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NEW CHANGES ANNOUNCED FOR 2009 SPIRIT & PLACE FESTIVAL

ANNUAL FESTIVAL GETS NEW FORMAT AND WEB SITE

INDIANAPOLIS – The Spirit & Place Festival, running Friday, November 6 through Sunday, November 15, is celebrating its 14th year with a makeover. The Festival, with a mission to stimulate conversation, collaboration, community building and action based on the artistic, spiritual and civic traditions that make Central Indiana unique, is unveiling a new 10-day format and fresh, interactive Web site.

In previous years, the Spirit & Place Festival has spanned 17 days, with the climactic Public Conversation occurring during the opening weekend. In order to achieve greater excitement, involvement and momentum from the community, the 2009 Festival has been condensed into a shorter 10-day format. The new Signature Series, sponsored by St. Luke's United Methodist Church, WFYI and the Indianapolis Museum of Art, will kick-off the opening weekend, with the Public Conversation closing out the Festival on the final Sunday afternoon. Further details regarding this year's public conversation will be release shortly.

While the Festival may be seven days shorter, the quality and variety of events have not been compromised. Forty diverse events will occur throughout the Festival including lectures, seminars, dance and theatre performances, nature walks, panel discussions, potlucks, tours, and more. Events are rich in topic diversity, covering the arts, politics, religion, spirituality, the environment, community and economic development, social networking, and history, just to name a few.

“The new format positions Spirit & Place to be more relevant and dynamic for a broader spectrum of audiences. Of particular note is our new Signature Series; our partner organizations have helped create three magnificent events that explore the *Inspiring Places* theme from very different perspectives. There truly is something for everyone,” says Spirit & Place Director Pam Blevins Hinkle.

Spirit & Place is also debuting a new Web site (www.spiritandplace.org). The fresher, more modern Web site designed by locally based advertising agency TrendyMinds, will allow the public to access Festival schedules, event information, and Spirit & Place background information. Web site visitors will be able to add events directly to their Outlook calendars and forward events to a friend.

All events will explore the 2009 theme, *Inspiring Places*. The civic celebration will engage more than 20,000 people in 40 programs presented by over 100 organizations throughout Central Indiana; 85% of the events are free of charge

“The energy behind our 2009 theme, *Inspiring Places*, has generated an unbelievable stream of creativity. Performers will create random acts of improvisation, artists and musicians will re-interpret the sights and sounds of nature, neighbors will re-envision their communities, college students will explore virtual spaces, and so much more!” says Blevins Hinkle. “We feel this might just be the best Festival yet.”

Spirit & Place is a collaborative community project managed by The Polis Center, part of the IU School of Liberal Arts at IUPUI. Major financial contributors include Lilly Endowment Inc.; Allen Whitehill Clowes Charitable Foundation, Inc.; Central Indiana Community Foundation; TrendyMinds; Eli Lilly and Company; Butler University; IUPUI/IU School of Liberal Arts at IUPUI; the University of Indianapolis; Indianapolis-Marion County Public Library; as well as more than 200 other community partners and donors. For a free festival magazine, to see a full schedule of festival events, or more information, call The Polis Center at (317) 274-2455 or visit www.spiritandplace.org. Follow Spirit & Place on Twitter @spiritandplace or join the Facebook Fan Page by searching for Spirit and Place.

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