

Canadians, get out and celebrate

Earlier this week, I attended a school event at Centennial Middle School. It was called a Unity Rally, and was organized by the local University Women's Club, to build awareness of Canada's unity, focussing on the aboriginal, French and English heritage that comprises Canada's history.

Now I tend to be a tad cynical about any school events planned during the last week of school, usually shrugging them off as a convenient disruption in the teachers' schedule; in short, one less class to plan for.

But after spending an hour in the gymnasium with 500 plus screaming, cheering kids, waving their little flags while dressed to the nines in red, I had to admit, maybe this wasn't such a bad idea after all.

The original plan was to have the kids take part in a Unity Parade, walking from their respective schools, as they made their way to Cedarvale Park, where the rally was to take place.

Unfortunately, an untimely thunderstorm forced a quick change of plans, but the end result was certainly as effective. The kids taking part loved it, and their spirit and admiration for their country received that much needed shot in the arm, paving the way for them to be pumped for tomorrow's Canada Day celebrations.

And since the rally happen to fall on Fete Nationale (formerly called St-Jean-Baptiste Day) the French Canadian holiday was appropriately observed at the same time, with half the speeches delivered in French.

I think, at times, we tend to be a little lax in recognizing our country's unity, waving our flag, and standing up to say we're proud to be Canadians.

Our American neighbors never miss a chance to flaunt their patriotism, as their school kids begin each day pledging

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Ted Brown

allegiance to their flag. I'm not suggesting we should be going to that extreme, but it's certainly not all bad to take time to admire and celebrate one's patriotism.

I'll be the first to admit I'm pleased to be called a Canadian. From my Irish roots to my forefathers fighting for Canadian soil in the late 1750s, I've always felt a sense of pride for my Canadian heritage, and will defend it any day of the week.

At the unity rally last Monday, many people expressed their thoughts and feelings about this country. One of the speakers brought greetings from a local aboriginal woman, who sent her regrets at not being able to attend.

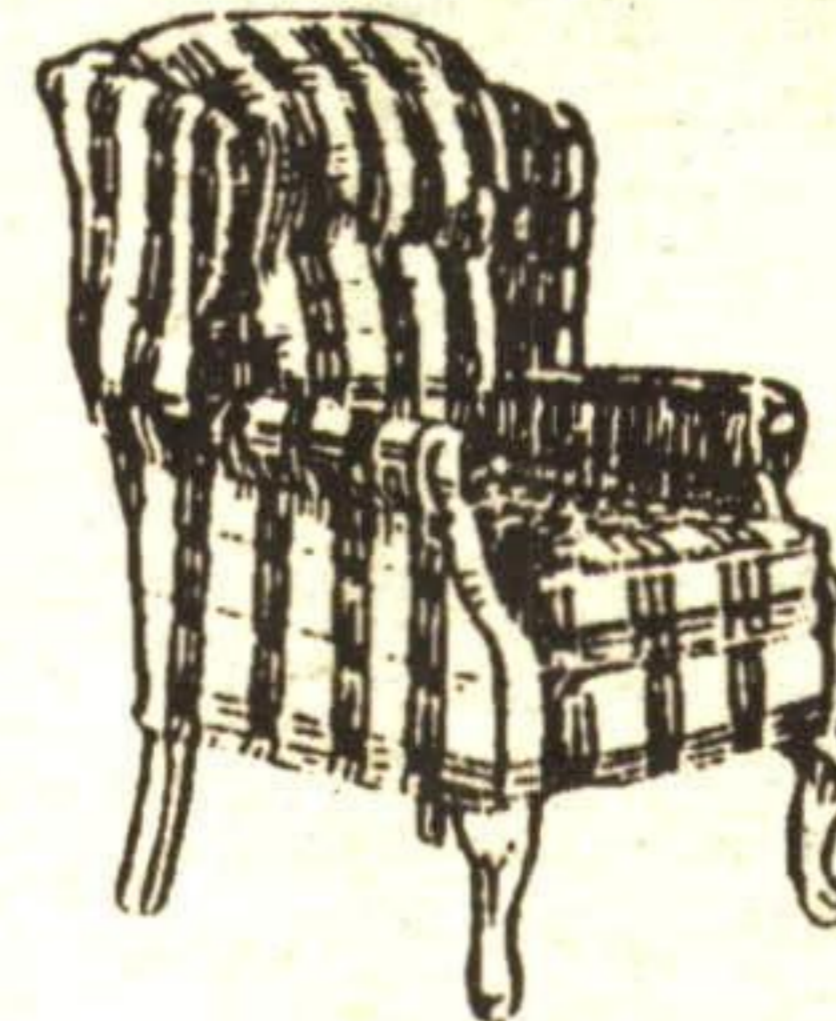
The speech was written in her native language, Ojibway.

