

Bulletin Board

Your guide to meetings, arts, fundraisers and leisure pursuits, 3D

BRIEFLY

ELKADER

Opera House hosting children's theater

The Opera House Players in Elkader are hosting a children's theater company from the Old Creamery for a week of theatrical workshops for children.

Participants will learn various performance techniques and perform in "A Star is Born" variety show. There will be two shows on July 19, at 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. at the Elkader Opera House.

Children ages 7 to 14 years are invited to attend the workshops, to be held July 14 to 19.

The children will need to be at the Opera House from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. every day, and bring a sack lunch. The non-refundable \$10 fee per child includes the weeklong workshop, a T-shirt and two tickets to a performance.

The deadline for registration is Friday. Registration forms and more information can be found online at www.operahouseplayers.com

MAQUOKETA

Third place in art contest goes to local student

Kim Lyon of Maquoketa won third place in the 2008 Congressional Art Competition, An Artistic Discovery. Lyon's entry was called "Boucles D'oreille."

An Artistic Discovery is the annual art contest conducted by members of Congress for high school students across the country.

Students submit original works of art to their representative's office, and the winning piece from each Congressional district goes on display as part of a year-long national exhibition in the Cannon Tunnel, an underground walkway to the United States Capitol from the House office buildings in Washington.

CONTACT US

Kids, take pictures of your neighborhood for us

The Gazette is looking for young people to share their view of their neighborhoods this summer.

Our annual In The Neighborhood project kicks off June 25 and runs through Aug. 13. We want young people, ages 12 through 15, who live in the neighborhoods we plan to cover to take pictures of how they see their surroundings.

The neighborhoods we're going to cover are: The Old Orchard Farms neighborhood on Old Orchard Road NE, June 25; The Guthridge Park neighborhood in Hiawatha, from Blairs Ferry Road to Milstead Drive and 10th Avenue to 12th Avenue, July 9; the Eastern North Liberty neighborhood, east of Highway 965, July 16; the Cherry Hill Park neighborhood, from West Post Road SW to Stoney Point Road SW and from 16th Avenue SW to First Avenue SW, July 23; the Apache Park neighborhood, from Johnson Avenue NW to E Avenue NW and from 32nd Street NW to 21st Street NW, July 30; the Linger Park neighborhood in Marion, from Alburnett Road and Onyx Avenue and from Beryl Street to Agate Street, Aug. 6; and the Memorial Drive neighborhood, from Otis Road SE to Mount Vernon Road SE and from 23rd Street SE to 28th Street SE, Aug. 13.

If you're interested, e-mail digital photos of your neighborhood, along with a description of the picture and the names of the people shown, to jamie.kelly@gazcomm.com

Photos are due one week before your neighborhood is scheduled to run.

ART

Showing off shrunken heads

Students' studies in art rewarded with professional show

By Meredith Hines-Dochterman
The Gazette

CEDAR RAPIDS — School athletes have their courts and stadiums. Drama students have the stage, musicians have auditoriums.

Art students have a strip of corkboard in the hallway.

"This is my Super Bowl for the art students," said Mark Cook, 48, owner of Cook Gallery and Workshop. "A professional setting that shows off their artistic talents."

For nearly five years, Cook has made it his mission to help art students develop their talent, rewarding their work with a professional show at the end of the academic year.

This year's show, *Shrunken Heads and More*, features a variety of media, including watercolor, pastel, printmaking, three-dimensional shrunken heads and computer-generated quilt blocks. Pieces are professionally displayed, with name cards identifying the artist and technique. Some students are as young as 8; others are in high school.



Mark Cook
Owner of Cook Gallery and Workshop, art instructor

All are talented. "My goal is to provide an engaged, meaningful art program to help students better understand the world and themselves," Cook said.

An artist himself, Cook studied painting and ceramic in college, going to Taiwan after graduation to work as an English instructor. The experience introduced Cook to teaching, and he went back to school for his teaching certificate. He also earned a master's degree from New York University.

Cook taught art in public schools for 10 years before going it alone, transforming the third floor of the historic Ausadie building into a gallery and workshop — an idea proposed by the building's owners.

"I am very lucky to have landlords who are supportive of my work," Cook said.

Cook's workshops follow the academic calendar, with instruction after school or on Saturday. Class sizes are small, with no more than 10 students at one time, but students aren't grouped according to ages or abilities.

Cook doesn't limit the lessons, either.

The shrunken heads, the center of this year's art show, were an exercise in facial proportion. Char-



Liz Martin photos/The Gazette

Hannah Botkin (left), 12, and Madeline Walker, 12, both of Cedar Rapids, view a collection of shrunken heads on display at the opening of the *Shrunken Heads and More* exhibit of students' work at the Cook Gallery and Workshop on May 31 in Cedar Rapids. Madeline is a student at the Cook Gallery. Instructor Mark Cook said the students used apple carving to learn about facial proportion, then the project evolved into the shrunken heads collection.

