

ARTS

Art association chooses six street banner contest winners

The 250th anniversary of Fort Sinclair provides the theme

By Jim Bloch
Voice Reporter

The roiling waves of the St. Clair River tosses around the sailing ship Griffin like a ball, its flag taut, sails full in the wind. A pretty red fox perches next to a birch tree providing a splash of color in a monochromatic winter scene. Another birch angles up through three blocks of color, the green of the shore, the blue of the water and the orange hum of daybreak.

These painted scenes won cash prizes for three adults in the St. Clair Art Association's sixth annual street banner contest.

Marie Schumacher, of St. Clair, took home first place and \$100 in the adult competition for her painting of the Griffin.

Caity McFadden, of St. Clair, won \$75 and second place for her "What Does the Fox Say?" Marilyn Biernot, of Goodells, took home third place and \$50 for her "Birch Tree."

This year, the SCAA partnered with the St. Clair Historical Commission in choosing the theme for the banners: The 250th anniversary of the building of Fort Sinclair. Artists were free to select something related to the old fort as the subject of their banner.

For the first time, the contest featured a separate division for people younger than 18 years old.

Oddly perhaps, the only

direct depiction of Fort Sinclair in the top six finishers came from St. Clair Middle School seventh-grader Luke Jolly, of St. Clair, who won \$100 and first place for his "Legacy of Sinclair" piece. Jolly's banner features a brown fort, shaped almost like an apostrophe, sitting in the middle of nearly abstract bands of color - a blue slab of sky, a yellow plank of sunshine, the undulating green mass of land, the blue squiggle of the Pine River in the distance, more green, and the blue of the Pine again in the foreground.

Jenna Cloutier of St. Clair, a sixth-grader at SCMS, won second place and \$75 for her "Canoe at Sunrise," a picture of a curvaceous birch canoe bobbing on the Pine River in the glow of early morning.

Taylor Nguyen, of Columbus Township, an eighth-grader at SCMS, won third place and \$50 for "The Watcher," a graphically dramatic fox, deconstructed into its own individual muscles, sitting on its flared tail, peering over its right shoulder.

"The Public Art Committee - which consists of me, Sandy Attebury, Jason Stier, Nancy Diebold, Elizabeth Harvey, Helen McCartan, Andrea Brieden, Juliet Smith, and Julie Alef - was extremely happy with the quality of submissions this year," said Lori Hannon, chair of the banner project. "We were excited

"The students wished that the fort was still standing so they could see it and tour it."

Lori Hannon, chair of the SCAA Street Banner Contest

to collaborate with Chrissy Gorzen, Chuck Homberg and Bob Freehan from the St Clair Historical Museum. They made poster boards with pictures and information that they sent to the schools and they also held an open house at the Historical Museum that was well attended. Because I teach social studies at St Clair Middle School, I was able to promote the project with my classes, as were the other teachers, so there were a lot of entries from the schools. The students were very interested to hear about the history of St Clair. Many students and adults alike had no idea that there used to be a Fort here and the students wished that the fort was still standing so they could see it and tour it."

The banners will be hung around the city.

"The city plans on hanging the banners after Memorial Day," said Hannon. "They will be in the same locations as past years: Palmer Park along M-29, Clinton, Fred Moore Highway, Carney Drive and a couple by the Boat Harbor."

Jim Bloch is a freelance writer. Contact him at jbloch@gmail.com.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF ST. CLAIR ART ASSOCIATION

FROM TOP LEFT: 1. Marie Schumacher, of St. Clair, took home first place and \$100 in the adult competition for her painting "The Griffin." **TOP MIDDLE:** Luke Jolly, of St. Clair, won \$100 and first place in the youth division for his "Legacy of Sinclair." **TOP RIGHT:** Jenna Cloutier, of St. Clair, won second place in the youth division and \$75 for her "Canoe at Sunrise." **BOTTOM LEFT:** Taylor Nguyen, of Columbus Township, won third place in the youth division and \$50 for "The Watcher." **BOTTOM MIDDLE:** Caity McFadden, of St. Clair, won \$75 and second place for her piece, "What Does the Fox Say?" **BOTTOM RIGHT:** Marilyn Biernot, of Goodells, took home third place and \$50 for her "Birch Tree."



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