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Western Bradford Notebook: Troy area shutterbug wins top award

Published: August 25, 2012

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Times-Shamrock Photo/Wendy Post Chelsea Wagner from the Troy area stands by her winning photograph in the Second Annual Treasured Towns & Landscapes of the Susquehanna Photo Contest, held by the Susquehanna Greenway Partnership. It's on display at Washington Street Station at 1 Washington St. in Towanda.



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Times-Shamrock Photo/Wendy Post Chelsea Wagner from the Troy area

TROY - When you see Chelsea Wagner from the Troy area, chances are that you will find her with her camera.

"It's on me all the time," she said.

She loves to take photographs, and she's entered contests and won a handful of awards over the years.

Her latest entry to win a big prize was taken on Route 6 between North Towanda and Luthers Mills, and shows the roadway in a state of destruction following the September floods last year.

Recently, she shared her photograph with me. The destruction of a portion of Route 6 and the menacing sky combine to create a dramatic image.

"If I had to put a name on the photo, I would call it Mother Nature's wrath or something," she said. Her husband, Dan, can be seen in the photo giving directions to someone who was trying to go to Wellsboro, and couldn't get through due to the road damage.

"I was so impressed with the power of the water," she said. "Logs were just thrown every which way, and the road was folded like rubber and reminded me of ribbons of licorice."

The color photo was named as the first place winner in the "flood" category and overall grand prize winner of the Second Annual Treasured Towns & Landscapes of the Susquehanna Photo Contest, held by the Susquehanna Greenway Partnership. The Greenway describes itself as "a corridor of parks, trails, and river communities along the Susquehanna River."

The letter to Chelsea reads, "we received over 300 entries which gave our judges quite a lot to consider." People were asked for the contest to "show what they treasured in the Susquehanna Greenway" area, Chelsea said.

Her photo was included on the organization's April eConnections newsletter and on its website. In addition, it was included in its Treasured Towns & Landscapes traveling photo gallery.

Currently, it's on display at Washington Street Station at 1 Washington St. in Towanda.

"When you look at the photo, your eye goes right into the center of the photo following the gray clouds and the line of the guardrail and the fallen logs," she said.

Chelsea, a former teacher at Mosherville Elementary School, said it was "unbelievable" to see the road ripped up.

"That was truly unreal," she said. "I've never seen a road like that, and I lived on the coast."

She's been taking photographs on and off since high school.

The Route 6 photo was a digital one, but she also still takes photos using 35 mm film, which she said has a "clean, crisp" quality that "you just can't capture with digital."

"I love taking pictures of nature," she said. "When I see something striking or strikes me as unusual, I just want to photograph it." Her son, Glen Richards, 24, of Pittsburgh and formerly of Troy, is also a photographer. She and her son both have the same type of cameras.

"He's not just following in my footsteps, but going beyond," she said. She said he visited India for six months in 2011-12 while working in an orphanage there, and took some photos while in India. His photo of a man in India won Best of Show at the Troy Fair in 2012.

Now that's she retired from teaching, Chelsea said she enjoys working in the

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- Eating "fair food"
- The rides
- Playing games
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photojournalism field. She took a photo in Pittsburgh of a shopping cart tipped on its side with graffiti in the background. An old, dirty, and wet sleeping bag was under the shopping cart. She entered the photo in the photojournalism category at this year's Troy Fair. The photo, taken with film, won first place at the fair.

The theme of the photojournalism category at the fair was "comfort," and Chelsea wrote a one-word sentence to accompany her photo: "Most people take comfort for granted."

She called the photo "Home" because it was the home of a homeless person.

Chelsea said her Route 6 flood photograph will be on display until the end of August in Towanda.

So, stop by and take a look at Chelsea's prize-winning photograph.

Do you have an idea for the Western Bradford Notebook? You can reach Eric Hrin at (570) 297-5251; email: reviewtroy@thedailyreview.com.

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