

## Honoring the Visionaries

Once again we will kick off the Art in the Redwoods with the Top Hat Dinner. In previous years we have honored distinguished Artists, generous Patrons and this year (our fiftieth) it is fitting that we honor **Betty O'Neil** and **Katherine (Rubel) DiMaio**, two of Gualala Arts' founding mothers.

Frank Healy, our own roaming reporter, writes:

*"O'Neil, an ardent gardener, was inspired to set up a show at the community center after attending the Oakland Flower Show. It took weeks for planning and decorating. An artificial redwood tree dominated the center of the Community Center floor. A wood framework was covered in bark donated by Norm Reuter. Fresh cut branches formed the limbs.*

*Flower arrangements around the central tree from Jesse Crenston, Bertha Ohlson, Kathy DiMaio and Mae Enos sat on bark-covered frames to resemble tree stumps. Works from local artists hung by O'Neil were displayed along the walls. Refreshments consisted of homemade cakes and desserts served with coffee.*

*That first year no prizes were awarded and the event was a success. The inspiration of these two ladies and a corps of countless volunteers planted the seed for what has continued uninterrupted for the next fifty years.*

*Like the symbolic redwood centerpiece in 1961 Art in the Redwoods has grown from a tiny seedling to a major annual August weekend for visitors, vendors, and artists. It also is integrally linked to Gualala Arts, an organization with over 1,600 annual activities, and it helped spur the effort to create the current Arts Center building."*



Come help us celebrate our fiftieth Art in the Redwoods! We will have something for everyone from the Top Hat dinner to the Champagne Preview, hundreds of works of art, story telling for the kids, live musical entertainment, homemade sweet treats, ice cold beverages, BBQ and wood-fired pizzas will be available over the weekend.

Hope to see everyone there!

*Sus*

David 'Sus' Susalla  
Executive Director  
Gualala Arts, Inc.