

Arts & Entertainment

FASM president big winner in art competition

By **STEPHANIE THIESSEN**
The Champion

Three years ago, Dave Repchuk came out of the closet — the artistic closet, that is.

Known as a computer guy, he decided to embrace and explore his artistic side, picking up his paint brushes once again — a passion that had been left by the wayside.

"We're all closet cases of one sort or another. We have to open the door and let it out," said Mr. Repchuk, a Kilbride resident.

A computer software creator with 30 years' experience under his belt, Mr. Repchuk said the development of both his left and right-brain pursuits led to a fuller, richer life. And, he made a discovery. The two worlds didn't have to remain separate. He was able to bring his technical expertise into his world of art in creative and unique ways, melding them together, particularly after joining the Fine Arts Society of Milton (FASM).

"Computers are good for anything that requires creativity," he said.

For the past three years, Mr. Repchuk has

continued working at the helm of his company, Bravo Software, during the day, while painting at night. More recently, he's been focusing on photography.

Art has been a part of his life as long as he can remember, and he studied at the Banff School of Fine Arts in 1972.

"I've had art in me from an early age, but it's only been in the past five years that I've decided to let it out. You reach a point where you say, 'It's time to unearth this thing.'"

Just last month he was elected FASM president, and he recently took five awards for three of his entries at the Rockton Worlds Fair.

"It was neat being recognized, especially with the number of entries in the field," he said, adding, "It made me quite happy."

His winnings included two first-place finishes in original drawing and acrylic, and a second place in watercolour.

One of the winning entries was a painting of a sunflower, which will be used in a children's book Mr. Repchuk and his wife, Tracy, are working on called Luggage Lizard's World Tour. Each of Mr. Repchuk's illustrations will be paired with a poem by Ms Repchuk, who's an author and a poet. Their joint works can be viewed at their DOCNOT gallery or by visiting their Web site at <http://www.innersurf.com/docnot.htm>.

As for his new stint with FASM, Mr. Repchuk said he's excited. Since joining FASM a few years ago, he's been an integral part of the group, contributing in his areas of expertise. A short while ago, he spearheaded an initiative that saw a group of college students re-design the FASM Web site as a school project. The site can be visited at www.fasm.ca.

He's also the man behind a members' gallery that's being designed on the Web site. FASM members can get space on the site to virtually display their creations. It's particularly helpful for members who don't have their own Web sites, Mr. Repchuk said.

As the new FASM president, Mr. Repchuk hopes to bring in new members and ideas to the group — especially with the influx of new residents to Milton.

• see GROUP on page B2



Newly-elected FASM president Dave Repchuk works on another artistic creation.

Photo by SABRINA BYRNES

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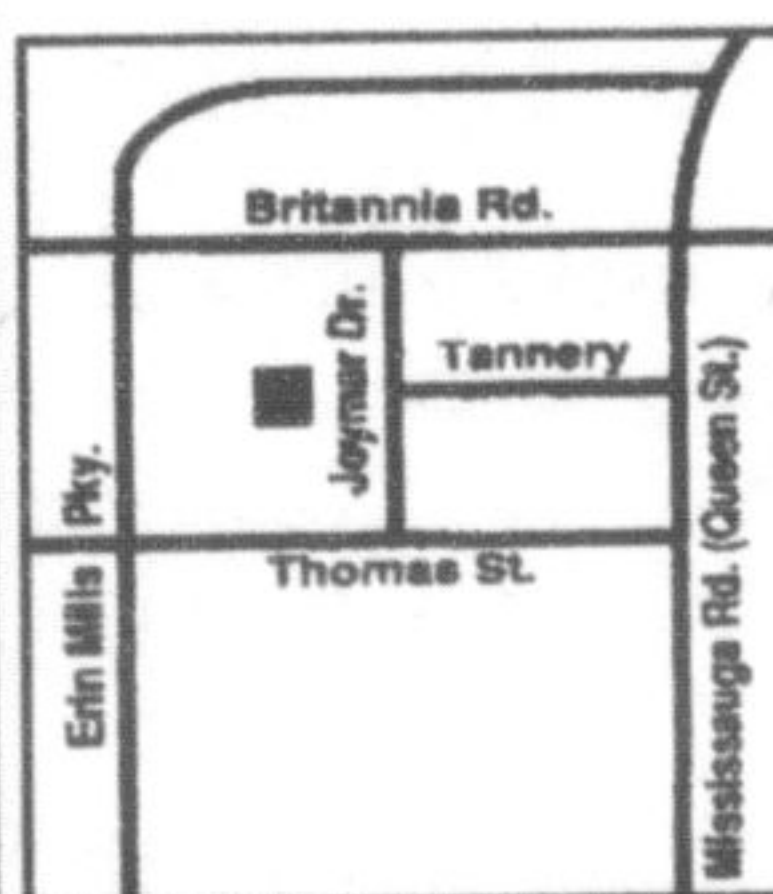
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