

Public art project displays island's essence

BY MELANIE BOLTHOUSE
Summer Guide editor

The name Mackinac comes from the word Michilimackinac, meaning great turtle.

To celebrate its reptilian namesake and the Mackinac Island Community Foundation's 10th anniversary, the island will present "Turtles Around Town," a public art project that is on

display until Aug. 14.

Twenty-four decorated fiberglass turtles standing 34 inches tall, 44 inches wide and 7 1/2 feet long will be placed around the island for visitors and residents alike to admire.

"We've been wanting to do this for a long time, but it's such a big project that the foundation's 10th anniversary seemed like a natural time to undertake such a

thing," said Kristen Lewald Graham, MICF director. "I'm so excited because this project in particular aims to accomplish everything the community foundation stands for. We wanted something for the island to enjoy and visitors and residents to look at and love. That's why our turtles are so big and so great."

A spin-off of Chicago's Cows on Parade, Turtles around Town is defined as a "simple concept with a large impact."

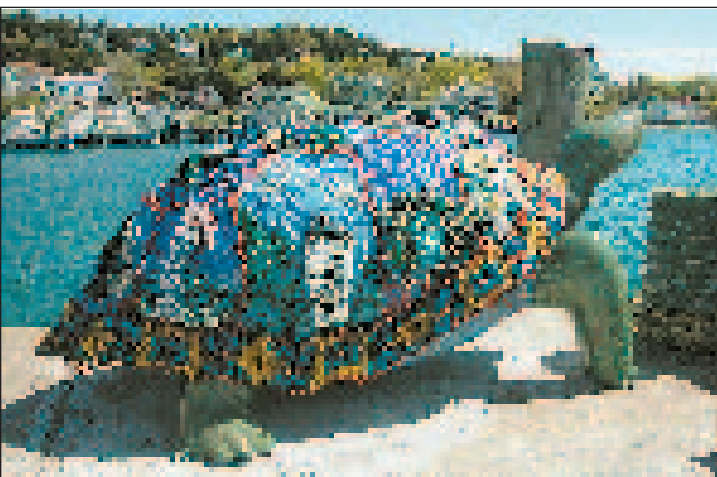
Artists with ties to the island proposed designs for different turtles and Mackinac Island sponsors chose to fund either a specific artist or design. Sponsorship was \$1,000 to help underwrite the cost of the turtle. The Sage Foundation is also underwriting the project, which includes The Great Turtle Festival July 5-7, where the turtles and the artists will be celebrated.

After the turtles have



Record-Eagle/Melanie Bolthouse

Michigan artist Marlee Brown created Trillium Turtle to represent the abundant flowers on Mackinac Island.



Record-Eagle/Melanie Bolthouse

Jewel of Mackinac was designed by Kelly Dorman, who constructed island icons out of beaded wire.

been on display for the summer, they will be auctioned off Aug. 15 to raise money for the Mackinac community's not-for-profit organizations.

"It was important that we use this project to benefit everyone and I think this is a great way to do that," Graham said. "People get to enjoy the turtles all sum-

mer, take them home if they are the high bidder and then we get to help out all the groups we try to help throughout the year."

Among the turtles on display, and ultimately up for sale, are designs with names such as Yankee Turtle Dandee, Matisse

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