

The PJ Saturday Family Magazine

Tempo

Art At The Audubon: Wildly Beautiful Scenes

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2-Day Art Fest To Feature Works At Audubon

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SHELIGREN

The majestic buck lying in a white-shrouded thicket has taken refuge from a snowstorm. His raised head indicates that he feels uneasy rather than safe, however, because a blue jay hidden in the branches is alerting him to possible danger.

Countless nature enthusiasts would be overjoyed to come upon a scene such as this, which renowned wildlife artist Bob Travers of Staten Island has portrayed in his oil painting "Winter Retreat."

Simply knowing that such wildly beautiful scenes are a part of man's heritage is exciting to most people. But just as the blue jay alerts the buck, environmental concerns are alerting the nature-loving public. There is danger!

"Public awareness is the bottom line. People have to start realizing that if we don't have more concern about wildlife, the time will come when the only access to wildlife will be through art," Travers told *The Post-Journal* during a telephone conversation from his home.

In order to stimulate people to reflect on the value of nature and on the impact that can be made by wildlife art, Jamestown Audubon Society is presenting Travers and about 25 other artists in its 1992 Nature Art Festival next Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 10 and 11.

"We are pleased to bring a show of this caliber to the public as a fund-raising project," said Society President Thomas Simmons. "Jamestown Audubon conducts educational programs for 18,000 students annually and it holds many other programs for

adults. Funds raised by the festival will support our efforts to help people learn about nature and environmental problems."

The diversity and excellence of the works in the show are testimony to the degree that wildlife art has moved from the backwaters of fine art to a prominent place in the mainstream. Innumerable viewers of artworks such as these are inspired to look into themselves and to realize that while the world of technology has brought many benefits, life would not be complete if the world of nature didn't offer a welcome relief from an excess of civilization.

Travers' sense of purpose is shared by many other artists. Merrill Coffin of Jamestown, who will show some of his best acrylic paintings at the festival, notes that as he watches Canada geese fly overhead during fall migration, he thinks about their winter habitat.

"I wonder, 'Is that habitat still there, or has some urban development taken it over?'" he said. He expresses gratitude to the top wildlife artists who have increased public awareness and raised millions through their works to help preserve nature.

Wildlife artist John Andrea of Blockville points out that people should be stewards of their environment. He would like to see everyone grow as close to nature as the Native Americans are.

A disciple of Henry David Thoreau, Andrea has accepted as his motto a quotation from this famous essayist: "Hope and the future for me are not in lawns and cultivated fields, not in towns and cities, but in the impervious and quaking swamps."

Continued on page 8



'A Different Drummer'

John Andrea shows his painting "A Different Drummer," which depicts a male grouse drumming with his wings. Andrea's paintings have been featured on the covers of several magazines.
Photo by Michael D. Anderson

This week's Tempo offers a colorful array of the works of local nature artists. The Jamestown Audubon Society is presenting the works of 25 artists in its 1992 Nature Art Festival next Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 10 and 11.

Robert W. Pyle's "Critical Eye" will help you plan for the coming year with an introduction of advance schedules of area arts events. Patricia Appleyard Parker's "Last Word" details the wonder of autumn, something she realizes can never be captured.

Narettie Martin

On The Cover

Merrill Coffin's oil painting "Frosty Morning Companions" sets viewers to thinking about the joy that bird watching can bring to a cold winter day. Coffin is one of about 25 wildlife artists who will have works on display at Jamestown Audubon Society's 1992 Nature Art Festival Oct. 10 and 11. Many of the artists have numerous awards to their credit, and their work has been featured in a wide variety of places, both near and far. The festival will include a drawing for seven items, bird walks, "Audubon Express" rides, and a bake sale.

Photo by Richard W. Hallberg



'Winter Retreat'

With this painting, "Winter Retreat," Bob Travers won the Minnesota Deer Hunters Association's "Artist of the Year" award. Travers is attracting critical acclaim around the nation, and his name was recently submitted for consideration to the Wildlife Artists Hall of Fame.

Continued from page 2

Many of the artists displaying at the Audubon festival have developed a mastery that has won them much recognition.

Travers, who is well on his way to becoming one of the most outstanding wildlife artists in the country, majored in drawing and painting at Pratt Institute, then launched a very successful 10-year career as a commercial artist. He earned from \$2,000 to \$5,000 a week doing illustrations for TV Guide, Harlequin romances, and video covers, but his heart wasn't completely in his work.

