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January 29, 2013

### **Berks Arts Council Announces Recipients of the 2013 Pagoda Awards**

20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Awards and recognition ceremony to be held February 26, 2013, at Miller Center for the Arts at Reading Area Community College.

**Reading** - Berks Arts Council will honor three Berks County residents for the 2013 Pagoda Awards at 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, February 26, at the Miller Center for the Arts. The first Pagoda Award was presented to the late Gertrude Sternbergh in 1993 in recognition of her valuable contribution to the arts in Berks County. Over the past twenty years, the awards were expanded to include multiple recipients celebrating contributions to the arts through excellence, patronage and leadership. Over 30 individuals have been presented since the award's inception.

The award recipients for 2013 are:

- Bruce and Ruth Anne Bengtson, Wyomissing: Patrons of the Arts;
- Cedric Elmer, Reading: Community Leadership and Commitment;
- David Kline, Reading: Excellence in the Arts.

**Bruce and Ruth Anne Bengtson** have long shared their love of and commitment to the arts in Berks County. They have left an indelible mark on the arts community through their generous support of local arts organizations such as the Reading Musical Foundation, the Reading Symphony and the Reading Chapter of the American Guild of Organists. Mr. Bengtson is known throughout the region as Organist at Christ Episcopal Church in Reading and for his appearances as an organ soloist with the Reading Symphony Orchestra.

**Cedric Elmer** has been a dedicated leader of the Reading arts community for the past five decades and has truly lived "Community Leadership and Commitment to the Arts." A pianist from the age of four, he earned the National Piano Guild's top award for piano performance at age 19. He began his career as a teacher with the Community School of Music and the Arts in 1963; he went on to lead the school as Executive Director and Managing Director.

**David Kline** is a multi-faceted performer whose love of music and the arts began at a young age. Known as "East Side Dave," Kline has been an integral part of the bluegrass music scene in Pennsylvania for over 30 years. His musical talents run the gamut from accordion to yodeling and, of course, include the guitar and banjo for which he is best known.

The Awards Ceremony will include performances to honor and reflect the recipients.

Pagoda Awards Chairman Lee Olsen noted, “Berks County is an artistically rich community. The committee was impressed with the breadth and talent of the nominations we received. The 2013 recipients exemplify the spirit of commitment to the arts the Pagoda Awards honor.”

The Pagoda Awards will be presented on Tuesday, February 26, at 7:30 pm the Miller Center for the Arts. Tickets for the Award Ceremony and preceding reception are \$40 and are available through Berks Arts Council. For more information, please contact the Berks Arts Council at 610-898-1930.

The mission of Berks Arts Council, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, is to cultivate, promote, and support the arts in our community through collaboration, education, and presentation.

*Berks Arts Council presents the Boscov’s Berks Jazz Fest, the Bandshell Concert Series, Greater Reading Film Festival, and the Pagoda Awards. The Council administers the Pennsylvania Partners in the Arts Re-Granting Program, which provides funding to local arts projects and programs, and provides art exhibition and marketing opportunities for member artists. Visit them at [www.berksarts.org](http://www.berksarts.org). Berks Arts Council receives state arts funding support through a grant from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency funded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.*

Recipient and award photos available on request.

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