

Elk Grove Citizen

A fine day for Fine Arts *First Fine Arts Festival a rousing success*

By Rebecca Maston

Citizen Staff Writer - Elk Grove's first Fine Arts Festival was held on Saturday March 31 at the Barbara Morse Wackford Community & Aquatic Complex. The event involved more than 40 volunteers to keep the show running.

Pat Sandefur, chairperson of the festival, said it took almost an entire year to plan the festival. The festival was presented by several groups, including Elk Grove Friends of the Library, American Authors Association, Military Writers Society of America, Elk Grove Artists and Cosumnes Community Services District. The festival included paintings, photographs and books all for sale.

Jan Miskulin and Ann Saibeni were the judges who determined whether the artwork submitted qualified to be shown at the festival. Sandefur says the committee is made up of art lovers of visual, performing and literary arts.

"People want to learn to appreciate art. You can't appreciate art, unless you're exposed to it," Sandefur said.

There was a full schedule of performers all day including the Strauss Festival Dancers, Sacramento Opera, and Elk Grove Community Band Brass Section. Performers were invited to perform at the festival by the committee.

Staci Maeda, of Wilton, was one of the artists who participated in the festival. She heard about the festival through Elk Grove Artists, being a member herself. Her display included both large paintings and cards.



After already selling three paintings, and the day not over, Cynthia Hobson stands with her work.

“Mostly I do animals, some figurative and some landscape,” Maeda noted. Maeda believes the festival was a great community event to make art accessible to the public and bring an awareness of art.

Another artist in the show was Cynthia Hobson. Hobson is originally from Chicago, but now lives in Elk Grove. Since retiring, she has become more seriously involved in her painting, with a variety of subjects and techniques.

“I’m just all over the place, acrylics, pastels. I try to do water color,” she said. “I try to capture moods and emotions. I try to throw a little humor in.”

While the time allotted to each painting varies for Hobson, if she is very involved in a particular one, it can take her up to one week to finish. Hobson had also already sold several paintings at the festival.

“Art is one of the areas you can express yourself and do it in a way that no one is judging you. It’s very relaxing,” Hobson added. “You have a product when you’re through that you can stand back and enjoy it, and hope that other people do too.”

Naida West was one of many authors to participate in the festival. In 1990, West became a full-time writer. She has written many historical articles, and now writes on her ranch in the Gold Country, where much of her stories take place.

She includes a map in her book for international readers not familiar to the area. She has a series of books beginning in 1825 and is currently working on the third book of the series. The series includes the books: “Eye of the Bear: Novel of Early California” and “River of Red Gold: A History Novel.” The third book she is currently working on has the tentative title of, “Rest for the Wicked.” West first researches all her stories through military and mission documents, as well as speaking with individuals such as Ellen Rosa. She states the facts in her stories. “Then I fill in the rest,” West said.

Another artist at the festival, Ralph Adamson, said he often uses photographs as references. A painter for 35 years, he says he is interested in painting the interplay of matter and energy and also patterning.

“I feel interpreting something, sometimes comes from every direction,” Adamson said. His ideas come from every direction, and he will sometimes splatter paint for inspiration. He will look for forms. Adamson lived in Kauai for 15 years and had an art gallery there.

As the day progressed, a large and steady crowd showed up for the Festival.

Sandefur said she hopes to bring the Fine Arts Festival back to Elk Grove again next year, and from the looks of it, the artists agree.