

Date: Friday, November 11, 2011

Time: 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm

Location: Downtown Alma--Former Billig's Flower Shop 107 E. Superior St.

Category: Arts and Entertainment

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Artventures is a collaborative effort between the Creative Arts Guild of Mid Michigan, Pine River Arts Council, Alma College, and the public schools throughout the area to create a space for the community to have exposure to educational art opportunities for all ages, an artist mentoring program for children and young adults, and a community gallery space. Gratiot County, considered one of the most arts impoverished counties, is in need of such a space to reach out to the community with an all-inclusive visual arts education and mentoring program. Kurt Wassenaar, who purchased and is refurbishing the old opera house in Alma, has graciously allowed Artventures to use Tom Billig's old space rent free to help start up the program. The four partners in our venture have made a financial commitment to the Artventures project. Also, Helman's Market, Pizza Sam's, ABC Music, First Bank, and Alma True Value Hardware Store have given monetary gifts to help offset our start-up costs. Larry LaLonde Salons, Commercial Bank, and State Road Animal Hospital have pledged money. Sherwin Williams has donated paints and supplies to paint and repair our interior space. The old Office Center in downtown Alma has donated furniture and many useful supplies that will allow us to immediately begin with our programming. Church Jewelers donated display cases and Needham's Home Center of St. Louis donated linoleum. The former Kiltie Korner (Nebraska Bookstore at Alma College) has also donated numerous supplies for workshops that will offset supply costs for students. Dr. Abernathy has donated food for the reception, money for workshops supplies, and helped us out with other furnishings we borrowed from Alma College Facilities. Some private funding has also come in from; Crystal Wilson, Dr. Vicki Chessin, and Brandon Snook. We are very grateful for all the support we have received thus far.

Our grand opening is this Friday, 11/11/11 from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. Our opening reception will include a grand exhibition of community work from local artists, Alma College faculty and students, public school instructors and their students, guild members and others. So far we have over 100 pieces of artwork that will exhibit from 11/11/11 to 1/3/12. We will have food, wine - thanks to Dave & Nancy Simon, entertainment by Andrea Armstrong, Dr. Barbara Burdick and Jan Caputo, and an open house of the facilities. Workshops and mentoring program will begin January 2012. If you have any questions or would like to make a donation please, contact Sandy Lopez-Isnardi 989-400-1233 or lopez_isnardi@alma.edu. If you would like to volunteer as a docent or teach an art classes contact Diane Clise 989-330-0662 or dclise@charter.net. I hope to see you all there!