

Art show premieres in Cov.

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COVENTRY — A statewide children's art exhibit opens in Coventry today. In past years, according to a local art teacher, the show has opened in Cranston or other communities.

This year's opening is at the Paine Field Community Center on Main Street (Route 117).

The PTA Reflections gallery contains art from all the elementary schools in Coventry, says Washington Oak Art Teacher Mary Ellen Carlu. With art from Warwick, West Warwick and Hope, Kent County is very well represented in the show, she says.

The yearly event showcases elementary school fine arts from across the state with entries in literature, musical composition, photography, painting, collage, and other mediums.

"It is a celebration of the fine arts," Carlu says, "but it is heavily visual arts."

The display will be judged during the week, Carlu says, to determine state finalists who will go on to compete at the national level.

In the past, Coventry students have gone on to win the national award, Carlu says. Several years ago, Patrick Splenanter, now in ninth grade, won the nationals.

"A copy of his painting now hangs proudly at the Applebee's in the Centre of New England," Carlu says.

With a wide variety of art to enjoy, the public is welcome to view the display, Carlu says. "This is a nice local art show that we are very lucky to have in Coventry this year," she says. "At least 15 elementary schools from around the state are participating this year."

Even the process of putting up the display has been a wonderful community builder, Carlu says.

"We have high school students getting community service hours by doing the set up and acting as docents," she says. "This is really a nice way to see children's art. And to give the [high school students] art community service hours is a wonderful thing."

The show will remain open in Coventry through Thursday with hours from 3:30 to 5 p.m. for viewing. The awards reception to announce state winners who will progress to nationals will take place at 6 p.m. on Thursday.

From Coventry, the show will travel to Cranston, and culminate as a display at the 100 Years of PTA in Rhode Island Celebration at the end of this month, Carlu says. "Everyone in town is welcome to come in and support the arts," she says.



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