THE BUSINESS ALBUM

Some of the winners in the Center for the Arts Plein Air Art Festival: From left, Greg Johannesen, who earned second place; Bruno Baran, judge; Alison Leigh Menke, who earned first place; Back, artist Leo Kahl, who won artists' choice and people's choice awards; and Laura Musser, Center for the Arts board member. Not pictured is John Slivjak, third-place award winner.

International Plein Air Art Festival draws more than 100

PHOTOS BY BILL GARVIN, BG PHOTOS

The Center for the Arts' first International Plein Air Art Festival took place recently in Harford County.

Artists from around the world were invited to create works of art outdoors at various sites around Harford County and compete in a juried art show at Rockfield Manor in Bel Air.

More than 100 local residents stopped by the art show and free reception catered by Pairings Bistro. The event also featured live music by the Bowtallion string quartet and guitarist and vocalist Chris Monaghan. Guests had the chance to view all the paintings created during the week, meet the 25 participating artists and purchase any of the 85 works that were made during the festival. A portion of the proceeds from painting sales went to Center for the Arts.

Artists paid a $25 fee to register for the Plein Air Art Festival and were invited to create works anywhere in the county. Among the outdoor subjects selected were landscapes of sprawling farms, waterside views in the City of Havre de Grace, the Concord Lighthouse, Wilson's Mill in Darlington, Sophia's Dairy, farmers' markets and views of Main Street in the Town of Bel Air. Special opportunities included a "Nighttime Paint Out" in downtown Bel Air, a "Paint the Market" challenge in Bel Air and Havre de Grace and a "Waterside Painting" experience in Havre de Grace.

There was also a live painting demonstration for children held at Broom's Bloom Dairy featuring watercolor artist Ken Karlic. The Center for the Arts provided all the painting materials for the children who sat outside and painted "plein air" scenes of Broom's Bloom Dairy.

Finished paintings were evaluated by judges who determined first, second and third place judges' awards, while artists chose the winner of the artists' choice award and guests voted for the people's choice award. The judges were Bruno Baran, artist and chairman of the board at Mid Atlantic Plein Air Painters Association and fine arts chairman at The John Carroll School; Heidi Neff Chuffo, artist and associate professor at Harford Community College; and Harford County Councilman Chad Shrodes. The artists who received awards were:

■ Alison Leigh Menke from Clarksville ($500 for First Place, Judges' Choice for "Fall is Here! At Brad's Market")

■ Greg Johannesen from Port Republic ($250 for Second Place, Judges' Choice for "Farmall 706")

■ John Slivjak Philadelphia, Pa. ($100 for Third Place, Judges' Choice for "Farm at Johnsons Mill Road")

■ Leo Kahl from Bel Air, MD (People's Choice and Artists' Choice for his work "Cold Front," a painting of Main Street in the Town of Bel Air as Friday's storm came through)

ABOVE LEFT: Leo Kahl was the winner of the artists' choice and people's choice awards in the first Harford County Plein Air Art Festival.

BELOW LEFT: Watercolor artist Ken Karlic addresses a group of children during the children's plein air painting demonstration at Broom's Bloom Dairy. The event was part of the Harford County Plein Air Art Festival.