

Redmond's art program is innovative

By Helen Schmidling
Correspondent

Redmond has no galleries, but it boasts more than 35 outdoor art installations, worth nearly \$850,000, around the city. Sisters has 20 art galleries of various sorts, from clocks to rocks, including fine art, but public art installations are few by comparison.

Last week, 18 Sisters residents, including representatives from the Sisters Arts Association (SAA), the City of Sisters, and local businesses visited Redmond's Art in Public Places program to explore our neighbor city's success with public art. The Sisters contingent took a driving and walking tour of the art, followed by a meeting with Redmond's art advocates.

In 2006, Nike founder Phil Knight donated to Redmond a large bronze sculpture of an eagle, its wings spread wide in flight, called "Air Traffic Control." The following year, Phil and Penny Knight followed up with another life-sized bronze called "Western Swing." Redmond's immediate concern was where to place these large outdoor sculptures, and the long-range concern was how to care for them in perpetuity. The city formed the Redmond Committee for Art in Public Places (RCAPP).

RCAPP is a committee of nine volunteers under the auspices of the City of Redmond. Since the Knights' donation, RCAPP has actively pursued annual efforts to introduce art into selected public locations and situations to create a sense of place and enhance community identity. Funding is both public and private, and to date.

Linda Gilmore Hill is the

volunteer chair of RCAPP.

"When we started, we approached (the City of) Lake Oswego, and they graciously shared their legal contracts," she said. "Except for one piece at the Chamber of Commerce, all of Redmond's public art is placed on public (City) property, so there is not an issue with homeowners or business owners."

Years ago, when a cell service tower was installed, the public art fund was given an initial allocation of \$9,000 from tower revenue. Ever since, the City funds the program annually, based on the economy, from zero dollars to \$15,000. The City's public works department installs and maintains the artwork, including pedestals, lighting, and other special needs. Volunteers administer the program.

Two special programs generate public art during alternate calendar years. One is called Art Around the Clock, and the other is called Art Showcase.

Art Around the Clock manages the large collection of public art. In odd-numbered years, RCAPP puts out a call to artists through an international website called CAFÉ (the same site used for the Sisters roundabout art). From the submissions, 15 pieces are selected, and artists are given a small stipend to cover their expenses of installation on public art pedestals around the city, for a two-year period. The public is invited to vote on a "people's choice" – which the City purchases at the end of the two-year period. During that time, any of the art may be privately purchased, with the City taking a commission on purchase price. Part of the reason this program is so successful is that artists make

art, and they need and want their work to be seen. So they're generally delighted to have this venue available. At the end of the two-year period, the artist may either remove or donate unsold pieces.

In even-numbered years, RCAPP manages the Art Showcase, inviting local artists to submit themed pieces for display in local businesses. This year's theme is Juniper Invasion. (Two years ago, it was rock chucks.) After a kickoff celebration at a local brewery, where all of the art is shown, the juniper-themed art by 21 artists working in different media is placed in local businesses, which also support the program by donating to have a piece on display in their location. The art will be auctioned on August 23 in Centennial Park Plaza, and the money raised from the auction is rolled over to support Art in Public Places.

RCAPP actively involves Redmond's young people in all of its public art projects. The committee itself includes one student representative. Moreover, students from all of the schools create many of the city's public art projects, including painting murals on electrical boxes, public buildings and the tunnel at Dry Canyon Trail. Students also made the large tiles surrounding the fireplace at Centennial Park. Art teachers and student counselors are integral to the effort.

Cities like Redmond and Lake Oswego manage substantial installations of public art, which ultimately serve to beautify and enhance community identity. After the tour, Sisters residents weighed in on their opinions. *See related story, page 10.*

Healthy, happy family...



PHOTO BY AL KRAUSE

People in Sisters Country are wondering how the Aspen Lake swan family is doing. Pete, Eloise, and Sydney are doing well – and Sydney is growing like a weed.

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Purchase tickets at Furry Friends office or www.furryfriendsfoundation.org

Drawing will be held Mon., Sept. 3, 2018.

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