

# Montie Awards Celebrate the Arts

*Third annual Montgomery County event honors its artists and civic leaders*

The third annual Montie Awards ceremony celebrating the expanding role of the arts in Montgomery County was held at The Owen Theatre on Aug. 2, paying tribute to the artists whose efforts enrich the community, as well as civic leaders whose support continues to create an environment in which artistic expression can flourish.

Created in 2011 to honor actors, directors and technical staff of The Crighton Players, now known as The Players Theatre Company, the Monties award program has expanded in scope and incorporates other arts organizations in Montgomery County.

"We are very pleased to have The Greater Conroe Arts Alliance (GCAA) expand their involvement in the Monties," said Carole Lamont, director of the gala event. "Our goal is to recognize all of the arts in Montgomery County and pay tribute to the artists and those who support the arts."

Among the highlights of the awards was the presentation of The Greater Conroe Arts Alliance's Visionary Montie Award to J. Ross Martin III, an entrepreneur, civic leader and political figure in Montgomery County, who has been a longtime supporter of the arts and live performance, as well as a key figure in the development of the Conroe Catfish Festival, the Sounds of Texas Series and numerous other endeavors promoting music and the arts in the community.

Presented to Martin by Conroe City Councilman Duke Coon and actor/sculptor Craig Campobella, the Visionary Montie Award is given to someone who, through their unique vision, action, support, creativity, or initiative creates a long-lasting positive artistic development of an event,



(L-R): J. Ross Martin III accepts the Visionary Montie Award from Conroe City Councilman Duke Coon and actor/sculptor Craig Campobella.

organization, or program in the Greater Conroe Area, resulting in the enrichment and benefit of the arts community and quality of life in Montgomery County

"Conroe is fortunate to have the support of the business community and local government that have an appreciation for the arts," said Martin. "Few communities the size of Conroe could have and support two community theatres that do such an excellent job and have so many programs that bring live music and other artistic entertainment to the community."

Pursuit of Excellence Monties are awarded by GCAA member organizations to recognize the efforts and outstanding contributions made by individuals in support of the artistic community. This award can also be given to a member who has

given an insurmountable amount of time or organization to an event or program that benefits the arts and the public at large in its mission.

Recipients of 2014 Pursuit of Excellence Monties include: Jean Barnhill, Heritage Museum of Montgomery County; Lynn Peverill, Conroe Art League; Annette Spikes, Conroe Symphony Orchestra; Denise Schmidt DeBold, Stage Right; Amy Sowers, Crighton Theatre Foundation; Timothy Eggers, The Players Theatre Company; Professor Clifford Hudder, Montgomery County Literary Arts Council; and John Wiesner, Montgomery County Performing Arts Society (MCPAS).

During the 2014 event, it was announced that the 2015 Montie Awards Night will expand to include Stage Right and the Crighton Foundation Theater. Both theater companies will share in the selections for the Theater Montie Awards and the GCAA will present

the Pursuit of Excellence Monties to deserving members of each respective nonprofit arts organization who are GCAA members.

The GCAA is a nonprofit organization dedicated to enriching lives by providing quality arts programs and events to the community of Conroe and the surrounding areas. GCAA membership is open to any organization or individual with a desire to have an artistic voice and presence in the Greater Conroe Area. Those interested are welcome to become members and attend meetings. The next meeting will be held on Sept. 18 at 11:30 a.m. at the Conroe Art League Gallery in the Madeley Building at 127 Simonton St. For more information, contact Annette Spikes at 936-756-5347, or [aspikes123@consolidated.net](mailto:aspikes123@consolidated.net). ●

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