



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **CELEBRATE “ARTI-GRAS” AT THE CHILDREN’S FAIR**

As a tribute to New Orleans’ own Hot 8 Brass Band, who will lead two second line parades and perform on the World Music Pavilion Stage at this year’s Summer Arts Festival, “Arti-Gras” will be the theme of the 2008 Children's Fair, presented by Target. Located at the heart of the Summer Arts Festival at 11<sup>th</sup> and Farnam Streets, the Fair will be held on Saturday, June 28, from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sunday, June 29, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. The Children’s Fair offers dozens of hands-on activities, art projects and stage entertainment for children ages 3 to 10 years old.

As a special treat, Hot 8 will open this year’s Children’s Fair with a “Second Line” parade. At 10 a.m. on Saturday morning, youth and families interested in participating in the Second Line parade will gather at the Holland Center where they will learn some of the traditional parade steps and moves. From there, Hot 8 will lead the participants in a parade through the Festival grounds and through the purple, yellow and green balloon arch at the entrance to the Children’s Fair. Children and families interested in participating in the Children’s Fair Second Line parade are asked to register in advance by contacting Michelle Dunn at 345-5401 or at [safintern@vgagroup.com](mailto:safintern@vgagroup.com).

Children will learn more about the traditions of Mardi Gras as they make colorful masks, noisemakers, necklaces and more. In all, there will be nearly 20 activities to choose from, each sponsored by a community organization, educator or local business. Participating organizations include the Festival’s presenting sponsor First National Bank, as well as Target, Omaha’s Henry Doorly Zoo, El Museo Latino, Girls Inc., Social Settlement, Metro Community College, CoCo Key Water Resort, Child Saving Institute and others.

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Several popular past Children's Fair participants will return this year including Hy-Vee with its delicious cookie decorating activity, as well as spin art, candy art and sand art. Pete Lochren and his Central ART CAR Exhibit will once again invite children to decorate a 1959 Metro-mite Panel Truck that is covered with chalkboard paint. Lochren will also exhibit his "Ambulance to the Future," a 1970 Cadillac Ambulance that is painted with a futuristic mural and his 1988 Chrysler Le Baron, dubbed "Uncapped Chaos," that is decorated with found objects.

Admission to the Children's Fair and several of the activities are free. Tickets for the remaining hands-on crafts and other activities are 50 cents each with most activities costing from one to three tickets.

### **Family Entertainment Stage**

In addition to hands-on fun, the Children's Fair offers its own Family Entertainment Stage featuring a full line-up of exciting performances Saturday and Sunday. The highlight of the weekend is sure to be Kenny Ahern who will take audiences on a hilarious and outrageous adventure of comedy antics. From balancing atop an eight-foot ladder on one foot – while juggling fire – to walking precariously on a large rolling sphere while playing the saxophone, Ahern has traveled the world creating laughter with his refreshingly unique physical comedy and slapstick style. Ahern will perform twice each day at 12:30 and 3:30 p.m. on Saturday and at 12:30 and 4:30 p.m. on Sunday.

On Saturday, the Blues Society Kids Band will kick things off with a 45-minute set beginning at 11:30 a.m. With two performances at 1:30 and 5:30 p.m., Omaha's own Amazing Lindy will combine his considerable skills of magic with comedy, audience participation and illusion to wow audiences of all ages. At 2:30 p.m., Poppin' Penelope will perform magic, stilt-walking, unicycling, juggling, puppets and balloon artistry with a 50's twist, and, at 4:30 p.m., El Museo Latino's Ballet Folklórico Primavera will perform traditional dances in colorful cultural costumes.

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On Sunday, another full afternoon of entertainment will begin with the Cathedral Arts Project Kids Jazz Band at 11:30 a.m. At 1:30 and 3:30 p.m., musician Phil Baker will invite children to join him in the Big Dance Circle, a place where kids limbo, conga, chicken dance, do the swim, chug like a train, hoedown, wiggle and much more. For nearly 20 years, Baker has used music to educate, entertain and enrich the lives of young people. He has played guitar, sung, directed and produced shows, and headlined events throughout the U.S. Also Sunday, Poppin' Penelope will make an encore appearance with her unique style of 50's fun at 2:30 p.m.

### **Fun Pass Program**

Each year, the Omaha Summer Arts Festival offers an outreach program called Children's Fair Fun Pass. This year, with the generous support of Target, Qwest and the Omaha Public Power District, more than 400 "Fun Passes" will be distributed to underserved and at-risk children from Omaha-area youth organizations.

Recipients for 2008 will include children from the Omaha Housing Authority, Sienna/Francis House, Girls Inc. of Omaha, Girls and Boys Clubs of Omaha, Child Saving Institute and Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Omaha. Each Fun Pass provides a child with ten free tickets for hands-on activities at the Children's Fair, as well as a coupon for a free lunch at the Festival.

For more information regarding the Omaha Summer Arts Festival presented by First National Bank, and the Youth Arts Program sponsored by Target and Qwest, please visit **[www.SummerArts.org](http://www.SummerArts.org)**.

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