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March 18, 2009

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- Front Page
- EVENTS CALENDAR
- Community News
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- Government Columns
- Calendar
- Health
- Professional Profile
- Travel News
- Obituaries
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- Win BlueClaws Tickets!
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- Service Directory
- Coupon Values
- Classifieds
- Place a Classified Advertiser Index
- News Archive
- Search Archive

Library Displays Artwork From Ocean Air Squadron

By Kim Fink



When members of the Friends of the Manchester Library Art Committee decided to take a different direction this week from their usual Saturday afternoon art exhibit, the gamble really paid off. Drawing the largest crowd to date, the aerial photography display and presentation of "The Ocean Black Sheep," held on March 7, impressed attendees with its glorious artwork and miraculous stories, making members of the committee very pleased.

--Photo By Kim Fink Drawing the largest crowd to date, the aerial photography display and presentation of The Ocean Black Sheep, held on March 7, impressed attendees.

Villa. "We typically sponsor an art show of county-wide and very interesting."

Ocean Air Support Squadron, Inc, "The Ocean Black Sheep," is the air wing for the Ocean County Sheriff's Department and provides search and assistance to those in need. The volunteer association is comprised of individuals dedicated to aviation and public safety.

"We are so pleased to see such a large crowd and equally as pleased that many of you are unfamiliar with our work," said Public Affairs Officer, Major Mike Maino, who spoke at the presentation. "We like to inform people of our services and reach out to the community in venues such as this."

Maino went on to discuss the services of the organization and the responsibilities of the volunteers. "We respond wherever and whenever we are needed, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. We have 30 members and currently have 12 to 13 airplanes. Airborne search is a main portion of our service, such as assistance in missing persons or traffic monitoring but we also provide outreach services to our community such as the aerial photography you see here today."

On display through March are dozens of samples of the Ocean Black Sheep aerial photography missions. Photos range from traffic scenes to local fairsgrounds.

New to the community, Diane Kennedy of Manchester said she was drawn to the program not only for the artwork but because she was interested in hearing more about Ocean Air Support. "Being new to the area, I have been extremely impressed by the amazing coordination of efforts among community organizations," said Kennedy.

Others were amazed by the photography and the beautiful landscapes of Ocean County. "Being from Rutherford originally, I never realized how picturesque Ocean County and the Jersey Shore are. The photographs are very pretty," said Martha Lozada, member of the Friends of Manchester Library.

For more information on the Ocean Black Sheep, visit www.oceanblacksheep.com.

To register for upcoming art shows at the Manchester branch of the Ocean County Library, call 732-657-7600.

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