By Jackie Finch

Photos courtesy of Sycamore Land Trust

New Sycamore Land Trust calendar features children’s art

When Selena Garcia decided to create a painting for Sycamore Land Trust’s Nature Discovery Art Contest, the 10-year-old Bloomington girl didn’t have to look far for inspiration. “I was inspired by my yard and all the animals that live inside it, like the chipmunk I named Chippy,” she says. “One reason it is important to protect the Earth is because we all live in it, on just one planet. And that is why I created this piece of artwork.”

Titled “Home to All of us,” Selena’s artwork is one of 10 selections from local young artists for the 2022 Kids’ Nature Discovery Calendar. The artwork is currently on display at Bell Trace Senior Living Community through January and next will be displayed at Meadowood Senior Living Community through March. “This is the first effort of its kind for Sycamore Land Trust,” says Kate Hammel, communications and membership director for Sycamore Land Trust. “We love every entry we received and our community has many extraordinarily talented young artists. Their work is beautiful and inspiring.”

Proceeds from the calendar will be used to support Sycamore Land Trust’s work to protect land, nature habitat and connect people to nature, Kate says. “The purpose of the calendar is educational and to involve local young artists in encouraging everyone to notice and appreciate nature. “An important part of Sycamore’s mission is to connect people with nature,” Kate says. “By doing so, we inspire people to help take care of it.”

In her painting called “Beauty of the Night,” 10-year-old Madeline. Hornecker says she chose that theme “because the night is beautiful like the hooting of the owls and the chirping of the crickets.” Madeline drew owls, bats, trees and crickets for her creation. “This ecosystem is very special,” she says. “It’s important to keep this ecosystem alive for the day and night creatures.”

Wealth of environmental information

In addition to the children’s art work, the calendar contains interesting information on birds, animals and the environment, plus photographs and a section on “What to look for this month.” For example, in February under the heading of “Will the groundhog see his shadow?” the calendar has a photo of a groundhog and notes that “according to legend, the groundhog’s shadow after emerging from its burrow on February 2 predicts the weather for the next six weeks. If no shadow is seen due to cloudy weather, spring will come early.”

Since the calendar is created for children, Kate says that featuring art from young artists was important. “These young artists took time to really observe nature closely and share the beauty they found with us,” she says. Building artist 5-year-old Madison Hornecker chose “Waterfall and Trees” for her calendar creation. “Cause it’s important to protect nature so trees can grow and clean up the trunks so the animals are safe and happy.”

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Founded in 1990, the nonprofit Sycamore Land Trust now has more than 4,200 members with a goal to protect land in southern Indiana. “We protect 30,302 acres on 121 properties,” said executive director Shade Backus, who noted that land preservation provides stewardship education to empower people to get involved in habitat restoration work and provide free environmental education programming for local schools and community organizations,” Kate says.

Young artists choose various subjects for their paintings. Maiya Marinova combined two of her loves – rainbows and the color pink – for her “Gor- geous Rainbow with the Sun.” “I added a little detail with a heart in it because I love nature,” the 6-year-old says. “And another thing is this: I didn’t waste paper because if I waste paper, I would be wasting trees because paper is made out of trees.” And another thing is this. I didn’t waste paper because if I waste paper, I would be wasting trees because paper is made out of trees.

Her choice, Elise Koehl says, was “Tom and Several Hen Turkeys.” “I was inspired to make this picture by the scene behind me of a tom and several hen turkeys. I think it is important to protect nature so there could be places like this for turkeys,” she says.

Even a rainy day can be beautiful, adds 10-year-old Avalon Ellis. “I call it the ‘Girl in the Rain.’ I really enjoyed making this. It was really fun. I think nature is beautiful and it is important to protect it because if we don’t, a lot of animals’ homes will be destroyed.”

Five-year-old artist Niko picked his grandmother’s flower is the violet cause you can eat it and you can use it. “My favorite flower is the violet cause you can eat it and you can use it. “My favorite flower is the violet cause you can eat it and you can use it.”

“We are grateful to all of these talented young artists for sharing their love of nature through this art,” Kate says, adding that Sycamore Land Trust already provides free environment education programming for local schools and community organizations. “It was really fun. I think nature is beautiful and it is important to protect it because if we don’t, a lot of animals’ homes will be destroyed.”

For more information, visit www.sycamorelandtrust.org.

Next Week in Homes:

Frank Lloyd Wright’s Allen House considered radical at time

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plans to create a 2023 calen-
der with selections from a
photography art contest for
all ages next year. “We also plan to hold another Kids’ Nature Discovery Art Contest, but the selections will be featured in a gallery walk at a Sycamore preserve, rather than in a calendar,” Kate says.

In conclusion, Phoebe Bullard says she chose to draw a picture of a fox family in a clearing to deliver an important message to everyone. “The mom and little boy are looking at the last falling leaf and the little girl is distracted and looking at a hollow tree,” the 9-year-old says, adding that she colored the picture with water paint.

“We didn’t protect the world around us and all the plants and animals in it, there wouldn’t be a beautiful world to live in,” Phoebe says. “And if there wasn’t a beautiful world to live in, life would be miserable without it.”

For more information: Visit Sycamore Land Trust at sycamore-landtrust.org. Calen-
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