

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Sharon Murphy
Driftless Area Art Festival
An event of Community Development Alternatives, Inc.
17193 Old 61 Road
Gays Mills, WI 54631
(608) 624-3409/ smm@fsmail.bradley.edu

Calling All Art Teachers

Art teachers from across the Driftless area are invited to prepare submissions of student artwork for exhibit in the KidsArt Gallery and the Teen Art Gallery, during the upcoming Driftless Area Art Festival, September 17 - 18 in Soldiers Grove.

All elementary schools submitting work have a chance at a drawing for a \$500 check for art materials, held the following spring. The 2015 winning school was Doudna Elementary in Richland Center.

Each year, more than 400 pieces of art, created by kids and teens from ages five through high school, are exhibited in the two galleries in the Youth Art Tent, one of the favorite features of the weekend. Professional artists help select pieces for ribbons and cash prizes.

Art works can be entered individually, through school art programs selected from work done throughout the school year, or through private art programs. Teen artists can submit their work independently or through their school art programs. All pieces, submitted from all grade levels, are exhibited and there's no fee for participating. There's a limit of one entry per young artist.

"We want to encourage as many teachers as possible to show the creative things their students have been doing," said M'Lou Wilkie, KidsArt coordinator. "We'd like to include art programs from all across the Driftless Area." Three pieces, one from each of three grade categories (1-3, 4-6, 7-8), win blue ribbons and cash prizes. Their art is auctioned the following spring, and the money goes to support the art programs in their schools. To date, \$9,235 has been raised in these auctions, and all proceeds go to the schools.

Teen artists' works are considered for cash prizes and art supplies. Again, all pieces submitted are exhibited and there's no fee for participating. Artists enjoy showing their works and some years teen pieces have been sold even before judging was completed.

To request an official entry form, contact M'Lou Wilkie at sunbead@mwt.net or call her at 608-624-3437. She'll send forms for grades 1-8, due May 30, or for teen art (ages 13 – 19) due August 26. Included will be general guidelines on how to present the art. "As September approaches, we will contact all registrants as to when and where to drop off art submissions for both youth art and teen art during the week of September 12," Wilkie said.

Funding for the 2015 KidsArt Gallery came from Dependable Solutions, Inc., of Boscobel, La Crosse and Prairie du Chien, the Backstitch of Elkader, the Kenneth K. Kinsey Family Foundation of Iowa City, 3 M and the Prairie du Chien Rotary.

Full details on the 2016 Driftless Area Art Festival, including pictures from the 2015 KidsArt Gallery, and information on all the artists and supporters of the Festival, are available at driftlessareaartfestival.com.

Photo: M'Lou Wilkie (left) Youth Art Coordinator and retired art teacher, presents a certificate to young artist Ethan Hady and a \$500 check to Doudna art teacher Julia Steiner, after a drawing open to all schools that participated in the 2015 Driftless Area Art Festival's KidsArt Gallery. A similar drawing will be held after the 2016 Festival, set for September 17 and 18.