

Celebrating the best of the human spirit

THE UP BEAT

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THE OTTAWA



This photo of the Jock River, taken by nine-year-old Adam Eido, won first prize in the youth category of the Appreciation of the Jock River Photo Contest, put on by the Friends of the Jock River. 'It reminds me of the time I spent there with my dad,' Eido says of the photograph.

Respect for river a snap

Junior shutterbug walks off with first prize for photo of 'beautiful river'

BY M.J. DESCHAMPS

While other kids his age are more likely to be sprawled out on the couch after school playing video games, nine-year-old Adam Eido is down at the Jock River, hoping to snap some good pictures before dinnertime.

Adam, a fifth-grader at St. Emily's Catholic School in Nepean, has been taking photographs for four years, he said, with the Jock River's nature and wildlife his main subject.

"As soon as my family moved to this house, and I saw the river, I thought it was just so beautiful," Adam said.

He recently won first place (and an Olympus camera) in the youth category of the Appreciation of the Jock River Photo Contest, put on by the Friends of the Jock River. The awards ceremony was held Wednesday night at the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority Centre.

Friends of the Jock River is a non-profit citizens' volunteer group, dedicated to improving the environment around this tributary of the Rideau River. Friends of the Jock River work with landowners, recreational users, government agencies and businesses to find solutions to problems that may threaten the health of the river.

The group received 200 photo submissions in total from 80 individuals in three different age categories — youth, teen and adult. Although the contest was initially aimed at school-aged children, it was extended to adults after the volume of submissions from kids was lower than expected.

Brian Finch, president of Friends of the Jock River, said he was disappointed with the response. He said the contest was held to help raise awareness among the next generation about environmental concerns and the importance of conservation.

Finch said that the Jock River is facing dangers right now due to destruction of wetlands and major developments in Barrhaven.

"The best way that we can protect the river is to make sure that people know about it," said Finch, who plans to take the catalogue of

submitted images to contest sponsors to display in their businesses.

"Hopefully people will see my picture and start going down to see the river, too," said Adam.

Frank McGregor, who placed first in the adult category, said it is crucial that the younger generation begin to appreciate the beauty of nature as much as Adam.

"Children are the future, and that also means that they are the future gatekeepers of the river, and of the environment as a whole," he said.

The importance of protecting the Jock River runs even deeper for Adam.

"My dad and I always go fishing there, and look at the birds and the waves," he said.

"I look at my (winning) picture every day, and the most important part to me is how it reminds me of the time I spent there with my dad."

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