Although there probably wasn't a person in the gymnasium who could understand the words, the spirit in which they were written was apparent — this woman loved her country, and she wanted to share that feeling with all who would listen.

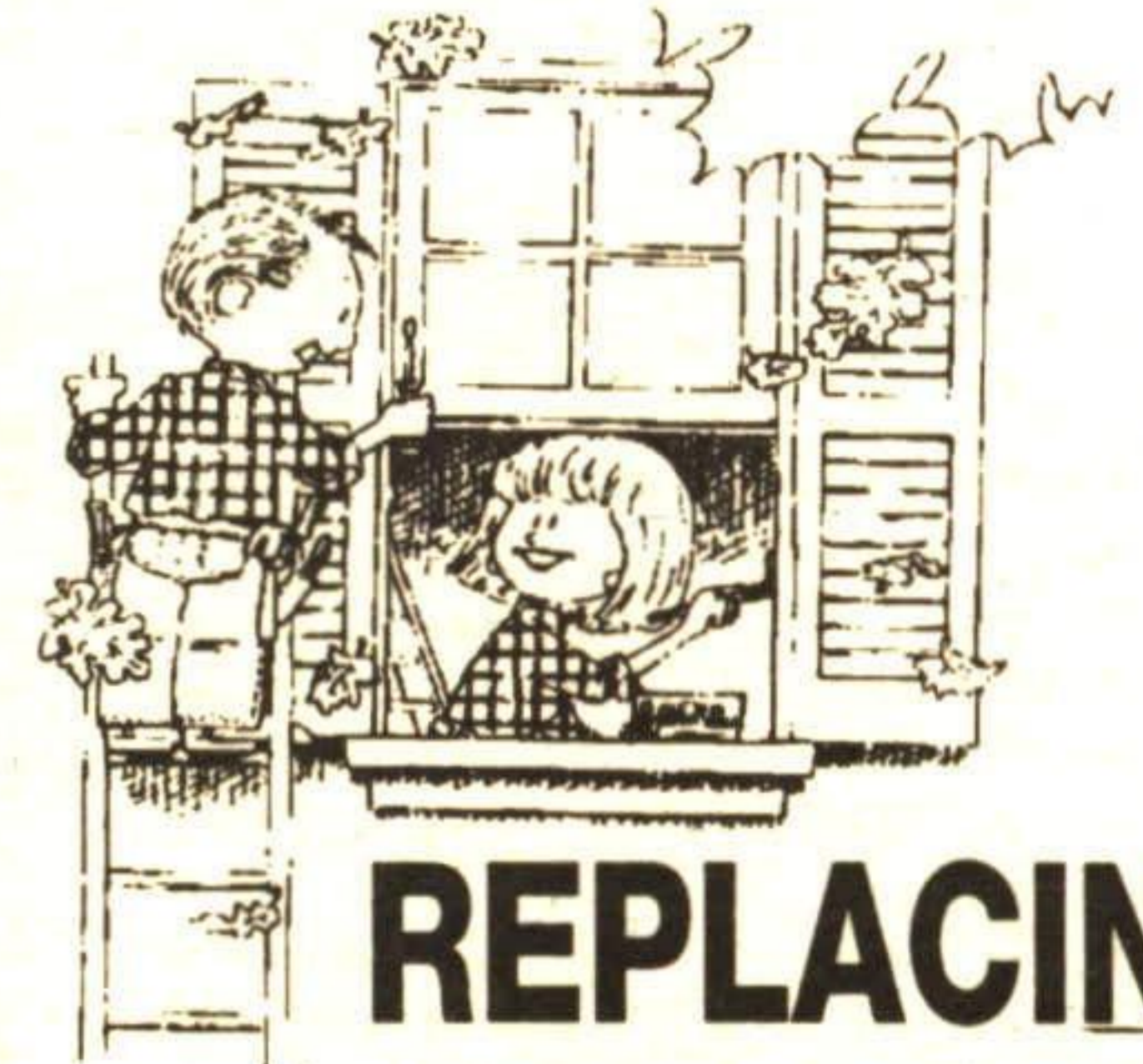
And all Canadians should do likewise, whether they be those who can lay claim to many generations of Canadian heritage, or have just arrived in this great country.

