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Voices, Go Arts!: Thanks for your support

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Community is key to CSA

By Mark Fauser, executive director, Community School of the Arts

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As we approach the end of CSA's fiscal year, it's important that I personally and properly convey to all of you in the community how grateful we are to you for your support.

And we would like to share with you some of the things that your generosity has created this year.

The beginning of our fiscal year was a program we created called ENERGY — an after-school program that introduced six different sports and six different art forms to kids throughout the six Marion elementary schools.

This was a giant collaboration between CSA, the YMCA, the Community Foundation of Grant County, the United Way, great teachers, coaches, wonderful people and organizations that shared their passion with our kids.

This community's gifts and interest in the arts at CSA have created jobs for more than 21 creative people, which has led to wonderful shows and more jobs.

We were able to bring in John D'Aquino from Disney's Cory in the House and Michael Deluise from Wayne's World to act and work with our local talent and create an original musical called the Miracle of Christmas. The stars also went to Grant County schools to inspire kids to follow their dreams.

They were wowed by our local talent and hospitality, and the good word is spreading.

Penelope Knight, wife of Nike co-founder, gave CSA another \$100,000 this year, putting the grand total of her gifts at \$350,000. Wow!

Grant County's support of CSA has given massive opportunities to hundreds of kids and adults who learn passion, discipline, confidence and art that they will own for a lifetime.

In the next few weeks, we will begin collaboration with www.chronicle-tribune.com, the Chronicle-Tribune's Web site, by using our kids to take a comical look at our local news and community.

Kids learn to write, act and use television equipment thanks in large part to giving people like Mark Baldwin and our staff.

In mid-April we will team up with Meshingomesia Country Club to do ballroom dancing on Thursday nights. This is for members and non-members alike to enjoy the evening there.

May 2, we will host First Fridays with the City of Marion; May 3 we will collaborate with the Marion Philharmonic Orchestra, Marion Civic Theatre and the Walton Center to put on The King and I.

May 19, we will have our first art auction, from which our local artists and kids will get 70 percent of the proceeds and which will promote the value of visual arts and our local artists in Grant County.

Want to find out more about CSA, including what programs are available to local kids and adults?

Log on to www.csa-marion.com, e-mail info@csa-marion.com or call 662-6263. CSA is located in Centrum Mall, 428 S. Washington St., Marion.

May 23 is our one and only fundraiser — Go Arts! Go Karts! This is one of the most fun events of the year, during which our community is encouraged to get silly and lay it all on the line on Bright House Networks and WBAT.

It is because of this event, and the community's kindness, that I am proud to say that by the end of June we will have given more than \$30,000 in scholarships, which is a record.

Our end of the year dance show is June 13 and 14; we still look forward to shooting fun commercials; and will create our first movie this summer with our acting students called Kids Rule.

Big thanks goes out to all of the hard-working board members, teachers, staff, volunteers, students, parents, Penelope Knight, all of our racers, race sponsors and a special thanks to all of the corporate sponsors.

Grant County has something special that residents have created and invested in, and it's called the Community School of the Arts. Thank you.

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