Local woman wins Marine Science Day artwork contest at VIMS

(May 2, 2011) Beth Beaubien of Williamsburg was awarded first place in the Virginia Institute of Marine Science's annual Marine Science Day artwork contest for her line drawing of a seahorse.

Beaubien's winning entry was one of more than 75 pieces of seahorse art submitted by children and adults from throughout Tidewater Virginia. It becomes the official design for this year's edition of Marine Science Day at VIMS, to be used in publications, advertisements, and on the 2011 Marine Science Day T-shirt.

Beaubien says she has a soft spot for seahorses, so when she saw the theme of this year's contest, she knew she had to enter. She adds, "I'm a huge fan of VIMS and was very happy to have found a way to support its work."
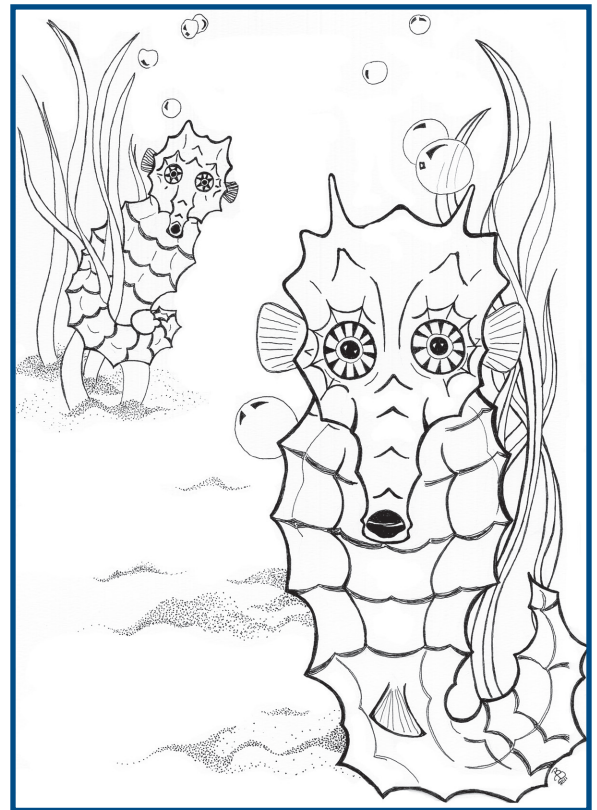
For her efforts, Beaubien will receive a framed print of the final artwork and one of the T-shirts printed with her drawing. The gifts will be presented during a brief awards ceremony during Marine Science Day on May 21.

Contest organizer Susan Maples, public outreach coordinator at VIMS, says the friendly competition provides local artists with an opportunity to display their talents while also supporting VIMS and its mission of restoring and enhancing Chesapeake Bay and its marine life.

"We had an amazing number of engaging works to chose from this year," says Maples. "It was very difficult to chose a single first-place winner." Judging was based on originality, fit with the Marine Science Day theme, and suitability for use on a T-shirt.

Second place in the contest went to Khatiana Perez, a 3rd grader at Ware Academy in Gloucester. Third place went to Phyllis Faas of Williamsburg. Honorable mentions went to 5th-grader Melissa Newsome and 4th-grader Tyler Grant-Carteret of Abingdon Elementary in Hayes; Amanda DiSpirito of Gloucester; Erin Forgit, an 8th grader at Hornsby Middle School in Williamsburg; Matt Freedman and Gabrielle Saluta of VIMS; and Jacob Ward, a 3rd grader at Ware Academy. Many of the entries received will be displayed at VIMS during the Marine Science Day festivities.

VIMS honors a different animal or environmental feature each year during Marine Science Day. In addition to this year's choice of a seahorse, past selections were sand (2010), scallops (2009), a penguin (2008), a sturgeon (2007), plankton (2006), a shark (2005), a sea turtle (2004), and a blue crab (2003).

Beth Beaubien's winning entry, titled Curious.

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Marine Science Day is VIMS' annual open house, a fun-filled event for the whole family that offers exhibits, children's activities, seining on the York River, lab tours, seafood cooking demonstrations, mini-lectures, and much more. All activities are free, as is parking. The event, which takes place on the VIMS campus in Gloucester Point, proceeds rain or shine. For more information, visit vims.edu/msd

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