

## ARTIGRAS

## PAINT IT GREEN

*The Jupiter festival holds a 'Recycling is an Art' contest.*

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JUPITER — The giant snake rises up from behind the cylindrical recycling bin, enveloping it as it rises, menacingly fixing the viewer in its gaze. And even though the very size of the thing, and the long red tongue darting out, should give the viewer pause, its pull is irresistible.

Fortunately, the impression left by this snake — created from foam, upholstery fabric and other found materials by art teacher Brent McHearn and his students at Inlet Grove High School — is on the viewers' artistic sensibilities and not on their bodies. The piece, located next to the hospitality tent at Jupiter's 26th annual ArtiGras festival, is part of an ongoing effort to be green, as well as to inspire a new generation of artists.

"I think the efforts have been unbelievable, incredible," says Patti Hamilton of the Southern Waste Systems, which spearheaded the "Recycling is an Art" contest at the Abacoa-area event.

The winner out of the 17 completed bins receives \$250 in art supplies. The contest was organized by Resource Depot, a facility that offers reused material for creative purposes.

The Saturday kick-off of the three-day festival saw a line that extended "clear down Town Center Boulevard," where the main gate for ArtiGras is located, said media spokesperson Rebecca Seelig.

The festival features about 300 artists from around the country, including about 270 that are participating in the juried art competition, as well as several local emerging



THOMAS CORDY/Staff Photographer

Linda Howell (left) gives Gina Azzizzi, 10, painting tips Saturday at the Alla Prima Creations on Canvas tent at ArtiGras.

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artists, who work closely with the festival to prepare their ArtiGras debut.

"They were very helpful. ... I like the location of the festival. This is a great little area, and we like the diversity of the work," says emerging artist Jeff Houghtaling of Lake Worth, a painter of the surrealist, Dali-esque school who features giant, omniscient eyes in much of his striking work.

Across the way, Deborah LaFogg-Docherty of Boynton Beach was displaying pastels of birds and other wildlife, because "I love all animals. We're here off and on every year. It's a beautiful location, very well run and always has a lot of people."

Seelig says that about 150,000 visitors were expected between Saturday and Monday.

Among the new features this year, besides "Recycling Is An Art," is the interactive adult art area, to correspond with

the popular ArtiKids area.

Inside, the Pellici brothers of Jupiter, 7-year-old Michael and 5-year-old Alexander, worked intently building, well, something out of foam and brightly colored plastic rods.

"It's a person!" explained Michael, so involved in his creating that he barely looked up.

"I thought it was a robot," said mother, Suzanne.

"No," the young artist said. "It's a person."

Farther away, friends Susan Present and Carolyn VanMeter, both of Jupiter, enjoyed colorful snow cones and discussed their art-buying plan of attack.

ArtiGras had a different effect on Prosier Walker, 18, an Abacoa resident and fledgling student photographer at Inlet Grove.

"Seeing this art directly inspires the work that I do for the (school) magazine," he said. "There's one booth that has black and white photography, and now I want to learn how to do it. There's no loud music here, very relaxing."

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