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Artisphere chalks up successful year



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Artisphere: Greenville's Arts Weekend proved to be a success on all counts this year, Kerry Murphy, the award-winning event's executive director, said.

The May 8-10 festival attracted 100,000 patrons, and its average visual artist sales topped last year's numbers, increasing from $3,700 to $4,100, Murphy said.

The move from April to May for the 2009 festival eliminated competition with other long-established regional festivals, Murphy said, adding it meant participating visual artist applications increased from 424 in 2008 to 585 in 2009.

Piling on the positives, the participating artists' survey rated Artisphere 4.9 on a 5.0 scale in both organization and hospitality.

Murphy said the hospitality rankings are largely due to the festival's 460 volunteers who gave 3,881 hours of service. The volunteer power was generated by 10 "Arts Partner" organizations that recently were rewarded $10,000 total, in varying amounts each, for their assistance.

Another $10,000 in "Chairman Awards" went to five local performing arts groups for their Sunday program participation at Artisphere. The five groups that received $2,000 each include the South Carolina Children's Theatre, Carolina Ballet Theatre, Warehouse Theatre, Greenville Symphony Orchestra and the S.C. Governor's School for the Arts and Humanities.

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