

This Week in Washington



WITH CONGRESSMAN
JO BONNER

Five-Year Anniversary of Iraq War

Last week marked the five year anniversary of Operation Iraqi Freedom, and while our efforts in Iraq have been painful, this milestone provided an opportunity to recognize the significant achievements made by our military men and women.

The current strategy, as implemented by General David Petraeus and Ambassador Ryan Crocker, has brought about a dramatic turnaround in the safety and stability of Iraq.

In the past 12 months, violence levels have declined significantly throughout most of Iraq, particularly Baghdad and the al-Anbar Province.

While there is still much to be accomplished, the successes of the surge are undeniable. We owe a debt of gratitude to our military men and women.

These brave troops have done yeoman's work to quell the violence in Iraq, and it is imperative that we continue to provide them with the tools they need to eliminate the terrorist threat in Iraq and come home safely.

First District Congressional Art Competition Winners Announced

Each spring, the United States House of Representatives hosts an art competition spotlighting the talented young artists from across the nation.

Mobile artist, Eugenia Foster, judged this year's entries, which were evaluated "blind" with no contestant information attached.

The winner of this year's First Congressional District High School Art Competition: An Artistic Discovery is Mae Stimpson of St. Paul's Episcopal School. Mae Stimpson is a student of art instructor Beth Compton, and she was awarded first-place honors for her entry, "Broken Dreams."

In addition to this award, Stimpson is also eligible to receive a \$5,000 annual art and design scholarship. She will receive roundtrip airfare for herself and a guardian in support of her

attendance at the opening of the exhibition in Washington, D.C. Her artwork, along with the other winning entries, will be displayed for one year in the United States Capitol building.

This year's competition attracted some very talented young artists from southwest Alabama. Each year, I am so pleased to participate in a competition that encourages students to develop their creativity and share their gifts with the community.

For those talented students to have their work showcased in the Capitol is truly an honor. I would encourage any young artist of high school age in Alabama's First District to consider submitting an entry for next year's competition.

If you would like to participate next year, you can find additional information regarding the competition on my website: <http://bonner.house.gov>.

I would also like to thank the Mobile Museum of Art for their continued support of this competition.

Other winners from this year's competition are:

Second Place:□□□□□□□□

Matthew Lee, Alabama School of Math and Science, Title of Work: "Candy Land"

Third Place:

Lauren Oliver, Fairhope High School, Title of Work: "Crawfish Boil"

Honorable Mention:

(1) Tim Kidd, Fairhope High School, Title of Work: "The Torn Truth"

(2) David Willoughby, Daphne High School, Title of Work: "Clara Bow"

(3) Meredith Magee, St. Paul's Episcopal School, Title of Work: Untitled

(4) Sara Bowen, Alabama School of Math and Science, Title of Work: Untitled

(5) Jamie Stauter, Spanish Fort High School, Title of Work: "Sunshine Still-Life"

Annual Workshop for High School Leaders

This past Wednesday, I held my annual Workshop for High School Leaders on the campus of the University of South Alabama.

A tradition in the First Congressional District for over twenty years, the workshop is a highly successful way of encouraging the leaders of tomorrow to take an interest in the events shaping the world around them.

We had an overwhelming response from several high schools throughout the First District. High school government and journalism students had the opportunity to question representatives from all levels of state and federal government, as well as members of the Gulf Coast broadcast and print media.

I would like to sincerely thank all those who attended, especially, Gordon Moulton, president of the University of South Alabama, Baldwin County schools Superintendent Dr. Faron Hollinger, Mobile County schools Superintendent Dr. Roy Nichols, Bob Grip of WALA-TV, Linda Swann with the Alabama Development Office, Claudia Zimmerman with the Mobile Chamber of Commerce, Ed Castille with the Alabama Industrial Development Training, Jennifer Abney of WKRG-TV, Rob Holbert of Lagniappe, Varion Walton of NBC 15, and Kaija Wilkinson with the Press-Register.

This seminar is part of our ongoing commitment to be easily accessible to all my constituents, while at the same time providing an educational backdrop for the leaders of tomorrow.

My staff and I work for you. If we can ever be of service, do not hesitate to call my office toll free at 1-800-288-8721.

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