Young artists qualify for national contest

By Darcy Wallace
IVN Staff Writer

After qualifying for a regional fine arts contest back in March, two I.V. Boys and Girls Club members took first place in their age groups in the Pacific division and now qualify for nationals in Atlanta, Ga.

Illinois Valley club members Lilee Arias, Silas Arias and Seth Hammersmith displayed their art at the Grants Pass club in February, where they earned the highest marks in their categories and advanced to the regional level.

In the Pacific division, Hammersmith and Silas Arias both advanced yet again, their work qualifying for the National Fine Arts Exhibit at Boys and Girls Club headquarters in Atlanta, Ga.

"This is a first not only for the Illinois valley, but also for the clubs of the Rogue Valley," said I.V. club arts coordinator Summer Chatham.

Silas' oil painting shows a lone evergreen highlighted with a brilliant sunset of orange and rose, a distant forest in the background. Hammersmith submitted an unusual mixed media self-portrait, using oil paint and duct tape.

"He is always using duct tape: wallets, backpacks; he decorates all sorts of things," Chatham said. "In a thousand years I would have never thought of that."

As arts coordinator, Chatham said she wants Boys and Girls Club members to have an activity they enjoy, not just something to fill a few hours after school. She said she has already noticed the increased enthusiasm from students putting in the time in after-school programs, such as fine arts and culinary arts.

Younger students in the culinary program are learning to apply skills from the classroom to cooking (relatively) healthy meals such as pasta primavera. Math skills learned in the classroom are put to the test measuring out ingredients for a new recipe.

"It's paid off for these kids," Chatham said. "It's important they have something they're not just involved in, but they look forward to."

According to the Boys and Girls Club of America website, the fine arts exhibit culminates in the National Conference, which tours the U.S. for a year.

The program involves youth ages six to 18 in categories of oil and acrylic, pastels, printmaking and seven others to encourage creativity and personal expression.

Boys and Girls Club clean up

(Photo by Darcy Wallace, *Illinois Valley News*)

Boys and Girls Club members along with Director Scott Thornhill pose with with trash and debris collected Saturday, April 30.

Keystone Club conference enlightens I.V. members

By Darcy Wallace
IVN Staff Writer

Five members of the I.V. Boys and Girls Club joined Grants Pass club members in attending the 2011 State Keystone conference Friday, April 22, and Saturday, April 23, in Lebanon, Ore.

The conference united Keystone Clubs from all over the state for a dinner, trip to Oregon State University (OSU) and a clean-up at a nearby park.

According to I.V. keystone team coordinator Pete Austin, it was the first time Illinois Valley club members attended the conference, giving them a chance to meet other Boys and Girls Club members and learn about their projects.

"One of the core areas [of Keystone Club] is character and leadership development, giving kids ownership from the standpoint of what they want to accomplish," Austin said. "We talked with other team leaders and programs they run to develop a better [plan] for us in the future."

On Friday night, Austin said group members ate dinner together and woke early Saturday morning for a pancake breakfast, followed by a tour at OSU.

Rob Lowden, Keystone President Seth Hammersmith, Alex Nguyen, Taya Stewart and Kimberly Crowe represented Illinois Valley at the conference.

Lowden recently won Youth of the Year for the Rogue Valley Boys and Girls Club, moving on to compete in Portland against other Oregon winners. Though Lowden did not win at state level, he successfully represented the Illinois Valley in the contest.

"They came back [from Lebanon] really enthused," Austin said. "Now they're excited and fired up about it. They want to start having weekly Keystone Club meetings. For those of us who are relatively new…they gained experience and knowledge of what other kids do."

Austin said Keystone members expressed interest in learning how to manage money, inspiring Austin to start a Money Matters course where they discussed budgeting, balancing a checkbook and related topics. On Saturday, April 30, Keystone members planned a clean-up on River Street as part of their community service efforts.

"[Our goals] are twofold: providing a safe environment where they will want to be, but also making a model for younger kids," Austin said. "It gives [younger students] an idea of what they will want to be when they are teens."