It's all the same — we're Canadians. So get out there and celebrate. Be proud. And above all, love your country.

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MALL ART: STONE ROAD MALL

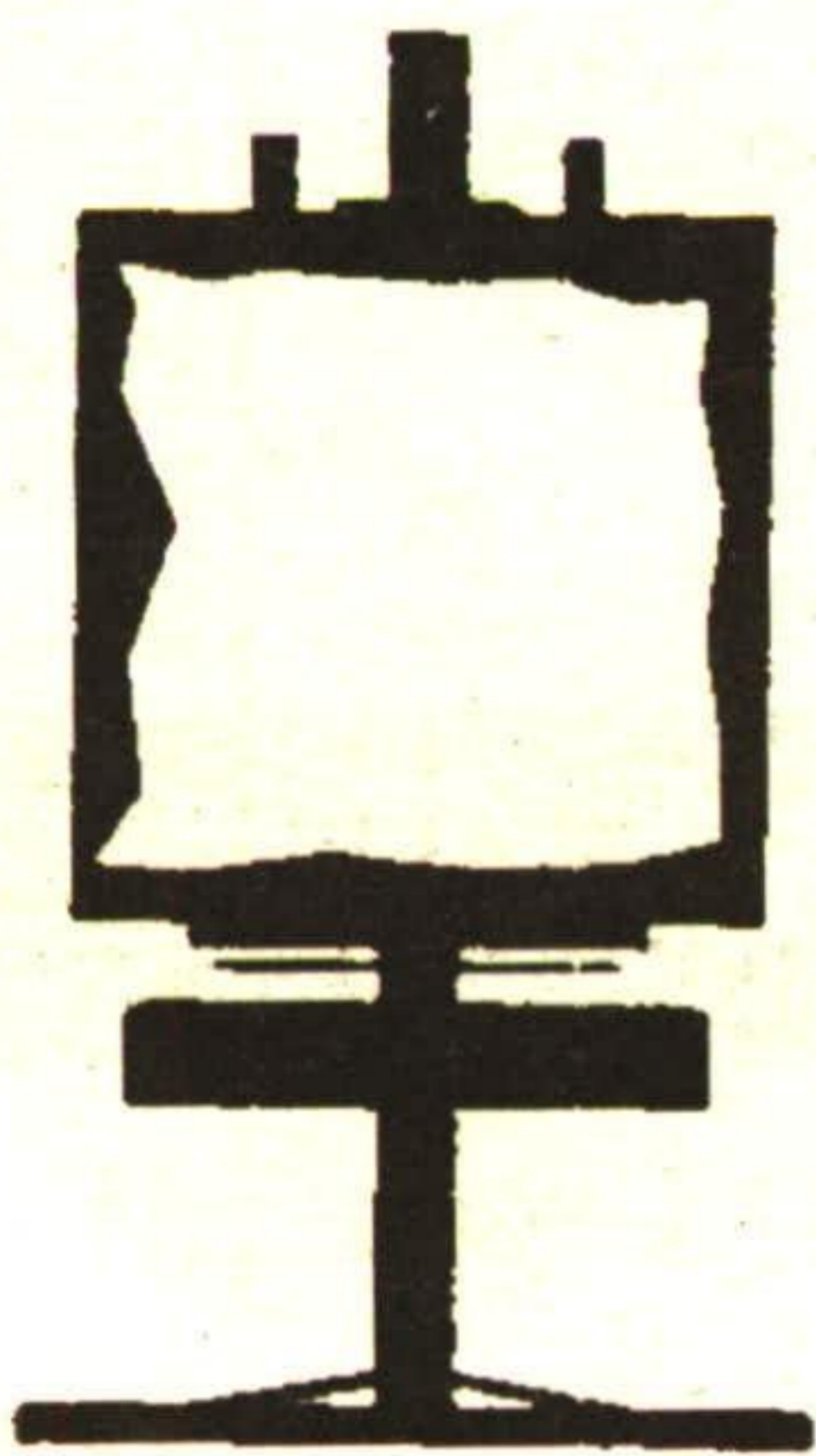
CALL FOR ARTISTS

THEME: "A CANADIAN SUMMER"
FINAL SIZE: 6 X 8 FEET, ON RAW CANVAS

Local artists are invited to submit their ideas for one of four large canvases to be on display at Stone Road Mall on hoarding during construction work at the Mall. See beside for details.
Deadline July 15, 1996.