"I came across a copy of *Wildlife Art News* magazine and I saw there was a possibility of a career in wildlife art, which is what I really wanted to do," he said. Travers became a full-time wildlife artist in 1988. He's now much happier — and he's earning almost as much as he did as a commercial illustrator!

One of his most recent honors is winning the Minnesota Deer Hunters Association's "Artist of the Year" Award with his painting "Winter Retreat." The print for this painting is being advertised nationally, and it may be sold out before its release date of Dec. 1.

"It's selling like crazy," said Travers. He will take orders for the print at the Audubon festival.

Travers is working on a limited edition wolf plate series for Danbury Mist in Connecticut. The mint plans to put "Winter Retreat" into the test market for a limited edition plate.

At the Audubon festival, Travers will autograph the *Baby Wolf* children's book printed by Walden Books that he illustrated in 1987.

In 1989, he won six major awards at the wildlife exhibit sponsored by the Ruffed Grouse Society at its second annual Western Pennsylvania Wildlife Art Expo. He was recently honored at the Wisconsin Club, where he unveiled a conservation edition of "The Journey Home" from his painting of a wolf on a canyon ledge. Proceeds from the 250 prints will benefit the Wisconsin Timber Wolf Alliance.

Travers goes out into the field and brings back lots of photos and bits of habitat that he uses as reference materials. He turns 40 this month, and he's looking forward to a long and stimulating career.

"Wildlife is a never-ending source of inspiration," he said.

Paintings to be displayed by Coffin will include "Frosty Morning Companions," which shows three cardinals and birch trees, "Kodiak Bear" and "Pheasant Companions."

Art teacher Eleanor Himes gave him a foundation in art when he was in high school. He added many facts to his educational ladder when he took the "Famous Artists Course," sponsored by Norman Rockwell and other *Saturday Evening Post* artists.

When Coffin retired from the business world as vice president of Adanlock Corp. in the early 1980s, he retired "to" something, not just "from" something. He's up in the morning before the birds begin to sing, and he devotes long, happy hours to painting.

"I totally enjoy nature. I've been a hunter and a fisherman off and on for years, and I constantly feed the birds at our feeders," he said.

Coffin's paintings feature much Americana as well as nature sub-

jects. His greatest honor was to have two Americana paintings on the cover and on the centerspread of an issue of *Palette Talk* magazine by Grumbacher, the world's largest supplier of art supplies.

Coffin is affiliated with Sailors Valentine Gallery in Nantucket Island, Goodman Gallery in Columbus, Ohio, and G & R Gallery, a wildlife gallery in Buffalo. He has won "Best of Show" awards at the Bemis Point Art Show and at the Fredonia Farm Festival art show, and first prize in the Mystic Art Show in Connecticut.

Paintings Andrea will have on view will depict "A Different Drummer" (a ruffed grouse), "A Visitor from the North" (a snowy owl), a "Spring Arrival" (red-tailed hawk) and other wildlife.

"I spent all my life — thousands of hours — hunting, fishing and trapping. I saw that nature art was getting popular in magazines, and I thought I would give it a try."

A construction worker at Barnes Construction in Falconer, Andrea has been enjoying his hobby of painting since 1975.

"I spent all my life — thousands of hours — hunting, fishing and trapping. I saw that nature art was getting popular in magazines, and I thought I would give it a try," he said.

Although he is self-taught, he has become so good at watercolor and acrylic painting that many people have recognized his expertise. Paintings of his have been shown on six covers of *Florida Woods and Waters*, two covers of *Muskie, Inc.* magazine, and one cover of *The New York Conservationist*.

A special feather in his cap will be the one-man show of 23 works that he is giving Oct. 20 in conjunction with the Society of Animal Artists' "Art and the Animal" exhibition, sponsored by the Roger Tory Peterson Institute of Natural History in Jamestown at the Explore/Center at Washington and Third streets. The Society of Animal Artists selected him for this honor from about six artists in the Northeast.

Andrea has also held one-man shows at Jamestown's Prendergast Library and WCA Hospital. One of his paintings was on display at the Department of the Interior in Washington D.C. for an extended period.

A painter who is very attentive to detail, Andrea takes many photos and prepares specimens that he uses for feather confirmation.

"I try to capture the spirit of the animal or bird. I try to depict them as close as I can to the way I see them," he said.

