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Paint Your Own Pony Contest Winners Announced at Booth Western Art Museum

CARTERSVILLE, GA – The Booth Western Art Museum announced the winners of the Paint Your Own Pony Contest on Thursday, May 18, following a lecture by Lori Musil. Musil is the award-winning artist who created *Cowpony*, the life-size painted horse that is prominently featured in the Booth's atrium. The Museum encouraged artists of all ages to purchase a *Paint Your Own Pony Kit* and develop their own Painted Pony masterpiece as part of the Museum's Painted Pony Month celebrating The Trail of the Painted Ponies. Thompson Honda of Cartersville exclusively sponsors this month-long celebration.

First and second place winners were announced in each category.

Ages 8 and under:

First place: Elizabeth Blackwell, 8, for her pony *The Horse of All Seasons*

Second place: Elliott Smith, 8, for his pony *Spiser*

Ages 12 and under:

First place: Karla Perez, 10, for her pony *Mystery Art*

Second place: Aaron Ruiz, 9, for his pony *Fire Cross Horse*

Ages 18 and under:

First place: Jackie Avello, 17, for her pony *Gearing Up*

Second place: Rebecca Lewis, 16, for her pony *Silhouette Paint*

Open:

First place: Ann Yarborough for her pony *Have Paint Will Travel*

Second place: Carol Rotti for her pony *Fancy Dancer*

First place winners received a \$200 gift certificate to the Booth Museum Store and a Painted Pony gift basket. Second place winners received a \$100 gift certificate to the Booth Museum Store and a signed copy of the Painted Ponies Collector's Edition book. The Trail of Painted Ponies, Inc., is considering the winning entries for possible reproduction as a collectible figurine.

In addition to Musil, judges for the contest included Rod Barker, President of The Trail of the Painted Ponies; Jackie Thompson, art collector and horse trainer; and Lisa Wheeler, Director of Education for the Booth Western Art Museum.

There were 107 ponies entered in the contest, and participants ranged in age from 4 to 74. Most entries were from Georgia, but one entry came from as far as Michigan.

Executive Director of the Museum Seth Hopkins said, “We are very pleased with the enthusiastic response to our Painted Ponies month here at the Booth Museum. With over 100 great entries, the judges had a difficult time deciding on the winners. It was great to see so much artistic talent on display in one place, and to know what great artists we have around North Georgia.”

Winners and other entries may be viewed in the Member’s Lounge of the Booth Museum until May 31, and visitors are invited to submit their votes through the end of the month in each age category for the People’s Choice Award. Winners of the award will be announced in early June.

Visitors may also view Jackie Thompson’s private collection of Painted Ponies figurines, displayed in the Museum Atrium through the end of May. This display allows many people to see some of the Painted Ponies that have already been retired, as well as view two original Painted Ponies by Lori Musil commissioned by the Thompson family.

The May 2006 celebration also included children’s Saturday activities, a painting demonstration by Lori Musil, and special sales in the Museum Store.

About the Booth Western Art Museum:

The Booth Western Museum is an 80,000 square foot museum located in Cartersville, Georgia, where guests are invited to explore the American West through contemporary Western artwork. The Museum also features a Presidential Gallery, a Civil War art gallery, and Sagebrush Ranch, featuring hands-on art activities and area for role-playing, storytelling and reading, all with a Western flair. Visitors to Booth Museum also enjoy the intimate downtown setting with unique specialty and antique shops, boutiques, and nationally featured restaurants, all within walking distance of the Museum. Open since August 2003, the Booth Museum is the only museum of its kind in the Southeast and is the second largest museum in the state of Georgia. For more information about the Booth Western Art Museum call 770-387-1300 or visit www.boothmuseum.org.

About Lori Musil:

A native of Tucson, Arizona, Lori Musil now resides in the hills overlooking historic Cerrillos, New Mexico, just south of Santa Fe. A painter, potter, jeweler, and sculptor of the West and its wildlife, she is a self-taught artist with a keen sense of fine detail. During her 30-year career in commercial art, she also began working with clay and ran a small pottery gallery. A cowgirl at heart, Musil describes her art as “embodying a variety of subjects...from cowboys and Indians, to sun-dappled gardens and spirit-filled landscapes. Every medium speaks to me in a different manner – each having its own style and stroke.”

About The Tale of The Trail of Painted Ponies:

The Trail began in Santa Fe in 2001 as a popular public art exhibition that invited the very best artists to magically transform life-size horse sculptures into glorious works of art. These stunning Painted Ponies enchanted thousands of people when they were exhibited throughout the state of New Mexico. At the conclusion of the exhibition, these Painted

Ponies were rounded up and auctioned to benefit worthy philanthropic organizations. To date, The Trail of Painted Ponies has raised close to one million dollars for deserving charities.

Since that time, The Trail of Painted Ponies has crafted exquisite collectible-sized figurines that are replicas of the original Painted Ponies. These miniature works of art have quickly become one of the hottest selling collectibles in America. The Trail of Painted Ponies books have also become national best sellers. From Main Street to museums, collectors and critics are raving about The Trial of Painted Ponies!

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