



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
June 4, 2007

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**CREATIVITY IS READY FOR LIFT OFF  
AT 2007 CHILDREN'S FAIR**

“Explore Your Universe” is the theme of this year's Omaha Summer Arts Festival Children's Fair sponsored by Target and Qwest and planned for Saturday, June 23<sup>rd</sup> from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sunday, June 24<sup>th</sup> from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Newly relocated to the heart of the Summer Arts Festival at 11<sup>th</sup> and Farnam Streets, the Children's Fair offers children ages three to 10 years old dozens of hands-on activities, art projects and stage entertainment.

Children can let their imagination and creativity take flight as they build instruments, design jewelry, decorate flower pots, create spin art, make slime and more. In all, there will be 20 activities to choose from, each sponsored by a community organization, educator or local business. Participating organizations include Festival presenting sponsor First National Bank, as well as Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo, El Museo Latino, Girls Inc., the Junior League, Mulhall's, Metro Community College and many others.

In keeping with the Fair's extraterrestrial theme, the Strategic Air & Space Museum will be on-site offering a variety of activities including a custom-designed 'Hummail' fully stocked with freebies and information about the museum, an airplane making activity and the opportunity for children to design their own astronaut patches. The Omaha Children's Museum will focus on maintaining the health and beauty of our current planet with the assistance of GarbaGina, a Go Green! mascot created entirely of recycled and composted materials.

“There are a lot of conversations going on now about going green,” said Tom Simons, director of education for the Omaha Children's Museum. “As adults, we are confronted with the issue all the time when we turn on the lights or fill up our cars with gas. We believe this is also a relevant topic for children and will introduce Go Green! activities through our school outreach program this fall.”

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Several popular past Children's Fair contributors will return this year including Mural Mural Graphics and Art Cars. Using the theme "Explore Your Universe", the Mural Mural team will provide two days of hands-on art exploration using eight to 10 primed artistic panels per day. The panels will attract children ages three to 14 with big whales, animals, flowers and planet themes. There will also be a "Someone Like Me!" panel – allowing children to paint themselves using one of five different skin tones.

A big hit from 2006, Pete Lochren will bring back his chalk board milk truck, space ship car and other vehicles for display at the Children's Fair. Families are invited to be creative with their messages as they write and draw on the milk truck.

Admission to the Children's Fair and several of the activities are free. Tickets for the remaining hands-on crafts and other activities are 50 cents each with most activities costing from one to three tickets.

### **Family Entertainment Stage**

In addition to hands-on fun, the Children's Fair offers its own Family Entertainment Stage featuring a full line-up of exciting performances Saturday and Sunday. On Saturday, the Blues Society Kids Band will kick things off with an 11:30 a.m. performance followed by the funniest pirate never to sail the seven seas. Cap'n Arrr, will have children and grown-ups alike rolling on the floor with laughter during his two sets at 12:30 and 3:30 p.m. Having learned to be a master of pantomime and physical comedy from the famous Marcel Marceau, Cap'n Arrr, aka Won Israel, has engaged audiences on four continents with his unique, interactive comedy routines.

Also on Saturday, the Lincoln-based String Beans will perform two sets at 1:30 and 4:30 p.m. Known as "The Wiggles of the Midwest," the String Beans entertain children and adults alike with their silly lyrics, catchy tunes and high-energy performances. At 2:30 p.m., PRIMAVERA Ballet Folklórico Mexicano will perform traditional folklorico dances of Mexico and, to round out the day, Poppin' Penelope will entertain at 5:30 p.m. with magic, stilt-walking, unicycling, juggling, puppets and balloon artistry with a 50's twist.

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On Sunday, another full afternoon of entertainment is planned beginning with the Cathedral Arts Project Kids Jazz Band at 11:30 p.m. Making his first appearance at the Festival, artist Paul Merklein's Great Big Faces show will be presented at 12:30 and 2:30 p.m. Great Big Faces combines dynamic art and audience participation to create six-foot-tall faces of famous folks and kids from the audience using oil paints. This unique and unforgettable show celebrates creativity, variety and diversity.

Featured at 1:30 and 4:30 p.m., the husband and wife team of Laughing Matters will perform "juggling, mime, magic and other nonsense." Based in Kansas City, Laughing Matters has performed across the United States and around the world. Finally, Poppin' Penelope will make an encore appearance with her unique style of 50's fun at 3:30 p.m. on Sunday.

### **Fun Pass Program**

Each year, the Omaha Summer Arts Festival offers an outreach program called Children's Fair Fun Pass. This year, with the generous support of Target, Omaha Public Power District and Qwest, more than 350 "Fun Passes" will be distributed to underserved and at-risk children from Omaha-area youth organizations.

Recipients for 2007 will include children from the Omaha Housing Authority, Sienna/Francis House, Girls Inc. of Omaha, Girls and Boys Clubs of Omaha, Child Saving Institute and Big Brother/Big Sister of Omaha. Each Fun Pass provides a child with ten free tickets for hands-on activities at the Children's Fair, as well as a free lunch of a hot dog, chips and a soda.

For more information regarding the Omaha Summer Arts Festival presented by First National Bank, and the Youth Arts Program sponsored by Target, please visit the web at [www.SummerArts.org](http://www.SummerArts.org)

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