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KEEP IOWA BEAUTIFUL ANNOUNCES 16TH ANNUAL PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST WINNERS

Keep Iowa Beautiful (KIB) has announced the winners of its 16th Annual Photography Contest! This contest invites photographers to showcase Iowa's natural and environmental beauty through their lenses and capture the essence of their favorite seasons in a creative and engaging way.

"Keep Iowa Beautiful's annual photo contest is a great opportunity for photographers to capture and share the essence of Iowa's story," said Andy Frantz, Keep Iowa Beautiful Executive Director. "We were truly impressed by the incredible quality and creativity of this year's submissions. This contest highlights the immense talent of photographers across our state."

Over 500 photos were entered in six categories in this year's photo contest. Keep Iowa Beautiful is proud to announce the winners, with first, second and third-place recipients in each category receiving \$100, \$75, and \$50, respectively. Additionally, the prestigious Robert D. Ray Best of Show awards honors top photographers with prizes of \$500 for 1st place, \$250 for 2nd place, and \$100 for 3rd place. The Public Favorite award winner also received a \$100 prize. New this year, Keep Iowa Beautiful highlighted a Youth Winner, selected from submissions by photographers who are 18 and under.

"As an avid photographer, my dad, Bob Ray, rarely went anywhere without his camera. Through his lens, he captured the faces and stories of Iowans he cared so deeply about. His passion for keeping Iowa beautiful extended far beyond its natural scenery; it was rooted in his love for the people who made this state so special," said Randi Ray, Robert D. Ray's daughter and a panelist in the photo contest.

To ensure fairness and objectivity, all entries were judged blindly, without the names of the submitters visible to the judges, emphasizing the quality and creativity of the photos themselves.

Category winners:

The Robert D. Ray Best of Show winners:

1st Place: "Heaven with a Zip Code," Scott Hoag of DeWitt

2nd Place: "Juniper Tree overlooking Fall Colors along the Mississippi," Suhaib Khan of Glendale, IL

3rd Place: "Great Blue Heron Shakes off the Morning Dew," Peyton Renning of Des Moines

Iowa Landscape winners:

1st Place: "Juniper Tree Overlooking Fall Colors along the Mississippi," Suhaib Khan of Glendale, IL

2nd Place: "The Best Campsite in Iowa," Cody Davis of Grinnell

3rd Place: "Sunset over Farmland," Sharon Scarff of Wayland

Honorable Mention: "Wired for an Iowa Winter," Harlen Persinger of Grundy Center

Honorable Mention: "Gassing Up," Scott Hoag of DeWitt

Iowa Water winners:

1st Place: “Ice Fishing,” Silas Clough of Zwingle

2nd Place: “Lake Dreams,” William Beardsley of Spirit Lake

3rd Place: “Dock to Serenity,” William Beardsley of Spirit Lake

Honorable Mention: “Pikes Peak State Park overlooking the Mississippi River,” Brian Abeling of West Des Moines

Iowa Cities winners:

1st Place: “Glitter City,” Scott Hoag of DeWitt

2nd Place: “Davenport, Iowa,” Brian Abeling of West Des Moines

3rd Place: “Madison County Courthouse,” Morgan Weaver of Afton

Honorable Mention: “Children Watch Fireworks in the Snow in Ankeny,” Lee Navin of Ankeny

Iowans in Action winners:

1st Place: “Crawling through the Corn,” Dave LaBelle of Dyersville

2nd Place: “On the Move!,” Sharon Scarff of Wayland

3rd Place: “The Agony of Defeat,” Scott Hoag of DeWitt

Honorable Mention: “Hoover Blacksmith,” Jesse Streinz of West Branch

Honorable Mention: “Smoky Job,” Will Hilsabeck of Peterson

Iowa Wildlife winners:

1st Place: “Great Blue Heron Shakes off the Morning Dew,” Peyton Renning of Des Moines

2nd Place: “Red Fox Kit Backlit,” Jim Rose of Mason City

3rd Place: “Screech,” Sharon Scarff of Wayland

Honorable Mention: “The World of the Northern Saw-whet,” Cody Davis of Grinnell

Honorable Mention: “Young Buck, Late Summer,” Justin Cox of Iowa City

Hometown Pride winners (all taken in Hometown Pride program participant communities):

1st Place: “Heaven with a Zip Code,” Scott Hoag of DeWitt (taken in Lost Nation)

2nd Place: “Life at Your Own Pace,” Scott Hoag of DeWitt (taken in Shellsburg)

3rd Place: “Nite Glow in Indianola, Iowa,” Brian Abeling of West Des Moines (taken in Indianola)

Honorable Mention: “Holly Learning how to Plow with a Team of Horses,” Deb O’Brien of Jewell (taken in Albert City)

Youth winner:

“Driftless Falls,” Zane Raza of West Des Moines

Public Favorite winner:

“Glitter City,” Scott Hoag of DeWitt

All winning photos can be accessed on our website at: <https://keepiowabeautiful.org/photography-contest/winners/>

About Keep Iowa Beautiful

Founded in 2000 by Governor Robert D. Ray and Donald F. Lamberti, Keep Iowa Beautiful is a statewide non-profit empowering Iowans to create vibrant communities and build hometown pride through volunteer-driven enhancement programs. An affiliate of the Keep America Beautiful program, Keep Iowa Beautiful strives for a thriving Iowa supported by strong local leadership, beautiful public spaces, and engaged residents. To learn more about our programs or to donate, please visit our website at <https://keepiowabeautiful.org/>.