

THUNDERBOX ROAD

trail of the painted privies

By JOHN HALLOWELL

Sonja Howle was multi-tasking. At work one day (incidentally, she works in a barn), she picked up her boss's coffee-table-style picture-book called *Nature Calls: the History, Lore and Charm of Outhouses*. She was greatly intrigued and, since her job is business development for Sand Creek Post & Beam (on FM 3351, north of Bergheim; the barn that she works in is one of their creations – an absolutely beautiful barn with clean, modern offices amid rustic exposed beams and charming “country” decorations), she set out with Sand Creek owners Stan and Pam Hegener to come up with a fun and interesting promotion involving old-fashioned privies. Under Howle's energetic leadership, the project has grown into an amazing regional artistic event.

The Hegeners built twelve identical, classically-designed outhouses (“thunderboxes”) and invited twelve noted area artists to customize them for a traveling art show, beginning on the banks of Cibolo Creek in Boerne October 4. The participating artists were: David Querbach, Pamela Gardner, Nancy McGalliard, Ken and Donna Malson, Thom Evans, Rex Hausmann, Dotti Brundrett, C.J. Latta, Ben Beckendorf, Betty Rhodes and Greg Glowka, Gwendolyn Listerman and Charles and Tami Kegley. They did their jobs well!

The premiere at the Creek restaurant in Boerne was a well-attended, fun event featuring a short speech by Mayor Dan Heckler, a public introduction of the artists and plenty of time to examine the unique masterpieces on a beautiful October afternoon. The display remained in Boerne through October 20, when it moved on up the road to Ingram for a two-week stay at the Hill Country Arts Foundation. Then it was off to Fredericksburg for three weeks at Grape Creek Vineyards. By the time you read this, the Thunderbox Road Art Exhibition should be back at the point of origin, Sand Creek Post & Beam in Bergheim, through the end of December.

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In the photo above, artists Thom Evans of Boerne, Ben Beckendorf of Fredericksburg and C.J. Latta of Fredericksburg stand near their masterpieces during the official introduction in Boerne October 4. In the top left photo, Mayor Dan Heckler of Boerne poses beside Latta's privy, dedicated to Latta's grandmother, Valeska Mueller. At left, "flames" erupt from the thunderbox submitted by Nancy McGalliard, of Comfort.



Wild horses thunder across the walls of Gwendolyn Listerman's thunderbox. Listerman hails from Kerrville.

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