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PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Rich Schaedle

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CHA Grant to Fund Arkville Winter Festival:

Catskill Heritage Alliance Matches O'Connor Grant FOR

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Catskill Heritage Alliance Matches O'Connor Grant

Arkville, NY—December 3, 2007 When a Grinch tried to take the fireworks out of the Arkville Winter Festival, the Catskill Heritage Alliance stepped in to ensure that the show would go on.

The first such event ever to take place in the community of Arkville, the Festival represents an attempt by the Margaretville Chamber of Commerce to expand its base beyond the village of Margaretville. That's why Festival Committee co-chairmen John Riedel, head of the Chamber, and Joe Moskowitz, proprietor of Casey Joe's in Arkville, were thrilled last August when M-ARK Executive Director Joan Lawrence-Bauer virtually assured them they could secure a grant from the O'Connor Foundation and a matching grant from the Crossroads Foundation, the public relations arm of Crossroads Ventures LLC, would-be developer of the proposed Belleayre Resort at Catskill Park, to fund the event. That's "standard operating procedure," says co-chairman Moskowitz; "Crossroads grants follow O'Connor grants."

The O'Connor grant was indeed received, and in early November, application was made to Crossroads for the matching grant to cover the costs of fireworks and advertising for the community event.

So it was a real surprise when Crossroads denied the grant, and it meant, Moskowitz says, “no decorations for Arkville, no tree-lighting to coincide with the Margaretville Central School Bazaar this Saturday at the Arkville Fire Hall, minimal advertising, and a great deal of last-minute begging.”

That’s when the Catskill Heritage Alliance stepped in and responded with a \$2000 contribution to replace the money Crossroads had withdrawn. The Catskill Heritage Alliance is a 501(c)3, tax-exempt grassroots organization dedicated to preserving the harmony between the villages of the central Catskills and the surrounding wilderness through community revitalization and open space conservation. “We are delighted to be able to help Arkville continue with its Winter Festival,” says CHA Chairman Rich Schaedle. “This is precisely the kind of local community participation we would love to see more of.”

Response to Movie Screening

As to what happened between the assurances given for the Crossroads grant and its denial, Moskowitz points to the screening at his coffee shop, Casey Joe’s, of the documentary film *Resorting to Madness: Taking Back Our Mountain Communities*, written and directed by Hunter Sykes & Darren Campbell of Coldstream Creative.

Moskowitz screened the documentary at his coffee shop for the simple reason that he was asked to by customers representing SaveTheMountain, the coalition of groups and individuals that opposes the proposed resort development and the Agreement in Principle announced by Governor Spitzer.

Because Moskowitz “didn’t necessarily support” the aims of SaveTheMountain, he insisted for the screening “that the developers and other supporters of the resort be allowed to state their case.” At the first showing of the film on Saturday afternoon, November 17—demand to see the movie was so overwhelming that three showings were necessary—that is precisely what happened. In the finest tradition of small-town democracy, a lively public discussion ensued, with views explained and exchanged civilly.

Says Moskowitz of the grant denial, “it was painfully apparent that the entire community was going to suffer. It also made me think about what kind of people could be behind this resort.”

Thanks to the quick response by the CHA, however, the tree-lighting will happen Saturday December 8, and the Arkville Winter Festival will take place as planned December 29.

As for the movie, its next 2 showings are Thursday, December 6, 7:30 PM, at Claude’s Bistro on Rt. 214 at Romer Street, in Phoenicia, and Saturday, December 8, 7:00 PM at the Saugerties Senior Citizen Center, 207 Market Street. The public is cordially invited, and admission is free.

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