

# Designing the next great piece of art



CHRIS DEBACK PHOTOS

Vaalik Wachmann and Dalton Rinnels show off their sculpture of a fish jumping out of water. At right: Anna SmolikHagen, Elizabeth Rand, Emily Tapken and Sophia Perkins talk about one of their sculptures.

## W-SR students show-off their talent for Kohlmann Park

by CHRIS DEBACK

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What Waverly means is an often discussed topic at council meetings and over morning coffee in area establishments.

Soon, residents and visitors will see another rendition of this ongoing existential question, but this time it will not be city officials articulating their vision or gabbing neighbors retelling the same story.

The new vision — and its realization, a sculpture in Kohlmann Park — will showcase an important and often unheard voice, that of



A sculpture designed by Lauren Fox, Abi Harr, Rachel Black and Erin Hinder that involves puzzle pieces.

Waverly-Shell Rock Middle School students.

Exactly what the sculpture would look like will be determined by a competitive selection process, and the final decisions will belong to the Waverly Chamber Design and Beautification Committee (WCDB).

The pool of artwork reviewed by the committee featured designs by teams of eighth-graders led by art teacher Chelsie Meyer.

This is the first time that students have tackled a sculpture designated for a public park. In the past, they have helped create a signature piece which is displayed outside the middle school.

On a recent Friday, the students presented their projects to UNI Art Professor Tom Stancliffe, Dan Perry, UNI shop technician, and Kathryn Bruening, UNI art student, in order to get some helpful feedback on the aesthetics and logistics of their ideas.

One project featured a circular bench, behind which the letter W stood. Another experimented with three puzzle-like pieces on top of each other and still



another created a fish jumping out of the water.

"They're thinking about it in complicated ways and it is a complicated subject," Stancliffe told Waverly Newspapers on Friday. "They are trying to think of their hometown, everything that it could be for them from their perspective and trying to make a form out of that, it is challenging for anybody, but they are doing amazing things which is great."

Meyer said working with an artist is a benefit for her students.

"They are able to see that not only I care about their design or art, but also able to see other people in the community and people within other aspects of life are investing in them by having them come today and giving them feedback as well as myself," Meyer told Waverly Newspapers on Friday.

Stancliffe was impressed by how advanced some of the pieces were.

"Some of the students take things very literally and some of them thinking more abstractly about it," Stancliffe said. "There both good, but I think they're amazed at what they are producing."

The winning design will be refined by Bruening and other UNI art students and eventually put into production.



Clockwise from bottom left: Kathryn Bruening (UNI student), Tom Stancliffe (UNI Art Professor), Dan Perry (UNI Art Professor), Chelsie Meyer (W-SR Art Teacher), Kurby Vowels (student), Matthew Pursell (student) and Jacey Meier (student) talk about the W-SR Middle School students' art project and what they can do to improve it.

Members of WCDB committee had identified six locations in Waverly where public art could be placed, but because a stone slab already existed Kohlmann park, where a statue on loan to the city had been located, was the logical place to start.

"Art is so important because it creates a reaction," Tab Ray, WCDB committee member said. "There is several in the community that don't think there is enough art in town, we think this is just kind of a first step that we're going to start doing some stuff with that."

The eight-day project is a part of Design It week at the

middle school where eighth graders were given the chance to choose from three options, sculpture with Meyer, creative sewing with Kristie Khuse and 3D printing with Shane Erlandson.

"They can see that their

creative vision or perspective on the community is now in [that sculpture] that is now in the park that maybe there kids will see," Stancliffe said. "I think that is a really nice idea."

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