

Local artists shine at annual art show

By Jodi Schneider McNamee
Correspondent

It was a perfect summer evening for the juried community art show and silent auction on Friday, August 12. The show kicked off the 21st annual Country Fair held at The Episcopal Church of the Transfiguration on Saturday (see story, page 1).

Art enthusiasts browsed through a stimulating display of fine art, interacting with the artists. The wine-tasting and hors d'oeuvres created an elegant atmosphere where people enjoyed an evening with friends while making new acquaintances.

From bright pastels to hand-carved gourds, the eclectic assortment of original high-quality oils, watercolors, acrylics, sculptures, photography and outdoor art captured viewers' attention.

This year the selected juror was local photographer Curtiss Abbott.

Abbott's interest in photography began with film and the darkroom and grew into the digital age. His images show his fine eye for composition, lighting and the beauty in the subjects that folks see.

"As a juror, I looked for something that I considered striking from an artist's point of view, something that is appealing and catches the eye and pulls you in for a closer look," Abbott said. "I looked at the artistic feel of the piece. So for me it was also an emotional response. You're also looking at the basic rules of composition and solid

technical skill."

Gayle Rodrigues, the silent-auction chairperson, is retiring after 11 years and handing over the reins to Jennifer Rambo.

"We needed a new chairperson for the silent auction since my husband, Reverend Ted Rodriguez — Father Ted — and I are retiring in April. The church is already in the process of hiring a new pastor."

Rambo and Rodrigues co-piloted the silent auction this year.

"I think it's wonderful that all of the proceeds go to a great cause, back into the community!" Rambo said. "I have been a member of the church for 30 years, ever since I was baptized here at age 4."

"This year we have 127 items, and they are wonderful things donated by our artists and gift certificates from businesses. Plus, many of the church members have made things for the auction like fused glass, quilts, and paintings," Rodrigues added.

Last year Randall Tillery picked up Best of Show for his oil painting "Rebirth" and this time around he was selected as the featured artist.

"It is an honor and it was unexpected, and I came up with some new pieces just for the art show," Tillery told *The Nugget*. "I brought seven paintings with me and three are of the local scenery: 'Along the Metolius,' 'Nature's Blast of Color' and 'Big Skies Over Broken Top.'"

Tillery's painting "High Country Lake," a piece he has



PHOTO BY JERRY BALDOCK

Best of Show winner Chuck Chamberlain discusses his work.

never shown before, sold as soon as the art show opened.

Volunteer Jan Shaver, coordinator/chairman for the juried art show, was busy mingling among the huge crowd of artists and visitors.

"We have 190 pieces and 48 artists, and this year we are seeing really nice work," Shaver said.

Local scratchboard artist Jennifer Hartwig won best mixed media for her cougar titled "mine."

"This piece is my very first scratchboard cat. A friend of mine had a photo of a cougar for years that her grandpa had photographed, and she gave

me the photo and asked me to work the photo into my scratchboard art," she said.

Gary Cooley, owner of Cooley Art Gallery in Sisters, won Best Oil & Acrylic for his 6-by-8 painting, "Three Sisters from Tumalo Reservoir" — a stunning sunset from Tumalo Reservoir looking back at the Three Sisters Mountains.

Bend artist Chuck Chamberlain has been painting for nearly 50 years and won Best of Show for his acrylic painting "Not a Single Leaf."

"My work has been in the show every year for many years and has never won anything, so this is a pleasant

surprise," Chamberlain said. "I incorporate a lot of detail in all my paintings, but sometimes you need to look up close to find it."

Chamberlain's style of painting was influenced by his New England background, and his work demonstrates an attention to detail and drama.

"I used to live in rural central New Hampshire and traveled the back roads, fished, hunted and photographed landscapes, barns and covered bridges."

Proceeds from the fair and art show are dispersed throughout the community of Sisters.

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