

# Arts Education in Vermont

Volume I, Issue I

April 2007



easy-to-read and easy-to-obtain format.

Your comments are important as this newsletter takes shape.

Keep in touch! Let me know what you think and any ideas you have for the next issue. *Gail Kilkelly, Coordinator for Arts, VT Department of Education.* [gail.kilkelly@state.vt.us](mailto:gail.kilkelly@state.vt.us) or (802) 828-6560.

## Special Interest Articles

Arts Assessment Institute—  
August 2007.

Capitol Christmas Tree Ornament Project 2007—Share Your Designs and Lesson Plans.

“Art Helps” program at Bridport Central School.

Juried Exhibit for Young Artists with Disabilities—

Opportunity for students

## Welcome to our first issue!

Welcome to the first issue of the Arts Education in Vermont Newsletter published by the Vermont Department of Education.

The purpose of this newsletter is to provide helpful information to Vermont’s arts educators in an easy-to-read, on-line publication.

This newsletter will be different; this is my direct link to you where I can give you news and information directly related to issues of arts curriculum, instruction and assessment in Vermont.

The goal of this newsletter is to provide you with information that needs to get from my desk to yours in an

**Call for Designs:  
2007 Capitol Christmas Tree Ornament  
Project (See pg 2)**

## REGISTRATION IS OPEN— Arts Assessment Institute in Vermont— August 7-8-9, 2007



The Arts Assessment Institute in VT will take place on Tues—Thurs, August 7-9, 2007 at Castleton State College in Castleton, VT.

Participants will attend three full days of arts assessment training in large and small group sessions.

National arts assessment experts **Dr. Scott Shuler, Arts Coordinator, CT** and

**Frank Philip (CCSSO-SCASS Arts, Washington, DC)** will be with us again this summer.

Changes have been made to the format based on feedback from last year’s participants:

1. Teachers will self-select participation in **Level I** (new to arts assessment) or **Level II** (some

experience in arts assessment) activities.

2. **Three graduate credits** through the Center for Schools at Castleton.

Registrations materials are available by writing to:

[DOE-summerarts@state.vt.us](mailto:DOE-summerarts@state.vt.us) or by calling Gail Kilkelly (VT DOE) at 802-828-6560.

## Share Your Designs: Capitol Christmas Tree 2007 Ornaments

The US Capitol Christmas Tree will be coming from Vermont in 2007! This is the fourth time Vermont has provided a tree to Washington, DC. Our state is continuing the tradition we began in 1967, 1980, 1994 and now 2007.

The VT Department of Education is seeking lesson plans that result in a hang-able piece of student art or "ornament" that can be hung on the 2007 Capitol Christmas Tree.

The name of the tree has changed throughout the years. The most recent change happened in November 2005 when, then Speaker of the House, Dennis Hastert changed the name back to the "Capitol Christmas Tree".

The tree that stands outside the Capitol will be a 60 ft. balsam fir from the [Green Mountain National Forest](#) in Bennington County. There will also be 70 "companion trees" smaller in size that will be placed inside Capitol-area buildings.

This gift to the nation coincides with the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of the Green Mountain Forest.

**VT NEED 7,500 ORNAMENTS TO DECORATE THESE TREES!**

**Specifications for the ornaments must be strictly followed** for the pieces to be considered for hang-

ing. Pieces that do not meet the following criteria will not be used and will be discarded by the National Parks staff.

**In order to be considered for hanging on the Capitol Trees, ornaments must:**

1. Represent the 2007 Vermont theme: **Bringing an Old Fashioned Holiday to the Nation.**
2. Be made of **durable materials that will hold up in an out-of-doors environment for 3 weeks.**
3. Be **lightweight, weatherproof, and able to withstand poor weather conditions.**

**NOTE: Ornaments cannot and will not be returned to students or teachers. All ornaments are discarded by the National Parks staff after the event.**

### Size of the Ornaments

#### Outdoor 60 Ft. Tree

- **9" - 12" in size** with a loop or way to attach a 12-15" long piece of 20-gauge wire. **Vermont is asked to supply 4,000 of these ornaments!**

#### Room-size Companion Trees

- **5" - 8" in size** with a loop or way to attach a 12" long piece of 20-gauge wire. **Vermont is asked to supply 3,500 of these ornaments!**

### Win a FREE TRIP TO THE LIGHTING!

As part of this project each participating student will be eligible to submit an entry form for a drawing to win a free trip to Washington, DC to attend the Lighting Ceremony with his or her parents and teacher.

#### Other information:

All ornaments must be completed by October 30, 2007

Collection centers will be identified around the state. Collection centers will be listed in upcoming Arts Education Newsletters.

Drawing forms for the free trip to Washington will be available in the next newsletter.

Donations of 20-gauge wire are being sought to alleviate some of the cost of materials.

This activity is voluntary and open to the entire Vermont community including public and private school students, home school students, and community members.

The VT Department of Education is working closely with the Bennington Chamber of Commerce and its partners. The VT Agency of Agriculture is seeking ways to include VT Future Farmers of America and VT 4-H.



