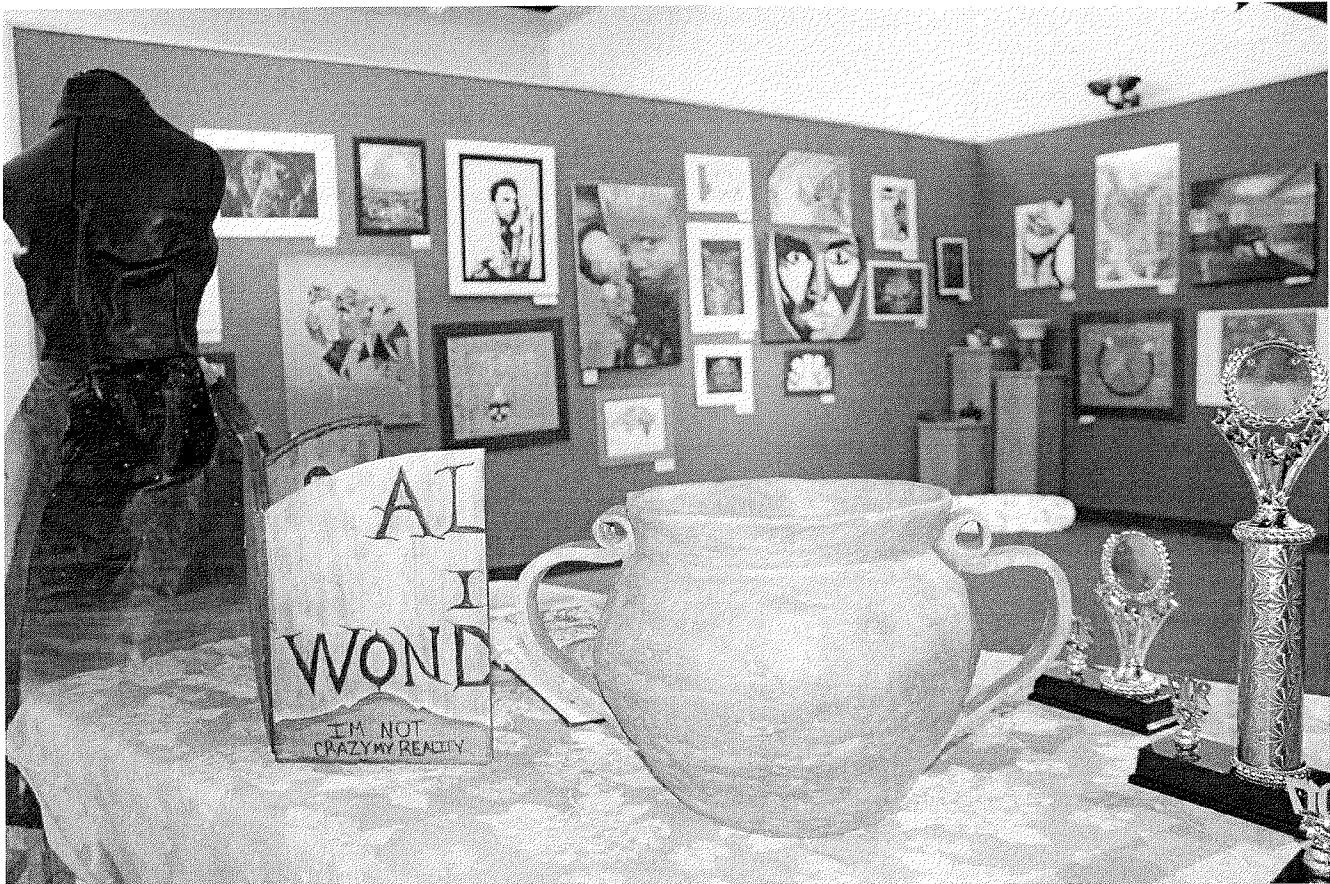


McCook Gazette

MCC paint-in gets boost from McCook Rotary Club

Tuesday, April 4, 2017



Local high school artists take center stage this week at McCook Community College's annual exhibition and paint-in competition. Nearly 200 art pieces from area high schoolers are on display at the Wrightstone Fine Arts Gallery on campus through Friday when the annual paint-in takes place over at the Peter and Dolores Graff Events Center from 9:15 a.m.-noon. With a recent lag in participation by area high schools, this year's event received funding from McCook Rotarians and their district to help pay entry fees for students.

MCC Photo

McCOOK, Neb. — A 40-year local art event for area high school students -- which has felt the pinch of reduced funding for the arts — has received a reprieve from the McCook Rotary Club.

Participation for all high school students entering in this year's McCook Community College High School Art Exhibition and Paint-In, will be paid for by a one-time grant from the McCook Rotary Club and a matching \$500 contribution from Rotary District 5630.

"In the 10 years I've been here, each year it seems like another school bows out because of funding limits from their home districts, or in some cases funds and resources going to other school groups instead of the arts," MCC Art Instructor Rick Johnson said.

"The real frustrating thing is that we're not talking about huge amounts of money to stage an event like this," he said, "Basically we're just trying to cover the cost of art supplies for art students from 20 area schools. I applaud the efforts of our McCook Rotary members to make sure all area high school artists get the chance to participate."

Johnson said in some cases, there were students who wanted to be part of this annual competition, and when their school wouldn't pay for entry fees, students paid their own way.

McCook Rotary spokesperson Sharon Kircher said the project matches many of the Rotary's community hallmarks in McCook and in the communities in the area. In addition to paying for all entry fees, art supplies and awards, the Rotary is helping market the event to schools within the district – an area which mirrors much of the Mid-Plains Community College area.

The annual event is a two-pronged event in which MCC displays the work from area high schools in the Wrightstone Fine Arts Gallery on campus for the two weeks leading up to the paint-in competition. These works are judged in a variety of categories and the winners announced at the paint-in competition. This year's judge for both the exhibition and the paint-in competition, is MCC graduate Lucas Kotschwar.

The paint-in itself brings together more than 25 teams of high school art students who gather at the Peter and Dolores Graff Events Center for a timed team painting competition. The format has changed slightly each year. This year the teams will each select a theme via a random draw and have two hours and 45 minutes to develop with tempera paint, and compete the theme on a four-by-six foot piece of heavy drawing paper.

The event is capped off with an awards ceremony in which the winning pieces from the exhibition are showcased and the winners recognized. Then the results from the team paint-in competition are announced.

This year's paint-in starts at 9 a.m. Friday at the Peter and Dolores Graff Events Center when the rules are announced and the paint-in themes are selected with the clock starting at 9:15 a.m. The public is invited and encouraged to attend the paint-in as well as the awards ceremony, which begin at 1 p.m.

Schools participating in this year's event include: Southwest High, Hayes Center, Chase County, Cambridge, Southern Valley, Gothenburg, Norton, McCook, Hitchcock County, Medicine Valley, Stapleton, Sutherland, Ogallala, Wauneta-Palisade, Arnold, Maywood, Dundy County-Stratton, Wallace, and Lexington.