Shrunken Heads and More

■ Exhibit closes Saturday. To schedule a viewing, call (319) 651-5152.

■ For more information about Summer Art Camps or 2008-09 Youth Classes, visit www.cookgalleryandworkshop.com

coal renderings of master portraits emphasize shading and technique. A study in the human figure taught students how to change a shape into a form.

"Mr. Cook is a very open teacher who is open to new ideas," said Greg Hansen, 19. "He'll give you an assignment, but how you execute it is really up to you."

Hansen, a recent Washington High School graduate, was among the more than 1,000 students and teachers throughout the nation honored at the University of Iowa Belin-Blank Center's Recognition Ceremony in October. Hansen, in turn, nominated Cook for recognition in instruction.

"I worked with Greg since he was a child," Cook said. "To see him earn that recognition was definitely a highlight."

Cook will host two summer art camps this year, plus continue custom framing in his shop connected to



Reyna Narhi (left) of Cedar Rapids takes a photo of an India quilt block photo print drawing by her daughter Erika Narhi (not pictured) on display at the opening of the *Shrunken Heads and More* exhibit. At right is Narhi's son, William Narhi, 12.

the gallery. The framing, he said, is his bread and butter.

"I think most people know that the arts are always underfunded," Cook said.

Cook Gallery and Workshop isn't exempt from that status. Cook hopes to secure corporate sponsorship and/or a grant to keep the program going.

"There's a void in art instruction that really needs to be filled," he said. "The children in my program, they have a passion for what they do. This is what makes them special. A standardized test can never measure the gifts and talents of the students in my program."

■ Contact the writer: (319) 398-8434 or meredith.hines-dochterman@gazcomm.com

FUNDRAISER

Relay rallies supporters, survivors in fight against cancer

By Meredith Hines-Dochterman
The Gazette

CEDAR RAPIDS — More than 2,000 people in Linn County are expected to strap on their tennis shoes in the fight against cancer.

Relay For Life of Linn County will be held Friday and Saturday at the outdoor sports complex at Kirkwood Community College. The relay begins at 7 p.m. Friday and continues through 9 a.m. Saturday.

Organizers said plans are in the works for moving some of the event's activities indoors because of the weather. Relay For Life brings together those who have been touched by cancer, with people from the community gathering to celebrate survivors, remember those lost to cancer and fight back against this disease.



Cheryl Valenta
Relay For Life community relations coordinator

Relay For Life brings together those who have been touched by cancer, with people from the community gathering to celebrate survivors, remember those lost to cancer and fight back against this disease.



The Gazette

Vonna Watson of Traer puts up her tent at the Linn-Mar High School track for the 2002 Relay For Life. This year's Relay For Life of Linn County starts Friday at 7 p.m. at Kirkwood Community College and runs through Saturday at 9 a.m.

"It's all about supporting cancer survivors in our community," said Cheryl Valenta, community relations coordinator for Relay For Life.

Relay For Life began in 1985 with American Cancer Society volunteer Dr. Gordy Klatt.

Klatt, grieving for a friend who lost his battle with cancer, spent 24 hours at his local track, completing 81 miles in 24 hours and raising \$27,000 in sponsored donations for the American Cancer Society.

Relay For Life has since

Relay For Life of Linn County

7 p.m. to 9 a.m. Friday and Saturday at Kirkwood Community College's Outdoor Sports Complex.

The Survivors' Victory Lap will be held at 9 a.m. Saturday.

For more information, visit <http://events.cancer.org/rflinncountyia>

become the American Cancer Society's signature fundraising event, with relays held in more than 4,500 locations in 21 countries, including Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Canada, England, Germany, India, Ireland, Scotland, South Africa and Taiwan.

Relay For Life events in the United States have raised more than \$2 billion for cancer research.

Now in its 19th year, Relay For Life of Linn County has raised a total of \$2.5 million for cancer research. Valenta said the 2008 goal is \$376,000.

During Relay For Life, teams of people take turns

walking or running laps overnight, symbolizing the fact that cancer never sleeps. Through the survivors' lap and the luminaria ceremony, Relay For Life honors those people who have faced cancer firsthand and remembers those who have lost their lives to the disease.

This year's event — with the theme "Celebrate. Remember. Fight Back." — emphasizes cancer prevention and cancer education in addition to support for those battling cancer. The relay will begin with a "thank you" for lawmakers who passed Iowa's statewide smoking ban.

"By having this clean air act, we're going to take a bite out of lung cancer," Valenta said.

Relay For Life of Linn County raised about \$380,000 for the American Cancer Society in 2007. About 2,200 people participated in the event, with another 500 people attending as spectators.

■ Contact the writer: (319) 398-8434 or meredith.hines-dochterman@gazcomm.com