

Hot pavement yields cool art



by **Desiree Shannon**
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Robert Levy, a painter, works from a stock photo of a woman looking at the ocean at sunset. Levy took second place at last year's competition. Credit: Desiree Shannon

Downtown Evanston sidewalks became a little more colorful Sunday as artists took to the pavement to create chalk art designs for the 8th Annual Sidewalk Chalk Art Contest.

The event, organized by [Downtown Evanston](#), had originally been scheduled for Saturday, but was postponed because of rain in the forecast.

Laura Brown, director of marketing for Downtown Evanston, said that 12 to 14 adults had signed up to compete this year. There were also a few children participating this year as well.

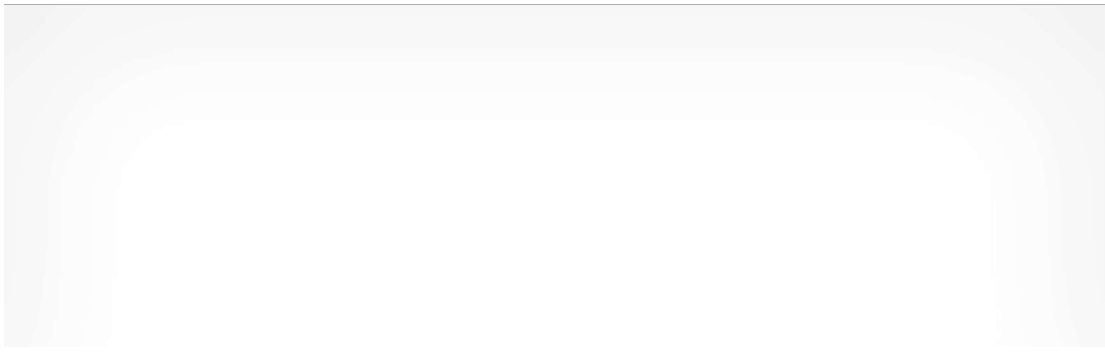
Brown said a lot of registrants have participated in other chalk events around Chicagoland, adding that they “are all pretty talented.”

Though most contest participants are old hands at producing chalk art, there are some who do it for fun, such as Natalie Glogowski, who was working near Accents Plus on Davis Street. She was creating a colorful iguana on the pavement.



Natalie Glogowski shows off her multi-colored rendering of an iguana. Credit: Desiree Shannon