The festival, which JAS has organized with the assistance of the Chautauque County Society of Artists and the Southern Tier Woodcarvers Guild, will include a drawing at which seven items will be given away. Three of the items are original artworks by participating artists: "Ruby-Throated Hummingbird," a woodcarving by Don Berns of Jamestown, a recent first-place winner at the Ward Foundation woodcarving competition in Maryland; "Eastern Blue-

bird," a woodcarving by Bob Guiffreda of Ashville; and "Red-Winged Blackbird," a watercolor by Andrea.

Other items include a decorator print, "Blue Jays," by world-famed artist Roger Tory Peterson, and a signed print, "Orchard Oriole," also by Peterson.

Viewers will find themselves caught up in nature's beauty through the work of painter Jack Paluh of Waterford, Pa., who recently won the Pennsylvania Duck Stamp competition and who will give a one-man show in conjunction with the Society of Animal Artists' exhibition.

Other artists include painter Ron Kleiber of Springville, 1992 Delaware Trout Stamp winner; Peter B. Jones of the Cattaraugus Indian Reservation, whose effigy figures in clay are in demand throughout the country; painter Johnny Creed Coe, a Sioux Indian who lives near the Cattaraugus Reservation; William Rensel of Rockton, Pa., bone and antler carver; William Poole of Jamestown, who portrays nature in photos and videos; former JAS President Richard Luce, who will demonstrate woodcarving; and woodcarver Sai-Lee Holland of Jamestown.

Jerry and Lori Seymour of The Trail's End Gallery in Panama encouraged some artists to come a considerable distance to take part in the festival. Elizabeth Rothra contributed to publicity.

The festival will include entrance to the exhibit "Living in a Greenhouse: the Legacy of Global Warming," rented from the Adirondack Park Institute. Guided bird walks will be conducted, and the motorized Audubon Express wagon will run hourly. Hot foods and baked goods will be for sale.

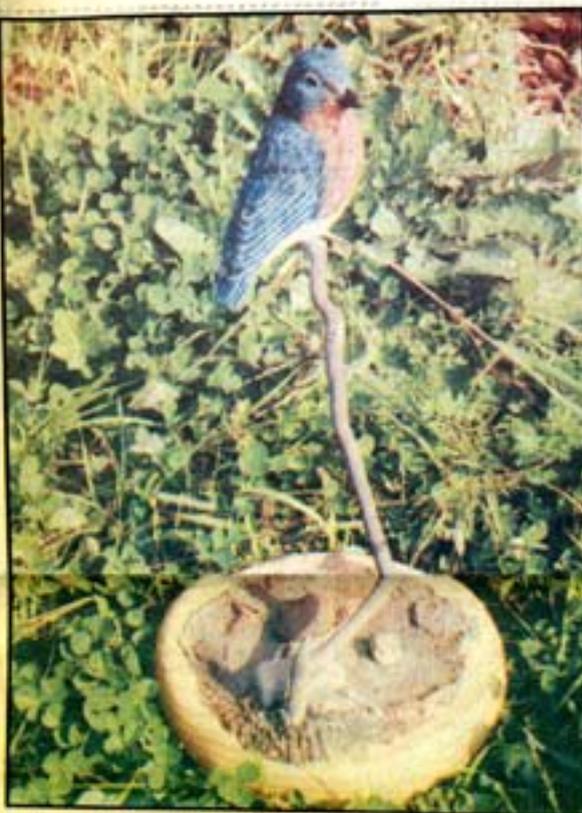
Hours will be from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday and 12-6 p.m. Sunday. Admission is \$2 per adult. People who have ticket stubs from the Art and Animal exhibition will receive a \$1 price reduction, and those who have stubs from the JAS festival will receive \$1 off on entrance to the Art and Animal show. Tickets for the drawing are \$2 each.

The festival will be at Burgeson Sanctuary, Riverside Road, a half mile east of Route 62 between Jamestown and Warren.



John Andrea's "Red-Winged Blackbird" helps people to realize that this common species has a distinctive beauty that is often overlooked.

P-J photo by Richard W. Hallberg



Bluebird 'Trails'

"Eastern Bluebird," a woodcarving by Bob Guiffreda, reminds people of the bluebird "trails" that are helping this colorful bird to make a comeback in the eastern United States.

P-J photo by Richard W. Hallberg



Tiny Elegance

The woodcarving "Ruby-Throated Hummingbird" by Don Berns portrays the elegance of this tiny bird with rapidly beating wings. Berns was a recent first-place winner at the Ward Foundation woodcarving competition in Maryland.

P-J photo by Richard W. Hallberg