

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Huguenot Bridge art supports Southampton Recreation Association ice rink repairs**

*Richmond, Virginia.* When Southampton Recreation Association families learned that their beloved indoor ice rink would require nearly \$30,000 in repairs before opening next season, they were worried. This is not exactly the best time to undertake a significant fundraising campaign. Undeterred, they formed the SRA Ice Boosters, and at their first meeting, a creative solution to their problem unfolded.

Local artist, Andras Bality, and his family had recently joined SRA, and they quickly became enthusiastic, if wobbly, ice skaters. Bality offered to have one of his paintings, "Huguenot Bridge Southside," reproduced as a limited edition, signed and numbered print, with all proceeds going toward the rink repairs.

This piece belongs to the James River Project, a collection of Bality's paintings inspired by Richmond's natural treasure. Bality was born and raised in Richmond and enjoyed tubing down the James in his youth. As a parent, he began taking daily walks with his two children along the river, and he quickly realized that there was plenty of beauty to paint in his own back yard. In order to complete the project he spent a year painting plein aire along the James River. He is a very popular local artist. His work has been exhibited extensively in Richmond and throughout the mid-Atlantic region, as well as Atlanta, New York City, Ankara, Turkey and Budapest, Hungary.

"We all have so many great memories of fun on the river," said Darla Toler, President of the SRA Ice Boosters. "This painting is such a great way to preserve those memories. We also felt this piece would be especially popular given that the Huguenot Bridge is about to be replaced. We hope that everyone in the nearby neighborhoods, and anyone who enjoys recreation along the river, will be interested in this beautiful, and affordable, work of art."

The 18 x 24-inch prints are available for \$20.00. You may view the print at the SRA web site (<http://www.sra-fun.org>). They may be purchased at Once Upon a Vine South in the Stratford Hills Shopping Center, the Stratford Hills Antique Market, Riverside Outfitters, and the SRA Office (272-7401 or [sra2office@aol.com](mailto:sra2office@aol.com)). To learn more about Andras Bality and his work, visit <http://www.andrasbality.com/>.

The SRA ice rink is a unique piece of Southside neighborhood history, and members are at work preserving that history in photos and stories. The rink was constructed on SRA grounds in 1962 by the Reynolds Metals Company as a test facility for the aluminum tubing they were developing for ice rink mats. It has provided nearly a half-century of winter fun and recreation for hundreds if not thousands of local families. Each year from Thanksgiving to early March, the rink provides Saturday morning classes, private lessons, adult classes, hockey clinics, ice socials, and home school classes. The culmination of the season is the Annual SRA Ice Spectacular, a revue on ice that has become legendary for its charm and small-town feel. At the revue, skaters of all ages and skill levels perform

choreographed routines to the enthusiastic support of parents and friends. This year, a mother-daughter duo performed, as did several pairs of siblings. The festivities end with hot cocoa and the traditional "Skating with the Stars."

As the only privately owned rink in the central Atlantic region, it is truly a frozen gem worth maintaining. SRA is extremely grateful to Mr. Bality for his generosity and enthusiasm for this project.

### **Information about Southampton Recreation Association**

Southampton Recreation Association is one of the oldest and largest family recreation facilities in the Richmond area. SRA has offered year-round recreation for the entire family since 1950. In addition to ice-skating, the club also offers two Olympic-sized pools, 2 baby pools, lighted tennis courts, a renovated clubhouse, and camps, lessons, and activities for the entire family. In 2008, the club built a beautiful new playground and a new basketball court. The SRA swim team is consistently the team to beat in the James River Aquatic Club, providing swim instruction and fun for thousands of youth over the decades.

Web site: <http://www.sra-fun.org/>

### **Contact Information**

3201 Chellowe Road, Richmond, Virginia 23225

SRA Phone number: 272.7401

Natalie May, Vice President SRA Ice Boosters 320.8524 & [nbmay@verizon.net](mailto:nbmay@verizon.net)

Darla Toler, President SRA Ice Boosters 232.1584 & [darlatoler@verizon.net](mailto:darlatoler@verizon.net)

Mike McVoy, Ice Director, 353.1328 & [mamcvoy@verizon.net](mailto:mamcvoy@verizon.net)

Andras Bality, Artist, 353.0710 & [majanandy@hotmail.com](mailto:majanandy@hotmail.com)

Parker Hale, SRA President, 233.3547

###