

Art extravaganza

Library to showcase art from summer reading program

By Christine Steele
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Copper Queen Library Assistant Program Coordinator Alison Williams and Library Manager Jason Macoviak stand near several images made by children who participated in the Summer Reading Program. The photographs were part of the programs Evergreen Cemetery Victorian Photography workshop and field trip. More artwork from other Summer Reading Program workshops are displayed throughout the library as well.

Photograph by Mark Levy

BISBEE — If you missed the showcase of art from the Copper Queen Library’s Summer Reading and Leap Extravaganza held at the Bisbee Royale in late July, you have another opportunity to see some of the amazing art produced by the kids in the program.

This year’s summer reading program was a little different than in previous years in that it took students out of the library on field trips and combined reading with another activity, like learning to shoot Victorian style photography at Evergreen Cemetery and plein air painting in Grassy Park. These activities resulted in some great works of art that have library patrons asking, “Who took those cool photographs?” said assistant program coordinator, Alison Williams.

Over 500 photos were taken during that one day event. Of those, 50 were printed for display.

“This is not a “best of” show,” explained Williams, “All 500 photographs were fantastic and it was extremely hard to choose. Because there were multiple shots of the same thing, these photos represent different aspects of the cemetery and how the students see the world around them.”

The photographers are anonymous because the students shared digital cameras among their group, Williams explained.

“We had 35 kids and 10 adults sharing 14 cameras,” she said.

John Charley taught the students some Victorian photography techniques, then unleashed them in the cemetery with their cameras. The result is creepy cool.

There are artistic shots of the cemetery’s ornate wrought iron fence, close ups of stone crosses on headstones, shots of statues, madonnas, a broken doll and views of the iconic Bisbee hills in the background. Some of the students even dressed up in period costume and took pictures of each other. There is a girl in Victorian clothes smoking a pipe and a girl clutching the broken doll while looking at a grave.

The photographs are displayed in a group along the wall as you go upstairs, and in various places around the library. Also on display are dozens of paintings the students made during their plein air class in Grassy Park. There are paintings of rainbows and cactuses, birds, and even some of Bisbee’s notable buildings and of “B” mountain.

Also included in the exhibit are photos of the “spine poetry” the students created by stacking various books together and making a poem from the titles and words on the book spine. Coordinated by library manager Jason Macoviak and Williams, the show will remain up through early October.

“To see the end result of everything, from the beginning from when we started planning, to the actual classes, to the works of art the students created has been the most rewarding,” said Macoviak. “It’s been the finishing touch on the perfect summer for the library. Taking the library out of the library for the summer was really exciting. The kids were ecstatic about it. I think the anticipation of going somewhere and learning something new made them more engaged,” he said. “They owned it and the result is amazing. People are asking ‘Where did you get these photos?’ Putting them up on our walls lets the rest of our adult patrons to interact with what the children accomplished this summer.”