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PRESS RELEASE: Ridgefield Arts Council awards Karen McChesney and honors volunteers of the Ridgefield arts community at the annual RAC Behind the Scenes Awards.

The Ridgefield Arts Council (RAC) held its Behind the Scenes Award ceremony at the Ridgefield Community Center on May 28, 2009. Each year the RAC honors individuals nominated by Ridgefield non-profit arts organizations as being outstanding, dedicated volunteers and supporters of the arts. One honoree is selected as the winner of the Behind the Scenes Award.

This year's winner was Karen McChesney, who was nominated by Keeler Tavern Museum. Her dedication and devotion to Keeler Tavern began in 1966 and has never faltered. During her 43 years of service at Keeler Tavern she has been a board member, a co-chair of the gift shop, Director of Artifacts, and has created the changing exhibits that delight visitors to the museum. She has also given her time and talents to many other local organizations including the Ridgefield Guild of Artists, Weir Farm, Adult Education and Founders Hall.

Other volunteers who were honored at the ceremony were Tammy Strom who was nominated by both the Ridgefield Chorale and SHERE (Special People's Housing Education Recreation Employment Education), Howard Turner who was nominated by the Ridgefield Conservatory of Dance, Marilyn Kreitz who was nominated by the Ridgefield Symphony Orchestra, Sarah Bouissou who was nominated by the Western Connecticut Youth Orchestra, and Ellie Ernst who was nominated by Weir Farm.

RAC Chair Nancy Andrews greeted the audience and introduced each honoree, and then First Selectman Rudy Marconi presented the award to Mrs. McChesney. He also thanked all the honorees for their service and support of the Ridgefield arts community.

For more information about the Ridgefield Arts Council and Ridgefield cultural events please visit ridgefieldartscouncil.org.