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### **Festival of the Arts is an Acushnet tradition**

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By Eric Chew Correspondent May 20, 2014 12:00 AM

ACUSHNET — More than 450 works were displayed on Thursday, May 8, at the Ford Middle School's annual Festival of the Arts. The middle school artists, in grades 5-8, create their masterpieces under the direction of talented artist and teacher Kristine Daniels.

Ms. Daniels, who is in her 20th year of teaching, said she is grateful for the teachers, parents and volunteers who are willing to step up and lend a hand.

"To be part of a well-supported arts program, without which a lot of this would not have been possible, is just amazing," she said. In addition to being a well-respected and popular teacher, Ms. Daniels is also an author and illustrator. Her works include *Floyd and the Irresistible Cookie* (2009, Dog Ear Publishing) and *Floyd and the Mysterious Night Time Noise* (2011).

I was also lucky enough to catch up with Principal Christopher Green who offered to give me a tour of all the artwork displayed. This will be Mr. Green's last festival as he gets ready to step down from his position as principal in order to return to the classroom. As part of his judging duties, he chose several of his favorite pieces and placed award ribbons on them.

Select pieces will also be chosen for a special exhibit at this year's Annual Acushnet Art Show on May 17 - 18 at the Acushnet Council on Aging. The COA is located at 59.5 S. Main St.

When asked for his thoughts about the Festival of the Arts, Mr. Green said, "This event is my favorite project. Ms. Daniels is pretty amazing."

Continuing on, I came across 8th graders Alicia Amaral and Cora Monast who proudly displayed their Venetian carnival masks. The masks were made of plaster from a mold and took between six and 15 hours to complete. Also in the media arts presentation area, a video of "The Lost Sea" by the drama club was playing for all to enjoy.

Meanwhile in the auditorium, visitors were treated to music by the Ford Middle School Chorus lead by Brian Shanbrun, who along with Ms. Daniels helped put together the festival. They sang songs like "The Journey" and "Heatwave."

Various student musicians could be heard playing over the course of the evening. And thanks to funding from the Acushnet Cultural Council, a professional clarinet quintet played in the main lobby.

Volunteer teachers and students sold school supplies and handmade jewelry for a class fundraiser. Proceeds will be used for special year-end activities for the 8th grade class before graduation.