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Morgan Arts Council – Berkeley Springs, WV
304-258-2300 – www.macicehouse.org

Press Contact Only: Eddy Rubin (304) 258-2300; eddy@macicehouse.org

Photos available: contact.donna@macicehouse.org

SPIRIT OF THE TREE HANGS AT THE ICE HOUSE IN BERKELEY SPRINGS

BERKELEY SPRINGS, WV—Morgan Arts Council presents Spirit of the TREE at the Ice House Gallery, a wood show that explores all the different techniques used in one of the oldest crafts in the world, and featuring everything from wood earrings to tables.

A gala artists' reception opens the show on Friday, January 12th at 7:30 p.m. It showcases eight artists from around the region.

“As a lifelong naturalist, I have been fascinated with how trees act as such a strong inspiration for artists,” said curator Eddy Rubin about the theme of the show. “An artist can take a beautiful piece of wood and transform it while preserving the original spirit of the living tree.”

Local artist John Simpson is presenting hand-hewn bowl sculpting demonstrations every Saturday from 12-4 for the duration of the exhibit. John is one of several local craftsmen with work in the show.

Other Morgan County craftsmen in the show include Steve Kaldes displaying tables, clocks and spirit trees; Jack Veara who uses his chainsaw to bring out the spirit of the wood; and first-timer Mark Mayle with candleholders, flags and cutting boards. Taking the title of the show literally, Chris Bosley, a member of the Ice House Artists Co-op, is showing an old piece of a dead tree that's been brought back to life.

Regional artists in the show display everything from cradles, nesting tables and 18th century style furniture to bookmarks, bottle stoppers and handcrafted wood jewelry.

Two other shows open in the ancillary Hall of Dreams and Carr-Kelly galleries. “Collage Artwork,” is an exhibit of collages created entirely from *National Geographic Magazines* by Ilene Gold; and “Art from the Heart,” intuitive collage as a form of journaling by Halima Gay Reilly.

All three shows continue through February 25. Gallery hours are Friday through Sunday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

These programs are supported in part from the National Endowment for the Arts, the West Virginia Commission on the Arts and local hotel/motel taxes. The Ice House is at the corner of Independence and Mercer Streets in downtown Berkeley Springs, WV. For more information on this and other MAC activities, call 304-258-2300 or visit www.macicehouse.org.