- 4 PRIZES OF \$500 TO BE AWARDED -

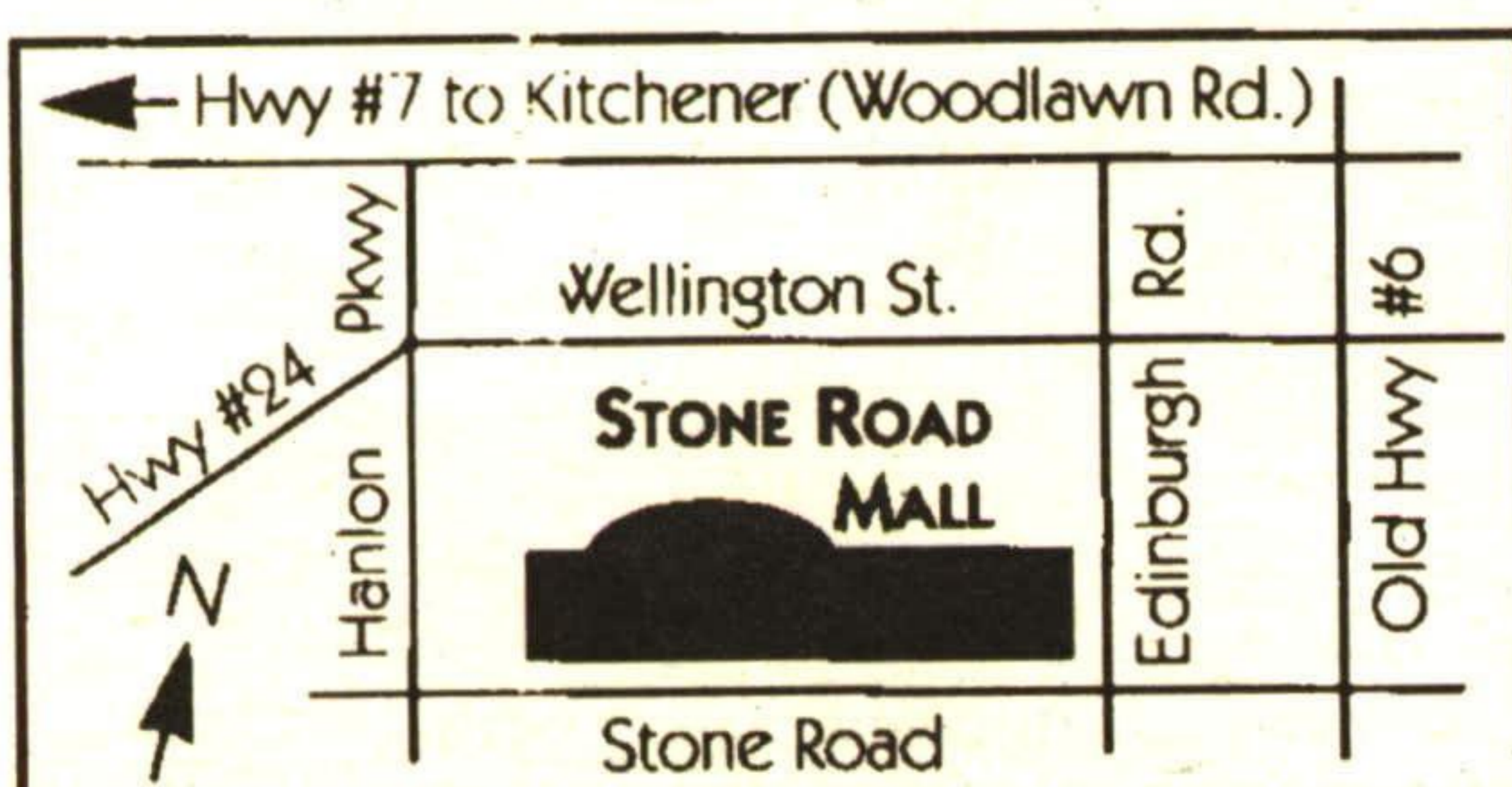
Prize will be awarded in Stone Road Mall gift Certificates. Artists will be supplied with canvas and given \$100 towards materials.



THE FINE PRINT:

A 12" x 16" artist rendition is to be supplied for selection. Final size 6 x 8 feet, open media. Leave rendition unsigned for judging. Judge's decision is final. Rendition to be delivered along with artist's name and contact number to Customer Service at Stone road Mall by July 15, 1996. Artist must be available to create work at the Mall between July 20 and August 2, 1996. All work to become property of Stone Road Mall. Must be an original work. Call 821-5780 for more information.

MALL HOURS: MONDAY TO FRIDAY: 10:00 - 9:30
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