

Final bronze plaques made for art tower

By Patrick Fisher

Staff Writer

The art tower in Philipp's Park on New Prague's west side will be completed, as the last bronze plaques were made recently.

This summer Kiersten Dahl-Shetka led a class, Sculpting with my Special Friend, through New Prague Community Education. The class was open to children ages 4-9. The eight children who participated were Hannah and Sophia Bruder, Macey Hager, Jayden Hahn, Ella Schwakopf, Jackson Simon and Nolan Widner. Shetka said the children had help from their parents, a family member or a caregiver. The classes were held every Tuesday and Thursday through June.

On June 30 the children with their helpers made their wax molds. On July 14 they poured the bronze into the molds at Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter. With three plaques that had been made previously, 11 plaques were completed.

"It takes about five to six hours per bronze plaque to



Photo courtesy of Carlie Bruder

Children, their parents and volunteers from the New Prague area gather at the making of bronze plaques recently at Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter. The plaques are the final ones that will be added to the art tower in Philipp's Park on the west side of town.

completely finish them," said Shetka. The work left to do includes cleaning up the plaque, grinding away unwanted areas, an acid metal bath and adding gold metal leaf.

The children were asked to include in their sculpture something they love in their life and their community. The final sculptures include such items as Star Wars, ballerinas, dolphins, a bald eagle and representations of family

members.

Such sculptures would normally cost more than \$350 to produce, but support from the New Prague Arts Council and local donations helped bring the costs down.

The tower project has been funded in part by the Minnesota Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund.

"I hope to get them all up before the snow flies," said Shetka of the bronze plaques that will be added to the art

tower.

She is hoping to hold a dedication ceremony, although a date has yet to be determined. Dates that are being considered are either for Dozinky or in the spring.

"I've been so honored to work in this community and I've been working with awesome people," said Shetka. "I've made life long friends and have a new family."

DalekoArts opens romantic comedy on Thursday

DalekoArts, New Prague's professional ensemble theatre company, with New Prague native Ben Thieciel and his wife Amanda White at the helm, opens its third production, the magical romantic comedy "Almost, Maine," at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 8, at the New Prague Middle School, 721 Central Ave. N.

The show runs in New Prague this weekend only. The other two nights at the middle school auditorium are 7:30 p.m. Friday, Aug. 9, and Saturday, Aug. 10. "Almost, Maine" then transfers its set, full production team, and cast to Alexandria. There it will run from Tuesday, Aug. 13 to Sunday, Aug. 18, at Theatre L'Homme Dieu. Almost's residents, guided

by the deep and spectacular colors of the northern lights, find themselves falling in and out of love in ways they could never have imagined. Laughter and tears accompany bruised egos, hearts and knees in this sweet, hilarious and touching evening under the wide-open night sky.

The show features New Prague native son Thieciel, and Minnesota stage veterans Sean Byrd, Jane Prohland, and Lizzie Gemes. Anne Byrd, Twin Cities director, actor and faculty member in the Normandale Community College Department of Theatre, is directing the production.

Individual tickets can be purchased by calling 952-314-9077 or visiting DalekoArts.com.

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3 pm Monday