

STUDENT ART: Library will display artwork through month

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on display at Sisters Elementary School (SES).

Seventh-graders in Kit Stafford’s Americana class created memory jars or mourning vessels. These vessels are designed after an African-American practice, sometimes known as “ghost pots,” intended to hold the ashes of a relative, and encrusted with jewelry and memorabilia from that person’s life. Often a daguerreotype (photograph) of the person was attached to the jar, which was then either placed at the gravesite or kept by a member of the family.

In Stafford’s class, each student chose an occupation and made up a character that represented their ancestor. In order to provide an understanding of another time and place, Stafford asked her students to make believe their ancestors all lived in the rural South, in the mid-1800s. Each student photographed herself, posing in an antique oval frame, to represent her ancestral image.

Once her students had created their ancestral character, they wrote their eulogy, and collected miniature trinkets, jewelry, and other objects to decorate their jars. Stafford mixed up a big batch of clay, and it was time to get down and dirty. The students covered the jars with clay, and

once it was partly set, decorated the jars with photos and trinkets. They printed out the eulogy and photograph and set it beside each jar. The result is quite stunning and often revealing — Stafford says that so many of the qualities the students attribute to their ancestors are reflective of themselves.

Sisters Elementary School art teacher Karen Williams meets with her art classes in K-4 once every three days. Her students have explored the fantasy characters of Dr. Seuss, studied the style of contemporary artist Jim Dine (here represented by big, colorful hearts), and made colorful collages of landscapes and houses. The students have used oil pastels, crayons, markers and collage in their creations.

As a relatively new member of the SES faculty, Williams is looking for more ways to expose her students to art and the community they live in. “We have a lot of fun — and those students whose work is actually up in the library are really excited,” she said. Any business that would like to feature children’s art from time to time can contact her via email at karen.williams@sisters.k12.or.us.

High school artists have their work in the display cases, and on the walls in the Community Room and hallways. Teacher Bethany Gunnarson explained that small labels, with silver and gold keys, accompany many of the pieces. These are a mark of



“At Face Value,” by Hannah Tenneson.

achievement for the students, for participation in the Scholastic Art and Writing Competition. Their artwork was recently displayed at COCC in Bend, where students competed with their peers throughout Central Oregon. Gold Key award-winners have gone on to national competition, with awards yet to be determined. But everything from honorable mention to silver and gold is a local honor. The Oregon Art Education Association, an affiliate of the Alliance for Young Artists and Writers, presents the awards annually.

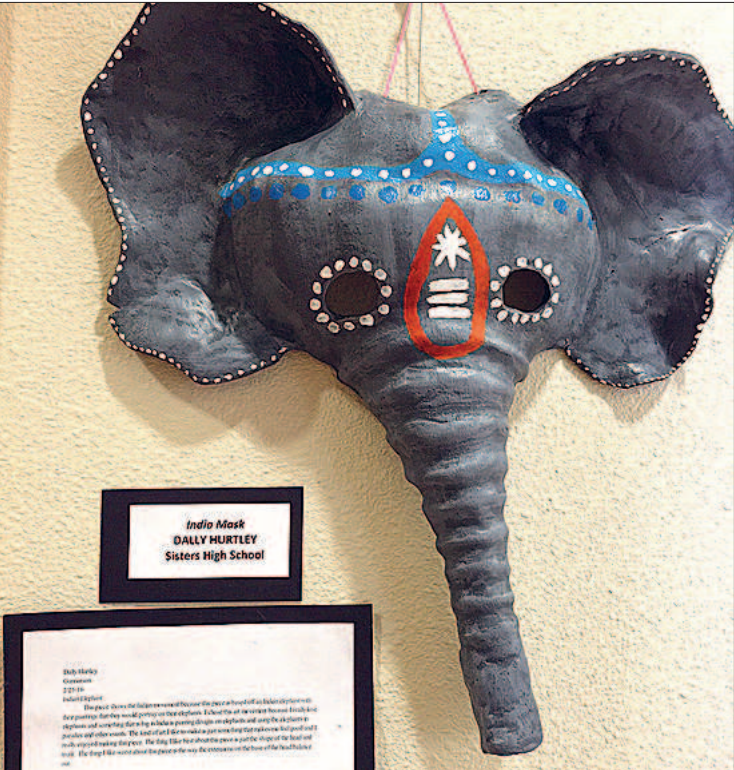
Senior Hannah Tenneson is compiling a sculpture portfolio, and several of her works are included in this show. “At Face Value” is a very detailed bust sculpture with a gold “blob” like a fried egg splayed over half the face. “Between the Lines” is a floating head of an animal made from nearly weightless foam strips. Gold and silver keys are prominent in her work.

When studying sculpture, several students formed clay masks with a theme or character, accompanied by a written

artist’s statement. Student Dally Hurtley made an elephant mask “because I really love elephants and something that is big in India is painting designs on elephants and using the elephants in parades and other events.” The Japanese kitsune mask, dating back to 794 A.D., inspires Ashlyn Papworth’s fox mask. Ashlyn says, “I really liked the eyes and fierceness to it.”

Middle school students created a series of small clay creatures, on display in the lobby glass cases, and explored color and form in a series of landscapes on canvas, tucked into the hallways near the lobby.

The variety from kindergarten through high school demonstrates the scope of art and its interplay with other disciplines, including history, mathematics, and science. The public is invited to see the artwork all month during library hours, Tuesdays through Fridays, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. This exhibit is sponsored by the Friends of the Sisters Library Art Committee.



“Elephant Mask,” by Dally Hurtley.

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