Continued on A-7

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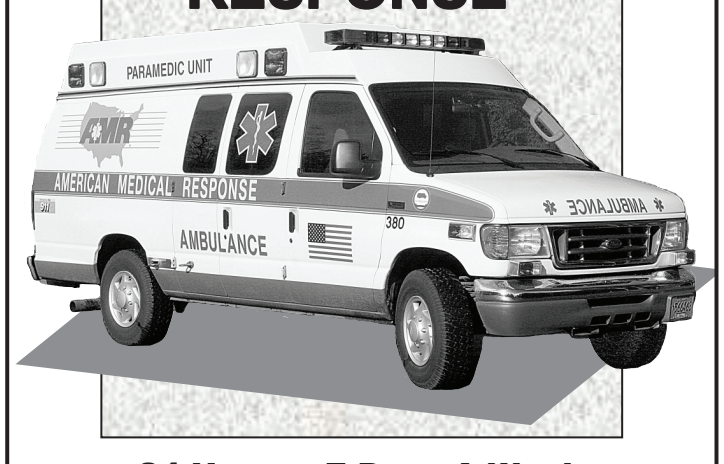

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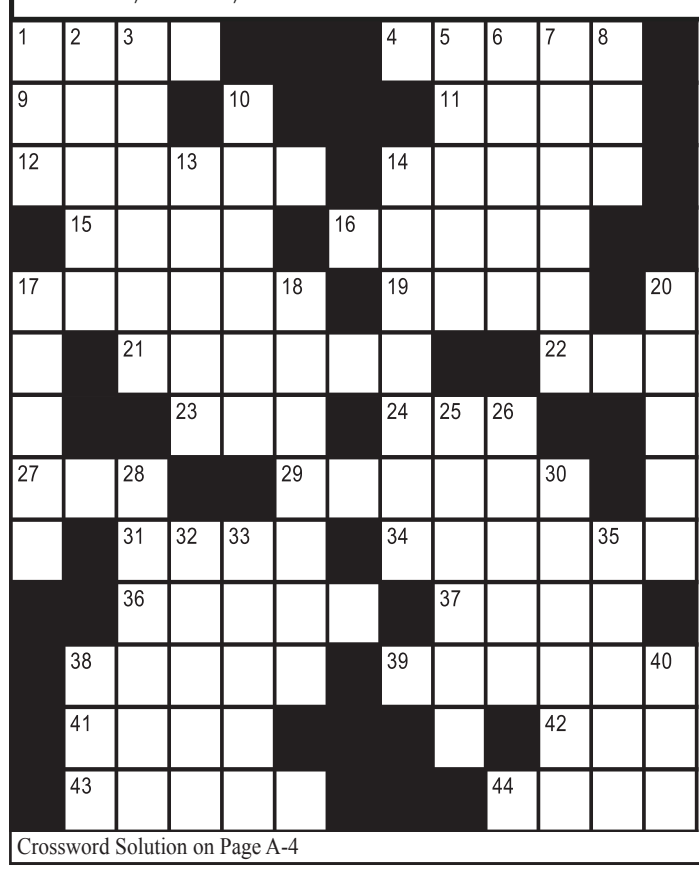

ACROSS

1. Equal
4. A promotional statement
9. Baseball stat
11. Handbag
12. Contained
14. Foul
15. Ointment
16. Loud warning signal
17. Chocolate trees
19. Harp
21. Modifier
22. A brief immersion
23. Voracious snakelike marine or freshwater fish
24. Expresses mild alarm
27. North Atlantic fish
29. Having or showing arrogant superiority
31. Keen on
34. Golf shot
36. Meeting place
37. Explosive device
38. Underway
39. Brigand
41. In case
42. Self-importance
43. Urge on
44. European sea eagle

DOWN

1. 1/60 of a minute
2. Netherlands Antilles island
3. Castanets
5. Mistrustful
6. Express audibly
7. Destroyed
8. Adjure
10. Get rid of
13. Ice skate part
14. Small nut-bearing tree
17. Young bird
18. Liquidize
20. Fake or falsify
25. Dropsies
26. Ralph ____
28. Be of different opinions
30. Distant but within sight
32. Snare
33. Run at a moderately swift pace
35. Pretend
38. Mountain
40. One of the digits of the foot

Crossword Solution on Page A-4