

Trails West! Festival suspended after 26 years

(KNZA)--Organizers behind one of St. Joseph's biggest festivals have announced its suspension after 26 years.

The Allied Arts Council, in a press release, cited declining attendance and rising costs in their decision to suspend the Trails West! Festival.

Allied Arts Council Executive Director Teresa Fankhauser said the council decided it was time to explore new opportunities due to the change in how people consume their art and the number of outdoor arts experiences that are now available.

The release stated that the three-day festival, held annually since 1993 at Civic Center Park, was the largest arts festival in northwest Missouri, with more than 45,000 attendees at its peak and with an annual economic impact of over \$1 million a year.

During the past several years, the annual downtown arts festival has seen declining numbers, with 10,000 people attending this year's event. Fankhauser said that's when discussions began about suspending the festival to stop and take stock of its value.

Fankhauser said the Council wants to take time to assess what the city would like to see before moving forward with any new ideas.

Many Signals Communications