Salute visionaries Stone and Olson, Young and Kremer at June 4 event

The public is invited to the Vision Awards, a third bi-annual event, 6-8 p.m. June 4 at the Ritz Theater, 345 13th Ave. NE.

Presented by the Northeast Minneapolis Arts District board, the Vision Awards honor those who have provided leadership and commitment in the service of arts, artists and culture in the Arts District. Peter Rothstein, Artistic Director of Theater Latticino, will host.

Wait Dzezick, former council member and park board member, will be honored posthumously for his support and fundraising for the first Art-A-Whirl. There will be an alter at Rogue Buddha Gallery.

by Margo Ashmore

Two couples who will be honored as Northeast Minneapolis Arts District Vision Award winners demonstrate what happens in community when artists and visionary arts-friendly investors own property. In celebrating their contributions, we go back to 1991 when [the] downtown [arts scene] by John Kremer.

He and Jennifer Young bought the California Building to give displaced artists a place to land, the first such intentional arts building in Northeast.

They acquired the Northwestern Casket building in 2006 and what is now the Casket Carriage House in 2007. Currently, they rent to 250 artists in 250,000 square feet of real estate, and own other business rental properties, including the Odd Fellows building on 4th and East Hennepin which won a heritage preservation award. They’ve known some of their tenants since the 1980s.

Along the way, they served as the first developers for the Ritz Theater in 2000 and most recently the Flux Arts Building. They’ve assisted others in question of the heart of the Arts District.

His history major gave him a sense for the forces at work making neighborhoods change. But Northeast’s transformation “has happened much bigger, better, and faster than I thought it would,” Kremer said. “It’s helped to understand that side of the desk.”

by Margo Ashmore

Olson was Vice President of the Ballet of the Dolls Board, helping to buy the Ritz, and later served on its Foundation Board.

In her career as a judge, Olson learned a passion for the arts: “I felt a mission to help people communicate

led to some great commissioned works, and, in 2010, a celebration made during an Art-A-Whirl. The late 1990s and early 2000s “were hard times, things started building,” Olson said, with several galleries nearby. In 2008, “getting tied up in working two jobs,” they closed the “big” gallery and rented the space to Chowgirls.

Frank Stone served on the Above the Falls City of Minneapolis Advis-ory Committee (ACAC) and the Lowry Bridge Building Committee as an arts representative for North-east.

Lynn & Frank were among the founders and board members of Sheridan Neighborhood Organiza-tion (SNO).

Americans for the Arts is an annual convention in Minneapolis June 12-16. They’ll be visiting the Northrup King Building and the Flux Arts Building in the Northeast Minneapolis Arts District on a tour called “Doing it for Ourselves – Artist-led Places.”

While at Northrup, they’ll visit Studio 400 which was featured in the Northeast Minneapolis Arts Association’s In Studio magazine. It is a residency program for emerging artists of color.

Kudos, and stay tuned for NE Influential

• Congratulations to Theater Landa on raising about $220,000 at their gala held May 8. It had been awarded a March blizzard night. Find out more about what makes this theater so popular and successful, and why they chose Northeast, at the Vision Awards (see next top article).

• Northeast Minneapolis Arts Association logged the 24th Art-A-Whirl, full of interactive arts experiences at studios big and small. It was a great event for exploring the Northeast Minneapolis Arts District and beyond on a chilly weekend, May 17-18. Friendly trolley drivers and helpful guides welcomed guests from all over to experience arts and the neighborhood.

• Mark your calendars for June 21, the Northeast Influential, a potluck picnic on the summer solstice for artists and arts supporters. It is typically held at a park or other outdoor space. Arrangements still pending, watch the Northeast Minneapolis Arts District Facebook page for details.