**SUBMIT YOUR ORNAMENT LESSON PLAN TO SHARE WITH OTHER ART TEACHERS!**

Your lesson plans will be posted in the next Arts Education newsletter.

Share your ideas for designs including materials, lessons plans, Arts GE and assessment (and a digital photo of an example if possible) to [gail.kilkelly@state.vt.us](mailto:gail.kilkelly@state.vt.us)

The [Bennington Area Chamber of Commerce](#) is pleased to be spearheading Vermont's gift to the nation in the form of the 2007 US Capitol Christmas Tree.

Check out [www.capitolchristmastree2007.org](http://www.capitolchristmastree2007.org) for full details.

Questions about the Capitol Christmas Tree Ornament Project should be directed to Gail Kilkelly, Coordinator for Arts, VT Department of Education. Email: [gail.kilkelly@state.vt.us](mailto:gail.kilkelly@state.vt.us) or (802) 828-6560.

Participation is voluntary by schools and students.

## Art Helps” program at Bridport School

“Art Helps” is a grant funded program at the Bridport Central School that helps students find positive communication skills using art.

This innovative program is the project of Bruce Lee, part-time licensed art teacher and part-time classroom aide at the Bridport Central School.

By applying for a grant opportunity through his district, Bruce saw an opportunity to help students who had a hard time in school and exhibited a variety of behavior challenges.

“My proposal was to assist a variety of students who may need extra help to be successful in school”, Bruce wrote in his proposal. “Many children find it difficult to express themselves appropriately in a school setting. They may excel academically yet behavior issues often hold them back. Other students find it difficult to express themselves verbally or in written form. They may be withdrawn, becoming shy and lonely in the process. However, through the medium of visual art these students may find their voice.”

“Criteria for student selection Art Helps sessions may include, but not be limited to behavior issues (especially bullying) and/or social issues (making friends, peer pressure, etc.)”

Bruce wrote in his proposal, “Through the use of visual art I feel students can find successful and healthier ways to communicating their thoughts and feelings. My primary focus is to help students find alternative and safer ways of expressing themselves—at school and elsewhere.”

Working with the classroom teachers, EST team, special educators and guidance staff, students were identified for possible participation in the program. Parents were then notified and brought into the decision making process. Finally students are offered the opportunity to participate in the Art Helps program.

Students come to Bruce for 30-minute sessions individually or in a group. By picking up a pencil they have the opportunity to work through a variety of issues from inappropriate aggressive behavior to being victimized by being bullied. Students are en-



couraged to use drawing techniques learned in their art classes.

Bruce is careful to say that this is not art therapy. The sessions are designed to help students “find their voice” by drawing choices and positive behaviors that could replace destructive or counter-productive ones.

Bruce Lee related this story during the fall:

“ There are two girls in the group from first grade. In class they are painfully shy and wouldn't say boo if they were dressed as ghosts for Halloween. Anyway, today, they were so animated and talkative I could hardly believe they were the same kids. In fact, I ... had to drag them out of the room to go to lunch! I hope this will lead to a greater degree of self-confidence for them so they can open up in their regular classroom...fend off bullies and stand up for themselves. ”

**Bruce Lee** relaxes by playing the bagpipes at the Arts Assessment Institute last summer. Bruce is the art teacher at Bridport Central School.

Bridport Central School is a K-8 school with an enrollment of just over 100. The town of Bridport lies a few miles west of Middlebury.

**“... through the medium of visual art these students may find their voice.”**  
**Bruce Lee**

VERMONT  
DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION

120 State Street  
Montpelier, VT 05620-2501

Phone: 802-828-6560

Fax: 802-828-6563

E-mail: [gail.kilkelly@state.vt.us](mailto:gail.kilkelly@state.vt.us)

- ⇒ **Capitol Christmas Tree Ornament Project 2007—**  
Design and Lesson Plans ideas!
- ⇒ **School Quality Standards and Local Assessment... where do the arts fit in?** The first in a series addressing the arts in the School Quality Standards and the Local Assessment requirement.
- ⇒ **Have you read...** Critical Links: Learning in the Arts and Student Academic and Social Development by the Art Education Partnership.

**Opportunity for students —  
Juried Exhibit for Young Artists with Disabilities**

*Editor's note: Here is an exciting opportunity for some of our high school visual artists!  
GK*

The national office of VSA arts announces DRIVEN: a National Juried Exhibition for Young Artists With Disabilities Ages 16-25. There will be 15 finalists and \$60,000 distributed in awards.

This contest is open to young artists ages 16-25 living in the United States who have a physical, cognitive or mental disability.

A panel of distinguished practicing artists and arts administrators will determine the standards and select the finalists for the awards.

For details on how to submit artwork, see [www.vsarts.org/VWcall](http://www.vsarts.org/VWcall)

**Or, call VSA Arts of Vermont at (802) 655-7772 for a print brochure.**



"Anne's windows" © 2006 Gail Kilkelly