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**Little Rock Singer-Songwriter
Wins Silver & Bronze Medals at 2009 Midwest Fleadh Cheoil**

Little Rock, AR (June 16, 2009) Little Rock singer-songwriter, Peg Roach Loyd received a silver medal for Bodhran and a bronze medal for Newly Composed Songs in English at the Midwest Fleadh Cheoil held in Detroit in May. With the silver medal, Loyd qualifies to compete in the All-Ireland, Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann 2009, in Tullamore, County Offaly, Ireland in August. That competition draws qualifying musicians from throughout all of Ireland and around the world.

Loyd won the silver medal for her skill at playing the bodhran, a Celtic frame drum played with a stick called a "tipper." Loyd played rhythms for a jig, reel, polka and hornpipe to traditional Irish tunes played on the flute by Mary Walsh of St. Louis, Mo. Both Loyd and Walsh are members of the St. Louis Irish Arts, a not-for-profit cultural organization that teaches Irish dance and music. St. Louis Irish Arts will perform at the Ozark Folk Center in Mountain View on June 19 and 20 where Loyd will be a featured guest of the group performing at the 2 pm matinee show on Saturday, June 20.

"I am very grateful to Helen Gannon of the St. Louis Irish Arts for providing me with the opportunity to sing with her group performing at the Ozark Folk Center," Loyd said. "St. Louis Irish Arts is the only school of traditional Irish music located near Arkansas. They are a very talented group of young students and I am honored to perform with them."

Loyd also won a bronze medal for her song, *The Forgotten Ten*, which tells the story of Patrick Doyle, one of ten men hung by the British in 1921 during the Irish Rebellion. Loyd heard about Patrick from his grand-daughter, Andrea Van Leirup, who now resides in Little Rock.

"The lyrics paint the picture well," said Paddy Homan, the adjudicator for the songwriting competition, who complimented Loyd on her song. "Well sung. I felt the power. Very well done," said Homan.

This was Loyd's second time to compete in the Midwest Fleadh. She won a gold medal last year for Newly Composed Songs in English for her song, *The Fiddler's Feet* and a bronze medal for Singing Traditional Songs in English.

The Midwest Fleadh Ceoil is one of two traditional Irish music competitions held in the North America. The Midwest Fleadh attracts musicians from across the U.S. and Canada. Over 200 musicians competed in over 100 contest categories based on age range and gender.

Loyd plans to compete at the All-Ireland in August even though the contest there is much more competitive. "I am very excited and grateful to have the opportunity to represent Arkansas and the United States at the All-Ireland in August. I enjoyed the competition at last

year's All-Ireland and while I did not bring home any trophies or medals, I heard everyone in the room tapping their foot to my song, and that was a moral victory.”

In Spring 2008, Loyd released her **debut solo CD, *Carving in Stone***. The CD includes three traditional Irish songs and nine original songs of Irish themes and stories written in traditional Irish and American folk styles. Both award-winning songs, ***The Fiddler's Feet***, and ***The Forgotten Ten*** are on the CD. Proceeds from the sale of the CDs benefit three not-for-profit organizations: Heifer International's Ending Hunger program and music scholarships for the Augusta Heritage Center's Irish Week and the St. Louis Tionol, two music schools Loyd has attended over the years.

The selection of Heifer International stems from Loyd's ancestral background. “My great grand-parents emigrated from Ireland during the Great Potato Famine, from 1848 to 1860,” said Loyd. “When I read about how Heifer got started and what they try to do to provide a longer-lasting solution to the hunger problem around the world, not just providing food, but real, practical and economical solutions for families in need, I knew immediately Heifer was a good fit.”

“The other organizations I support are music scholarship programs at two Irish music educational festivals – the Augusta Heritage Center's Irish Music Week in Elkins, West Virginia, and the St. Louis Tionol. I have benefitted from the music education workshops offered at these two festivals for many years and wish to donate a portion of the proceeds from my CD to help young students who may not otherwise be able to afford to attend.”

Before striking out on her own as a solo artist, Loyd was the former lead singer of the Little Rock-based Irish folk band, Cairde, which performed for eight years throughout Central Arkansas and at regional festivals including the North Texas Irish Festival in Dallas, CelticFest in Jackson, Ms., and Clanjamfry in Memphis.

In addition to the appearance with the St. Louis Irish Arts in Mountain View on June 20th, Loyd will be performing on Friday evening, June 19th, from 5 to 7 pm at the Baker House Bed and Breakfast as part of the Argenta Art Night gallery walk and will play bodhran with the Arkansas Country Dance Society's Contra Dance Band from 7:30 to 9:30 pm at Park Hill Presbyterian Church in North Little Rock.

Sample audio tracks from Loyd's CD, *Carving in Stone*, are available on her website, www.CellaDawnMusic.com. Her CD is available for purchase locally at the **Historic Arkansas Museum** in downtown Little Rock and online through CDBaby.com, DigStation.com and iTunes. Loyd is a featured performer on the **Arkansas Arts Council's Arts on Tour Roster**.