

YSU police investigate missing penguin sculpture

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"Mosaic In Metal," one of the 31 penguins in the Penguin Parade public arts project in Youngstown, is missing.

The five-foot tall fiberglass penguin, which was bolted to a two-foot base, was last seen 5 a.m. Friday, July 17, between Moser Hall and Ward Beecher Hall on the Youngstown State University campus. It was discovered missing early that afternoon, university officials say.

Penguin Parade is a public arts project co-sponsored by YSU and the Community Foundation of the Mahoning Valley. Penguin sculptures, sponsored by local businesses and individuals and decorated in a variety of colorful ways by local artists, were placed in locations throughout the YSU campus during the Summer Festival of the Arts July 10 and 11. After the arts festival, the penguins were delivered to locations throughout Mahoning and Trumbull counties, where they will stay until an auction is conducted in October.

"Mosaic in Metal," decorated with hundreds of one-inch square stainless steel tiles, arrived on campus on Saturday, July 10. After the arts festival, the artist was to pick up the penguin for completion, but it turned up missing before it could be moved.

A photo of the penguin is available at www.ysu.edu/penguinparade/cooper.html.

The YSU Police Department is investigating the case. Chief John Gocala said that theft of one of the penguins could result in a charge of felony theft.

Anyone with any information about the penguin should call YSU police at 330-941-3527.

Patricia Brozik, executive director of the Community Foundation, said the other 30 penguins – four of which are displayed on the YSU campus and 26 others that are at locations throughout the Mahoning Valley – are safe and sound.

"The community has been very appreciative and respectful of these penguins as works of art," she said. The foundation owns and insures the penguins.

Gocala said YSU police are working with local law enforcement agencies to assure that the penguins are safe.