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## Inmate art sale benefits community

The "Hidden Art Locked Away" art show is Feb. 3-4 at Riverfront Community Center.

Christopher Burnett | Staff Writer

Artwork created by inmates in the Army Correctional Complex and the U.S. Penitentiary is featured in the "Hidden Art Locked Away" art show Feb. 3-4 at the Riverfront Community Center in Leavenworth.

A preview showing of art entries from 4-8 p.m. Feb. 3 will also serve as the judging event. Artwork selected will be awarded first-, second- and third-place designations. Art will be exhibited for sale from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Feb. 4.

The event is conducted in association with the River City Community Players, a local theater group that operates under the auspices of the Leavenworth Parks and Recreation Department to produce plays at the historic Hollywood Theater.

Chiquita Hudson, director of correctional programs at the U. S. Disciplinary Barracks and Joint Regional Correctional Facility, said the art program is an important element of the arts and crafts classes offered to certain inmates. She said that only minimum custody and trustee inmates are allowed to participate because it is a perk for positive behavior and conduct.

"The art show is part of our recreation offerings. Our programs are designed to be correctional and rehabilitative in their function and purpose. We like inmates to gain something constructive and tangible through any direct participation in activities like this," Hudson said. "Inmates always have the option whether or not to sell their work. But, those who do decide to sell their art like the fact that voluntarily donating portions of each sale offers an opportunity for them to give something back to the community at large."

Barry Garner, recreation supervisor at the USDB and JRCF, said the art program provides another recreation offering to complement activities such as sports and weight lifting. He said arts and crafts activities provide inmates more constructive options from which to choose.

"The arts and crafts activities are part of our craft shop programs in which certain inmates have access to those facilities and can participate. It's an incentive program to reward inmates for long-term positive conduct and behavior," Garner said. "We are able to open up entering this particular art show to the entire inmate population because this type of artwork can be created in their pods. And many of them have been planning to participate since last year."

Garner said there are 84 individual pieces of artwork created by 21 USDB and JRCF inmates that will be exhibited.

Hudson said that although submissions by USDB and JRCF inmates are technically created in the arts area of two-dimensional drawings and paintings, USP inmates often also exhibit and sell craft items like woodwork and leather goods such as belts, purses and bags.

"The gallery at Riverfront Community Center for this exhibit of inmate art always contains a wide range of arts and crafts on display. It is a great community event to come out and support," Hudson said. "Another positive point is that the inmate artists selling their work receive 80 percent of those proceeds, and have chosen to donate the other 20 percent of their sales proceeds to support the community theater program.

Riverfront Community Center is at 123 S. Esplanade St. in Leavenworth, telephone 682-4459.



PHOTO/ PRUDENCE SIEBERT, FORT LEAVENWORTH LAMP

Barry Garner, recreational programs supervisor at the U.S. Disciplinary Barracks, spreads out drawings and paintings created by USDB and Joint Regional Correctional Facility inmates for the upcoming Hidden Art Locked Away show and sale Jan. 30 in the USDB visitor waiting area. The annual art show and sale is comprised entirely of inmate-created artwork, including about 85 contributions from the USDB and JRCF, as well as some from the U.S. Penitentiary. The sale benefits the River City Community Players theater group. Judging and preview is from 4-8 p.m. Feb. 3 at Riverfront Community Center in Leavenworth; the sale is 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Feb. 4. Photo by Prudence Siebert/Fort Leavenworth Lamp