

OPINION



PILOT EDITORIAL

Young artist exhibition a good opportunity for students, and rest of us

The young artist exhibition at the Jackson Center for the Arts this month and next is the perfect opportunity for local students to have their artwork showcased and the perfect opportunity for all the rest of us to dip our toes into the sometimes intimidating world of art.

What a treat for students in preschool through 12th grades from across the Jackson County Central School District to have their works of art on display in a gallery setting. Three waves of artists will feature their work — paintings, sculpture, fiber art, even stop-motion animation — at the local art center from now through the end of April.

And what an opportunity for those of us not as well versed in the arts as we could be to get a taste of the creativity and expression art inspires by viewing the students' work at our leisure. The art center gallery is open to the public from 2 to 5 p.m. Mondays through Fridays and from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturdays. We are all invited to stop by, show our support for local students and maybe even expand our horizons a bit.

Playing my first lottery for a chance at winning a dream

Two swans flew low through the sky Saturday, cutting a path north near our house. I saw them through the windshield in my car. I turned, aligning my route with the birds, almost as if we were on our way somewhere together. I lost sight of them for a moment, searching against the clouds in the evening light for their faint patches of black. They were moving quickly, heralding spring as they swept away over the melting snow.

I noticed a few weeks ago the sun was still hanging above the horizon on my drive home from work, the days lengthening just when winter nights weighed heaviest. Every day that drive takes me past a beautiful old creamery, its orange brick still standing square. At sunset, I can see straight through

the curtains on its east windows to the west. For a second, the building is shot through with golden light, full of possibility.

The creamery inspired me to buy my first lottery ticket not long ago. I'd read a man in Mt. Lake won a million dollars in the Powerball, and the relative familiarity of that town made the idea of winning seem less foreign too. A million dollars — realistically, whatever is left of that after taxes — would be plenty to make an irresistible offer to the owners of the creamery.

I'd need the rest of the windfall to restore the building to its former glory: The tuck-pointing alone would be astronomical. And then, in my daydream, I'd fill it with vintage Chandler and Price presses, a cabinet of metal type and stacks of fresh paper,

shelves of books, big wooden tables with pots of colored pencils, a coffee maker and Internet so people might drop by to visit and work. It would be the perfect place to write the novel I've been thinking about since I left Jackson.

Purchasing my lottery ticket at a Kwik Trip like the lucky winner from Mt. Lake seemed auspicious, and I spent the next few days filling the creamery with my dreams, resuscitating this place that once thrummed and now only existed.

But on the day of the drawing, I didn't win. It was a letdown, though not unexpected. It had been nice to pretend that money was the missing thing I'd need to chase my dream, when really it would take more than that. People are funny that way, pinning their

hopes on something out of their control to keep from digging in to make things happen. I'm guilty of it, for sure.

But I haven't given up on the creamery yet. Each day I drive past and see that shot of sunlight through the curtains, I feel something. Maybe someday soon that feeling will be powerful enough to set me on a new course, like swans taking flight in spring.



MISS COMMUNICATIONS Marie Zimmerman

As number of alcohol-related DWIs fall, controlled substance-related DWIs rise

Question: I heard the number of DWI arrests is declining; is this true? What about non-alcohol-related DWI arrests?

Answer: While alcohol-related DWI incidents have dropped over the past 10 years in Minnesota, controlled substance-related DWI incidents have increased over the past 30 years. In 1990, five controlled substance-related DWIs were issued; in 1997, that number was at 128. By 2007, it was 659 and, in 2017, was 1,982.

We believe most drivers know to get a sober ride when they have consumed too many alcoholic beverages. Illicit and some prescription medications can also affect our ability to safely

operate a vehicle, even if taken as directed. The term "controlled substances" refers to both of these categories, and part of the rise of drug-related DWIs is due to increased use.

Another factor for the increase in controlled substance arrests is law enforcement officers are better trained in DWI detection especially with non-alcohol-related DWI offenders.

Minnesota currently has 277 specially trained officers called drug recognition evaluators. Non-certified DRE officers can and do call for the assistance from a DRE officer to assist with a DWI, if needed.

Here are some tips for motorists who are currently taking

prescription medications:

- If you don't know how a medication will affect your judgment, coordination and reaction time, have someone else drive or wait to take it until you get home.

- Check the warning labels carefully. Does it have one about "operating heavy machinery?" That includes motor vehicles.

- Some medications are fine when taken on their own, but may cause impairment when mixed with other medications or alcohol — even a small amount. Learn about the interactions and talk to your doctor or pharmacist.

- You can avoid a ticket — and a crash — if you simply buckle up, drive at safe speeds, pay attention and always drive sober.

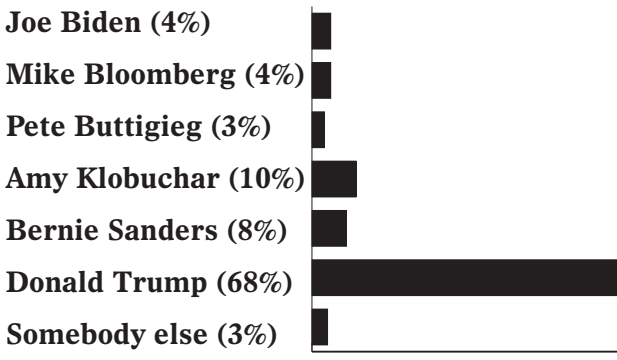
If you have any questions concerning traffic-related laws or issues in Minnesota, send your questions to Sgt. Troy Christianson, Minnesota State Patrol, at 2900 48th St. NW; Rochester, MN 55901-5848. Or reach him at, Troy.Christianson@state.mn.us.



ASK A TROOPER Sgt. Troy Christianson

LAST WEEK'S ONLINE POLL

Q: For whom will you vote in the March 3 presidential primary election?



Source: Jackson County Pilot Website

THIS WEEK'S ONLINE POLL

Q: What issue should state legislators be most focused on this session?

Vote online at jacksoncountypilot.com.

READERS WRITE

Science: To fear, or enrich our lives?

In "The Hazards of Science," Lewis Thomas writes of the "criticism of science and scientists," which can lead scientists to feel as though their work is for naught. Scientific inquiry is generally done for the good of all mankind. But should scientists be allowed to search for information that may harm mankind?

Science for the good of mankind doesn't always end there. Work toward eradicating disease can end in infection of subjects. Work in the field of recombinant DNA has been likened to playing God. Are there lines of scientific inquiry we just shouldn't be following? Why do we not allow only those sciences universally agreed upon as virtuous?

We are creatures of nature filled with curiosity. It would be unnatural for us not to research ourselves and other species. And, as we search for a better life,

we feel as though we can offer more to life than what is available at present. That said, there may well be areas of nature scientists should not explore. Yet, without researchers of yesteryear pushing the boundaries, where would we be? Would our world population be in the thousands or billions? Would loved ones whose lives have been extended by medical advances be here or not? In every meaning of the word "hero," are not scientists true heroes in that they have saved countless lives through these medical advances? Indeed, without the science of the past, would we be where we are today? And are tomorrow's experiments and inquiries worth the risks? Shall we fear what our curiosity may bring us in the future, or shall we seek to enhance our lives despite the risks?

Barrett Berkner
Jackson

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