

Artist Club, Arts Council present 2003 Festival awards

BY JOHN WURDZ
STAFF WRITER

The Farmington Area Arts Council celebrated the community's best and brightest artistic talents during an awards ceremony held Sunday as part of their Festival of the Arts.

Winner of the Distinguished Service to the Arts Award was the Farmington School District/Community Musical, which stages an annual production under the direction of Dean Cobb.

"It's an opportunity by a lot

of hard-working people to get everyone in the community involved," said Jim Liska, Chairman of the 2003 Artist-in-Residence Committee, "and the appreciation comes in the involvement."

Cobb expressed thanks to everyone who had been involved with the musical since its inception in 1993, from cast members to those who worked behind the scenes. He said he and his wife, Sue, tried to come up with a list of names, but stopped counting at 150.

Often entire families will get involved in the productions,

which regularly sell out during their annual run. Only residents who live in the Farmington School District or school district employees can participate.

"It's not unusual to watch performers on stage from six to sixty-six years old," said Farmington Mayor James Mitchell, who expressed high praise for the program.

In its 38th year, the Farmington Artist Club presented awards for its annual juried exhibition, judged by Michael Sevik, currently an instructor of art, mural paint-

ing, watercolor, artist bookmaking and drawing at the University of Michigan-Flint.

First place went to Jeri Fellwock for her acrylic abstract, "Tomorrow's Dreams"; second place, Regina Dunne's dramatic portrait, "The Coach"; a portrait titled "Eva," by Nancy Hurd took 3rd place; and Suzanne Hauman fittingly won 4th place honors with her incorporation of that number in an abstract titled "Four."

The Grambscher Award for best use of color went to Regina Dunne's "Sentinel of the West," which incorporated a south-

western color scheme.

Club president Allee Nichols, sporting a trademark hat, said Farmington Artist Club members bring their talents into the community, working with seniors citizens whose works were also displayed at the Costlek Center. Also, through the "Art Smart" program, artists bring portfolios into the classroom.

"We have some very, very talented, creative people in the Farmington area," she said, noting club members come from throughout the metropolitan area.

Arts Commission member

Haroun Alameddine presented special recognition to Paul and Fern Barber, who are retiring after more than three decades of service to the community through Farmington Schools and the Farmington Community Band.

The couple formed the group in 1966 as a way to encourage people to get involved.

"They are extremely dedicated to serving our community," Alameddine said. "We have all benefited from their dream."

Fern Barber, who was appointed to the Arts Commission in 1980, said the award was a tremendous surprise.

"It's wonderful to be in a community like this, where so many people volunteer," Paul Barber said. "I would encourage you to keep volunteering and be a part of that, so the community is always as vital as it is today."

The couple received a piece of bronze art created by 2002 Artist in Residence Bernadette Zachara-Marcos.

In presenting Fellwock, the 2003 Artist in Residence, Farmington Hills Mayor Nancy Bates commented, "How fortunate we are to live in a community that understands and values the healing nature of art."

She quoted Fellwock, who said she loved the "mystery of the unknown" that abstract art represented to her.

"Acrylic and abstract really opened doors for me," said Fellwock. "It was a way I think I could express myself."

She doesn't usually have an idea in mind when she begins to paint, but instead fills in layers and adds texture until she begins to see shapes and images, which she then pursues.

"It's difficult to know when a painting is done," Fellwock said. "I think they're done when there's no more marks I can make on them. If I still think I have more to say on a subject, I go into a series of work. It gives me a chance to really explore all the elements and aspects of what I'm trying to say."

In closing the ceremony, Hills cultural arts coordinator Nancy Coumoundouras made a strong pitch for considering arts not a luxury, but a need in life. Schools have started making the arts part of core curriculum and hospitals have made use of art in patient therapy.

"Everyone who gets up in the morning experiences the arts," she said. "The arts are all around us. They're part of our lives."

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2003 HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT ART AWARDS

- Two Dimensional**
1st place: Ellen Cappo, Mercy
2nd place: Genevieve Mihalko, North Farmington
3rd place: Noa Kritzer, North Farmington
- Three Dimensional**
1st place: Alex Sobolev, Harrison
2nd place: Christine Kenerson, Farmington
3rd place: Ashley Lake, Farmington
- Honorable mention**
Marina Bekhmutska, Harrison;
Kevin Clark, Farmington; Inna Gringauz, North Farmington;
Ashley Lake, Farmington; Wendy McPeak, Farmington; Hilary Michalak, Farmington; Genevieve Mihalko, North Farmington; Kelly Petako, Farmington; Whitney Sage, Farmington; Avantiika Sharma, Farmington; Meghan Stewart, Farmington; Nicole Stowers, Mercy

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