

'Kitsch' not to miss: Annual Reedsport Chainsaw Sculpting Championship

BY JULIA HOSKINS

Some call it kitsch, I suppose because of the tools used. I say that the eye and hand that can carve a statue such as this one—of the classical subject of the Archangel Michael stabbing the devil—could carve a sculpture of any material and equal the best sculptures in the town squares and museums of Europe. That spear is carved one-piece with the rest of the sculpture. (The wings are carved separately; it's the devil's tail curving up behind the archangel's wings.) The devil's horns and other small details are blackened with a blowtorch.

The Annual Reedsport Chainsaw

Sculpting Championship, held in June on Father's Day weekend, included carvers from Germany, England, Canada, Russia, Japan, and Italy, along with entries from all over the Pacific Northwest. Bob King of Washington was the well-deserving winner with this archangel/devil sculpture. All were excellent, and it's a marvel to see the carvings completed in the four-day time limit. There are both professional and semiprofessional competitions. A side bonus: terrific seafood dining in Reedsport and Winchester Bay!

Julia Hoskins
julmudgeon@aol.com



Photo, left: This first-place archangel sculpture was created by Bob King of Washington.



Photo, right: Another intricate sculpture that was entered at the annual Reedsport chainsaw carving competition this year.

Photos by Don Hoskins.

Reedsport, Father's Day Sonnet

Archangel Michael has the devil down.
A giant bear sits on a log to play
His mighty saxophone: spruce swirls
as sound.
Heaven's at war, and eagles soar,
this day.
Bullwinkle reads the Bible in his hand.
Dolphins, mermaids stare at wolves
and horses,
Bison plod, too late, across the land.
Here tree trunks come alive at saw's
forces.

They fly from 'round the world to
carve their art:
Japan and Netherlands, Russia
and more.
Buyers anticipate the final mart.
Earplugs are free; we tolerate the roar.
Blowtorches burn some black, and
light's incised.
Four days is all to sculpt a form
that's prized.

—Julia Hoskins

Applegate and Williams Schools welcome Principal Darrell Erb Jr.

"I must say I am very pleased to join the team at Applegate School. There exists a quality staff focused on teaching, learning, and continual improvement. What an opportunity to work with a bunch of great folks!"

With these words, Darrell Erb Jr. expressed his enthusiasm for his new position as principal in the Three Rivers School District, where both the Applegate and Williams schools will be under his watch.

With 18 years of experience in education, he has taught in the Brookings-Harbor, Gold Beach, and Sheridan, Oregon, school districts. He spent the last five years at Three Rivers: four years as dean of students at Lorna Byrne Middle School in Cave Junction, and a year as assistant principal at Fleming Middle School in Grants Pass.

Prior to his employment with Three Rivers, Darrell spent seven years as an executive and senior program associate with nonprofit organizations focused on sustainable community development. That work took him to many wonderful places in North and Central America, Europe, and Asia.

He says he's happy to be back in education and especially pleased to be the principal at Applegate and Williams schools. "I join a team of people committed to providing a high-quality, dynamic, and engaging school for all our students," said Darrell.

Welcome to the Applegate, Principal Erb!



New Applegate and Williams principal Darrell Erb Jr., during a family visit to Yaquina Head Lighthouse in Newport, OR.

Local artist Terry Ahola has taken first place at Reedsport

Terry Ahola had been "carving" for about 12 years when he decided to enter his first competition, choosing the 2008 Reedsport Chainsaw Sculpting Championship—and as a professional, no less. Right out the gate, he won not only First Place honors, but also the People's Choice and Carver's Choice Awards.

Terry also competed in the Reedsport event in 2012 and 2013, where he won Fourth Place, and at the Albuquerque 2008 Echo Carving Series, taking Second Place as well as being tops at an auction for the "Make A Wish Foundation."

Unable to get to Reedsport in 2014, he says he may compete again one day.



Terry Ahola at Boatnik in Grants Pass.



This sculpture, "Bear Cub, Raccoon, Beaver Concept," was Terry Ahola's triple-winning entry at the 2008 Annual Reedsport Chainsaw Sculpting Championship. See more at terryaholaswoodsculptures.com.

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Jakob Shockey, Riparian Program Manager
riparianprogram@apwc.info
541-890-9989

Janelle Dunlevy, APWC Coordinator
coordinator@apwc.info
541-899-9982

"promoting ecological, economic and community well-being in the Applegate watershed through on-the-ground projects and strategic collaborations."