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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

November 13, 2008

## **Linda Z. Smith Named 2008 Arts Angel by Creative Spirit Center**

**[Midland]** – On November 7, during the opening reception honoring 28 artists contributing to its Angel Art Invitational Exhibit, Creative Spirit Center presented its first annual Arts Angel award to Linda Z. Smith, the Center's co-founder and Director of Creativity Emerita. The Arts Angel award is bestowed annually by the Center upon the mid-Michigan artist whose direct contributions to arts education have assured opportunities for emerging artists and have furthered the advancement of the arts in the region.

In addition to her work establishing and directing Creative Spirit Center as a community-based arts center focused on the creative process, Smith has taught creative movement and led creativity experiences in Michigan and in venues throughout the United States. In 2007 she was named by Martha Stewart and *Martha Stewart Living* magazine as one of 11 winners nationally of a "Dreamer into Doer" award. She is a 2004 recipient of the Michigan Dance Council and The National Dance Education Organization Lifetime Achievement Award.

Wilma Romatz of Saginaw presented Smith with a memory book containing written tributes from many area artists who had been encouraged by Smith to pursue their creative inspirations. Many of the guests added spoken tributes, including Robert Driver of Midland, a graduate of Dow High School now attending Delta College with an art scholarship. Driver is an accomplished artist and violinist. He thanked Smith for being his constant mentor in art and creativity since he took an art class from her as a 6<sup>th</sup> grader. On behalf of her well-wishers, he also presented Smith with a lighted birthday cake, as the event fell on her birthday. Smith said that some of Creative Spirit Center's historical milestones had coincided with her birthday, going back to the Center's founding in 1994.

Over 80 guests attended the reception, viewing 44 pieces of angel art contributed by 28 area artists. The Angel Art Invitational Exhibit will be on view through December 23. The artists represented include Megan Archer of Streetsboro, Ohio, daughter of Susan and Michael Gaul of Midland; and mid-Michigan artists Steve Barber, Roz Berlin, Larry Butcher, Marty Calhoun, Wilma Carter, Louise Chen, Sara Clark, Mary Hansen, Virginia Hansen, Barron Hirsch, Patrick Humphreys, Jjenna Hupp-Andrews, Preston Jones, Cynthia Keefe, Ann Kowaleski, Shurle Lee, Jan List, Tish Little, Barbara Prince-Sovereign, Linda Z. Smith, Betty Rae, Pat Smith, Wilma Romatz, Kathleen Sullivan, Phyl Schneider, Janet Yerby, and Jan Young.

### **About Creative Spirit Center**

Creative Spirit Center is a not-for-profit community arts organization co-founded by Linda Z. Smith and Cynthia Keefe in 1994. The Center's mission is to create an environment for people of all ages to experience the creative process through ongoing classes, conferences, concerts, speakers and outreach programs; and its goal is to enhance the development of physical, psychological and spiritual wellness through the arts and humanities.

**Contact:**

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**[Note: JPG attached: Linda Z. Smith (center) with Wilma Romatz of Saginaw (L) and Creative Spirit Center co-founder Cynthia Keefe (R)]**

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