

Carved Compassion

HILARY PETRUS: a donation of talent and time

Thunder Bay's non-profit sector is becoming increasingly more creative in looking for unique ways to raise funds for their organizations. Local artist Hilary Petrus has donated one of his celebrated stone carvings in an effort to raise money for the Canadian Mental Health Association. Petrus does not commission or sell any of his pieces privately, but instead graciously donates several of his stone carvings each year to assist various local non-profit groups and charitable organizations.

His works have recently been instrumental in raising funds for the Easter Seals Society, Hogarth-Westmount Manor, the Northern Cancer Research Foundation and the Kidney Foundation. To date ticket sales and auctions have helped raise over \$10,000 for worthy causes.

A local chiropractor, Hilary's passion carving was mentored and enhanced by local sculpture Frank Potocnik. After carving wood for many years, Petrus decided to pursue an interest in experimenting with stone. With a call to Don McAlpine, the owner of Ruby Lake Marble in Nipigon, Petrus was able to acquire some samples for his first experimental carvings. After much trial and error he began to perfect techniques to produce some remarkable works of art. He carves with local sandstone from Lake Superior, soapstone from Kenora and alabaster from Colorado.



"I carve outdoors and prefer spring and fall when the weather is cooler as stone carving can be somewhat strenuous," says Petrus. One of his more popular carvings to date has been a rendition of a ruffed grouse, its popularity stemming from common sightings in Northwestern Ontario. Petrus has graciously donated a grouse (pictured left) made with black soapstone from Kenora and mounted on a magnificent walnut base.

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