

Auction of recycled art to benefit local environmental group

By Crystal Bozek , Staff Writer
Eagle-Tribune

LAWRENCE - One artist used shredded junk mail to create a larger-than-life portrait of John Lennon. Another jazzed up a floor lamp with twigs and strings of leaves.

There was everything from barbed-wire spider webs to a cigar box guitar.

"I actually pulled this from the Dumpster," said Methuen resident Sam Facella, speaking of his metal sculpture called Monster Bridge. "I spotted it and thought it was an unusual piece."

Members of Groundwork Lawrence weren't exaggerating when they said their art show would be all about recycling.

At the Glow Gala Celebration and Silent Auction on Thursday, people can bid on these environment-friendly masterpieces. Proceeds go to Groundwork Lawrence, an environmental nonprofit group responsible for many of the new parks, cleanups, youth programs and farmers markets in the city.

The group held a preview of the artwork Saturday at the renovated Washington Mills on Canal Street - the home of 155 new loft apartments. The gala will also be held in the historic mill building.

"We're so excited to be supporting Groundwork," said Kara Cicchetti, a representative with the mills. "It's an opportunity to connect the building to the rest of the community. ... We're inviting the downtown restaurants to cater the event. ... It's all about art and revitalization, and economic development all coming together."

Mill renovation projects such as this one are what Lawrence is banking on to bring more life to businesses, making downtown viable again, Cicchetti said.

Since holding a grand opening Oct. 2, Washington Mills has signed 60 leases.

The name Glow Gala came from the lantern theme in past years. This year, while there were still many lighting pieces, the group invited people to create a variety of works. There were sandals, painted glass, a tin man made out of cans, and several framed photographs and drawings.

"We wanted to try something a little different," said Heather McMann, deputy director of Groundwork. "Everything came out amazing."

Groundwork Green Team member Jesenia Lopez, 15, of Lawrence High School decorated a lamp with twigs, string, leaves and a pine cone that are shaped to resemble a dress. She wanted to blend her new knowledge of the environment with her love of fashion.

"I didn't think I could do it," she said. "I feel very accomplished."

Sabrina Dorsainvil, 17, of Greater Lawrence Technical School, was still trying to find her artistic inspiration with just a few days to go before the auction. She is leaning toward something papier mache.

A handful of teenagers from the Green Team contributed to the auction.

"Whatever it is, it will be phenomenal," Dorsainvil said. "I need a creative spark."

The event will also feature live music and dancing. Tickets are \$45 each and can be purchased at www.groundworklawrence.org.

Discover some artful recycling

What: The Glow Gala

When: Thursday, 6 p.m.

Where: Washington Mills, 270 Canal St.

Tickets: \$45 each

Contact: Groundwork Lawrence at 978-974-0770

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