

Art By Maloney, LLC

January 7, 2016

West Valley Arts Council
2016 Champion of the Arts
Support Letter for
The Talk Around Town Show

Dear Council,

It is with great pleasure to have the opportunity to write to you in support of The Talk Around Town Show produced thru Weeks Productions, LLC. I had the pleasure of meeting and working with Dan Weeks in November of 2015 while I was in the City of Peoria coordinating the Inaugural Exhibition of The Take Me Home Huey Project.

Take Me Home Huey Project Background Information:

The artist Steve Maloney conceptualized and created the multi-media installation. The heart of the project is a 42-foot contemporary sculpture for which Maloney repurposed a boneyard Huey helicopter, serial #174, which was shot down with two casualties in 1969 during a Medevac mission in Vietnam. Other elements of the art installation are a 30 minute documentary film that is in the editing process, a commissioned song as well as a detailed website with background information about this particular Huey helicopter, the artist as well as resources about Post-Traumatic Stress (PTSD). The helicopter's history and now artistic mission is significant; Take Me Home Huey honors Vietnam veterans, inspires conversation, promotes healing, and helps raise awareness for Post-Traumatic Stress.

The artist has partnered with Light Horse Legacy (LHL) an Arizona based 501(c) 3 non-profit organization and U.S. Vietnam War Commemorative Partner focused on supporting veterans with PTSD. LHL acquired, re-skinned and restored the aircraft for Maloney, who then transformed it into art for healing. Light Horse Legacy's founder, Dave Barron, researched the history of Huey #174 and reunited surviving soldiers and families connected to the aircraft.

Rather than rest in one exhibition space, we intend for Take Me Home Huey to travel as a colorful ambassador to major art and history museums, as well as significant public venues to pay homage to Vietnam veterans and raise awareness of the challenges of PTSD. The various elements of the sculpture literally touches all senses: a short documentary film highlighting recollections from boots-on-the-ground veterans of the role Huey helicopters played in the war effort, a powerful song and a comprehensive information hub and website - TakeMeHomeHuey.org

We are very excited to be in the midst of our inaugural exhibition in the Phoenix Metro Area. The exhibition began with the support of the [City of Peoria, AZ](http://CityofPeoria.AZ), hosting a 4-day event, which included several programs at their Rio Vista Recreation Center and Park adjacent to the Veterans Memorial Wall. Thousands warmly received the sculpture as it participated in the [Phoenix Veterans Day Parade](http://PhoenixVeteransDayParade) in downtown Phoenix, AZ. Currently Take Me Home Huey is on exhibition at the [Airbase Arizona Museum of the Commemorative Air Force](http://AirbaseArizonaMuseum) in Mesa, AZ.

Art By Maloney, LLC

During the inaugural exhibition in Arizona the pilot and door-gunner of #174 were reunited with the Huey and now art installation, as well as the sisters of the two soldiers who died bravely in action during the 1969 mission in Vietnam. The encounters and conversations were incredibly healing for all involved and will be an important aspect of the documentary film. During the exhibition, which drew wide print and TV media coverage, we were able to witness the powerful connection many of the Vietnam veterans and their families have with the Huey sculpture. The art installation promotes wonderful dialogues and starts important conversations.

I wanted to include the information about the project so you can see the importance and uniqueness our team is so deeply proud of and as project manager one of my responsibilities is working with promotion and interfacing with the media and many journalist to help honor our veterans and raise awareness of PTSD. Dan Weecks and his associates Calion Maston, Courtney Bailey, and John Weecks were a delight to work with for so many reasons.

My primary contact was with Dan and the thing I remember and value the most was his tenacity to tell the story without being overbearing and intrusive. His sensitivity to the subject matter and the timing of his presents was outstanding along with his patients in working with our aggressive schedule. He was truly dedicated to informing his community while honoring ours. He presented himself in the most professional and compassionate manner and told our story so well. His follow up skills combined with his availability in working with our Media Specialists were above industry standard and the Take Me Home Huey team is grateful to him and his staff for the exposure his reporting has given our project.

Weecks Productions were not alone in giving us this warm reception. The City of Peoria, the Rio Vista Recreation center along with the Phoenix Veterans Day Parade and the Airbase Arizona Museum of the Commemorative Air Force staff and directors were incredible to be with for our first exhibitions. It is with great respect that I say the West Valley has a terrific, supportive community full of nice people. Dan Weecks and his team truly caught my attention and I encourage you to recognize his assets to your community.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to express my sentiments and I look forward to my next trip to the West Valley.

Respectfully,



Stephen D. Zapantis, JR
Curator
Art by Maloney, LLC
Take Me Home Huey Project Manager
Light Horse Legacy Committee Member
Mobile 760-567-2199
szapantis@artbymaloney.com
takemehomehuey.org