

Penguin Parade auction slated for Friday

The Penguin Parade public arts project culminates on Friday, Oct. 29 at a gala celebration in Stambaugh Auditorium, featuring an auction of 29, seven-foot-tall fiberglass penguins to the highest bidders.

"This is the culminating event of a project that was started more than 18 months ago and that has sparked a true sense of community pride and spirit," said Catherine Cala, associate director of the Office of Development at Youngstown State University. "This will be a great evening of entertainment and celebration."

Penguin Parade, sponsored by the Community Foundation of the Mahoning Valley and YSU, is a public arts project that debuted at the Summer Festival of the Arts on the YSU campus in July. Thirty penguin sculptures, colorfully-decorated by local artists, were then placed at public locations throughout Mahoning and Trumbull counties. Last week, all of the penguins were moved to the Eastwood Mall, where they are on exhibit under the gazebo in the mall's Center Court.

On Thursday, Oct. 28, the penguins will be moved to the ballroom of Stambaugh Auditorium, where they will be auctioned beginning at 7:30 p.m. Friday, Oct. 29. J. Paul Basinger of Basinger Auction Service in North Lima will conduct the auction. Amanda Beagle, YSU graduate and Miss Ohio 2004, and David Luscher, YSU graduate and associate director of WYSU FM, will assist.

The auction will be preceded by hors d'oeuvres, desserts, live jazz and a cash bar at 6 p.m. Tickets for the auction are \$50 and are available at the door. Corporate-sponsored tables of eight cost \$500. More than 300 tickets for the auction have been sold. For more information, call the Community Foundation of the Mahoning Valley at 330-743-5555.

Participants who want to bid on a penguin must purchase a ticket for the auction, register at the event and receive a bid number. Bids also are being taken on line at www.basingerauctions.com. Bidding for each penguin is expected to start at about \$1,000.

At the end of the auction, the winning ticket in the raffle for the Hot Rod Penguin will be drawn. More than 1,000 tickets, at \$5 each, have been sold for a chance to win the penguin. Tickets are available at area Key Bank locations and will be sold at the auction.

"This is going to be a fabulous party to celebrate the success of Penguin Parade," said Karen DeAmicis of Home Savings & Loan Co., co-chair of the public arts project.

Proceeds from the event and the auction benefit the YSU McDonough Museum of Art, YSU's SMARTS program, the Community Foundation of the Mahoning Valley and its endowment funds.