of \$50,000 or less are eligible for a maximum grant of up to \$2,500 per year.
- Standard Grants – Most Standard Grants range in size from \$2,500 to \$10,000. Organizations with prior-year or current-year revenues of \$50,001 or more are eligible for Standard Grants.

## **Types of Support**

Foundation grants can come in various forms:

- General operating support.
- Season or programmatic support.
- Scholarships for students and teachers distributed through qualified organizations.
- Capacity-building support to strengthen organizations through the use of consultants, software, strategic planning initiatives, increased administrative assistance and more.
- Challenge grants designed to help nonprofits increase their individual-donor support.
- Capital projects.
- Outreach programs to increase exposure to the arts.

## **How to Apply**

Grant applications are downloadable from the foundation's website. One copy of the application should be mailed or delivered, along with proof of 501(c)3 status and nondiscrimination policy. The foundation happily encourages phone calls and emails with any questions prior to submittal. Please ensure that all pages in the application are copied on *one side only* (no double-sided pages) and *do not* use any staples, folders or other bindings. If you wish to submit special collateral such as programs or season brochures, please provide eight copies. To submit color photographs, *please provide jpgs only*, by sending a disc or emailing directly to the executive director.

## **Deadlines**

Applications are accepted year-round but must be received by 5 p. m. January 1, April 1, July 1 or October 1 to be considered for review during the quarterly trustee meetings. When those dates fall on a holiday or weekend, the first weekday thereafter applies. The foundation will notify organizations within 45 days of the outcome of their submission.

## **BOARD, STAFF & FINANCIALS**

### **Board of Trustees**

George A. Vradenburg III, Chair  
Phillip A. Kendall, President  
Libby Rittenberg, Treasurer  
Kathleen Fox Collins, Secretary  
Noel Black  
Susan Pattee  
Alissa Vradenburg  
Tyler Vradenburg

### **Staff**

Susan Edmondson, Executive Director

### **Financial Information**

**For year ended December 31, 2011:**

**Grants paid:** \$182,936

**Fair market value of investments:**

\$4,063,829 (includes \$554,854 in the  
Symphonic Music Fund)

Pursuant to IRS disclosure requirements,  
copies of the Form 990pf for Bee  
Vradenburg Foundation are available by  
contacting the office, 719.477.0185.

### **Contact**

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[Facebook.com/BeeVradenburgFoundation](https://www.facebook.com/BeeVradenburgFoundation)

### **Photo credits**

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Thomas Wilson of Chamber Orchestra of the Springs by Tom Kimmell.

Page 4: Free for All Summer Symphony photo by Tom Kimmell.

Page 5: "Christmas Mouse" photo courtesy Millibo Art Theatre; Manitou Chair Project photo by Dinah Mann;  
MeadowGrass Music Festival photo by Christian Murdock; COPPeR reception photo by Bryan Oller.