

Artists display talents at annual show

By Jodi Schneider
Correspondent

The Friday-evening art show and silent auction kicked off the 24th annual Country Fair held at the Episcopal Church of the Transfiguration last weekend.

Guests enthusiastically bid on items that were showcased in the entryway that lead into the art show.

The auction, featuring items donated by local artists and businesses, was run by Sydney Harrison, a former coordinator for the Country Fair on Saturday.

"We have over 200 donated items this year, more than we've ever had. There are wonderful things donated by local artists and gift certificates from businesses, and also many of the church members have made things for the auction," she said. "We also have a lot more things for tomorrow during the Country Fair."

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

Fun, creative, colorful and expressive are the adjectives that could best describe the work on display. From bright pastels to hand-carved gourds, the eclectic assortment of original high-quality oils, watercolors, acrylics,

sculptures, photography and outdoor art captured everyone's attention.

Volunteer Jan Shaver, co-coordinator/chairman for the art show, was on hand to talk to *The Nugget* about last year's positive changes to the annual art show and sale.

"This is not a juried art show anymore. It's by invitation only and all the art is for sale," Shaver said. "We used to have six to eight volunteers sitting at tables waiting for art intake and sometimes no one would show up. This is better for everyone all the way around. It makes things much simpler."

She added, "Now people are contacting us and asking if they can bring art in and we find out a little more about them. And then a couple of artists who couldn't make it recommended other artists."

Local artist Norma Holmes showcased five original pastels and her new book, "Land Escapes: A Painted Journey on Oregon's Eastside."

Eagle Crest artist Vivian Olsen loves what she paints — especially animals of Central Oregon.

She said they are all unique to her and she tries to express their individual personalities and postures, so no two subjects ever look alike — even quail.

Observing animals in the outdoors has always been her passion and enables her to paint expressive portraits of wild animals such as deer, bison, cranes, quail and

herons. She photographs her subjects to use as references for her studio paintings which she paints mainly with watercolors, but also with oils or pastels.

"I've been into animals my whole life, and I lived out in the country when I was little in Monterey Bay, California. I roamed the hills a lot with my dog. And as I got older, I met a wildlife biologist and we would go out and we would do research. We both loved animals, and I started painting them."

Olsen had five pieces for sale at the art show. She has a bachelor's degree in art and a master's in biology and has worked as a professional wildlife artist for over 30 years.

Longtime Bend artist Joanne Donaca is a native Oregonian and a member of the Watercolor Society of



PHOTO BY JODI SCHNEIDER

Vivian Olsen displayed her wildlife work at the Sisters Country Fair & Art Show last weekend.

America, the Pastel Society of America and Oil Painters of America.

Art-lovers stopped by to admire her large oil painting, "Poppy Road."

"I have some of my earlier paintings here also," she said, pointing to smaller framed prints that were on display. "I used to be more of a photo realist, and I've tried shifting my style to become looser. It's a little bit more

impressionistic."

She added, "I painted 'Poppy Road' from a photo I took in Sun Valley, Idaho. I saw this little alley and it was full of poppies and a small red sports car was parked nearby. I originally called it Poppies and Porsche, until a good friend of mine pointed out that a Porsche doesn't have headlights like that and suggested the name 'Poppy Road.'"

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