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Photo contest aims to showcase communities

Photography buffs asked to submit best shots of their neighbourhood

Terence Leung
for the Federation of
Calgary Communities

Shutterbugs from communities across Calgary were able to show off their photography skills in the Federation of Calgary Communities' first ever My Community Amateur Photo Contest.

The contest was designed for Calgarians to show off their communities, and what it means to them as part of Alberta Arts Days.

As judging comes to a close, 10 finalists will have their prints shown in the Plus-15 walkway between TD Square and Bankers Hall in downtown Calgary on Sept. 17.

Although it sounds simple, the judges for the contest quickly realized the difficulty of such a task.

"Some of the photos were terrific and showed what was important to them," says Federation community relations coordinator Brendan Murray.

"A lot of the photos have been kids playing in the yard and those traditional ideas of community. But one thing that stayed true was no matter in a suburb backdrop or urban communities, people truly make it their home."

Over 40 amateur photographers submitted a maximum of two photos each, and were asked to write a few

sentences why their images represents community life.

"We get so busy at our day-to-day lives, running around, getting groceries and going to work. Getting people to submit a photo, they have to think about community, their environment and why it's important to them," says Murray.

"When the finalists' photos are shown downtown, it'll be nice in that setting where business people are walking to work, having lunch and then bring that idea of community back to the downtown area."

Photos were judged based on four criteria: relevance to theme, creativity, composition and the overall impression of the image.

A \$300 cash value prize will be given to the first place winner, \$200 value to second place and \$100 value to third place.

Calgary Reflector photo editor and fourth-year Mount Royal College student James Paton was a judge for the contest. He feels the intent to visually bring community awareness to Calgary Arts Days was largely successful.

"The main thing for the contest is the sense of community. I think for the Federation and its 146 communities, it's tremendously important for all communities to be more aware of what each community does," says Paton, who was pleased with the quality of images that were submitted.

"There was one photo with children standing on a fence and behind them was a barbecue with adults socializing. I think that was really good because it put children first but still had many aspects of community living in one photo."

Paton laments some fantastic photos



Calgarians with a knack for photography and a good sense of community can take home \$300 in the first ever Federation of Calgary Communities My Amateur Photo Contest.

Photo courtesy FCC

weren't high enough resolution to print nor did they meet the minimum file size.

"People really need to sit down and don't willy nilly submit the photo. They need to think is it bright enough, does it use the rule of thirds and really read through what the contest rules are asking. Some photos didn't meet the technical requirements, which is a shame because they looked really great," says Paton.

"Another good photo was someone had submitted something set in the dead of winter at the dog park or some-

thing. It looked like a blizzard and a guy was staggering through heaps of snow. That rang true for me because community happens no matter what time of day and what season."

For more information on the contest, go to: <http://calgarycommunities.com/amateurphotocontest.php>



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