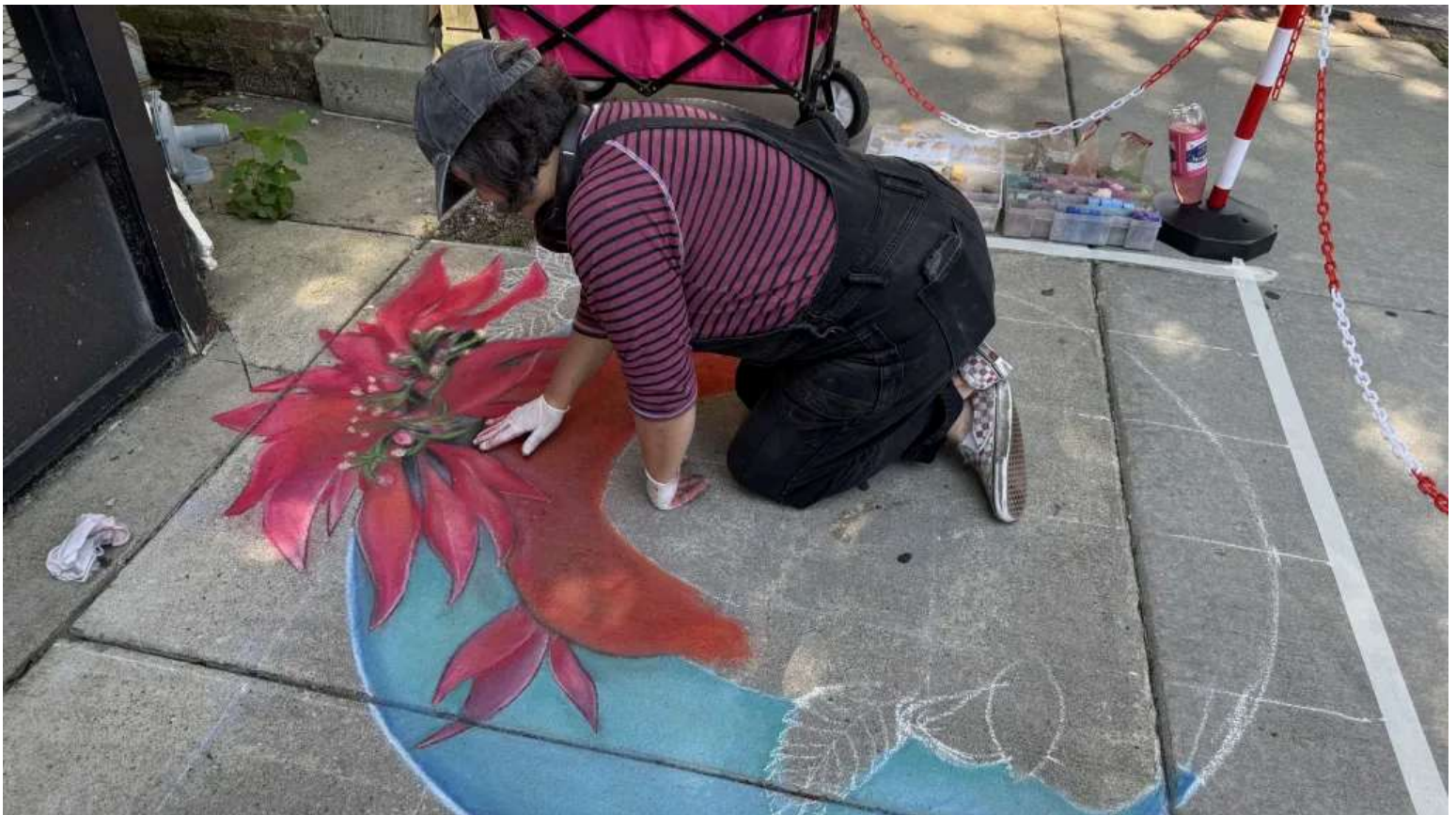
Before this event, she had only done one chalk event in her hometown of Lemont as a way to share a fun activity with her children and win free pool passes for the family. That said, she also really enjoys creating chalk art. “I love this, it is so much fun...it’s just so therapeutic...all you do is mix colors and get to talk to people,” she said.



Chalk art has its origins in 16th century Italy, where artists called Madonnari drew religious pictures on the streets.

This type of art spread throughout Europe and later to the United States, where it has enjoyed a revival over the past few years..

Here are some Madonnari and the work they were producing Sunday on downtown sidewalks.



Costume designer Elizabeth Niemczyk works on a portrait of an El Salvadorian girl, working from the top where she has drawn a colorful hair ornament. She said chalk drawing is “my Zen activity.” Her space was near Madison Grace on Davis Street. Credit: Desiree Shannon



Visual artist Cassandra Martinez, working on Sherman Avenue, works on a picture of a young girl in a field of colorful flowers, meant to suggest “that the light is within you.”
Credit: Desiree Shannon



Loyola art student Alessandra Borroni sets up her space outside of Blick Art Materials on Maple Avenue to work on “Starry Night Chicago.” Credit: Desiree Shannon



Students Josephine Greenwood and Claudia Nord join efforts to paint the beloved Evanston Lighthouse on Maple Street. The lighthouse signifies summer to these two Evanston natives. Credit: Desiree Shannon



Ebony Sade begins sketching a portrait of three celebrities who recently passed on:—Malcom-Jamal Warner, Hulk Hogan and Ossie Osbourne—on Davis Street. Credit: Desiree Shannon