

# Brown Bag Programs beckon the public beyond the marble columns

*May 28, 2014*



**Annie Wilson**

"Flint Hills Balladeer" performed at the May 20th Brown Bag Program.

Every third Tuesday at the Coutts Museum of Art in El Dorado something special happens. It's never the same, and it's always entertaining. It's the Brown Bag Program, which has been delighting local audiences for approximately 15 years. Performers and speakers have ranged from china painters giving demonstrations to Bluegrass singers to classical harpists to an artist sculpting horses from bailing wire.

Local attorney Tim Connell was instrumental in starting the program. Initially the monthly concerts were held at different businesses around El Dorado, the idea being to draw attention to the businesses in El Dorado while entertaining the crowd with live music. The program was funded through the Kansas Arts Commission, with a budget of \$100 to \$200 per concert, and performers included professional guitar and jazz musicians from around Kansas and members of the Wichita Symphony.

Eventually El Dorado Main Street became involved in the management of the program, and the venue for the monthly concert was set at the Coutts Museum. The programs have become varied to include other branches of the arts, such as artist talks. The crowd has remained steady, ranging from around 20 listeners to 50+ on occasion.

On May 20<sup>th</sup> Annie Wilson, singer and songwriter, played to a capacity crowd, bringing her images and stories of the Flint Hills to El Dorado. Named the "Flint Hills Balladeer" by the Kansas Governor, Annie has written and recorded over 50 songs about the prairie – some humorous, some soulful, all celebrating the beauty and lessons of life in the Flint Hills.

Another performance of note in 2013 was by Kayleigh Glanton and her father. Kayleigh appeared on NBC's *The Voice* in 2014, and was chosen to be on Blake Shelton's team.

The programs are held on the third Tuesday of each month at noon at the museum, 110 N. Main in El Dorado, and are free to everyone. Light refreshments are provided and regulars frequently bring a brown bag lunch. To find a schedule of upcoming programs visit [Coutts Museum events](#).

All of this just goes to show that a good idea can make a lasting, positive difference in a community. Good idea you had, Tim! Snap!