

Art group hopes to provide bridge for local talent

By Bruce Wallace

A small group of local artists is combining their talent and working to have their first show and competition.

The Ashland Artists Group, eight members strong, will be holding their initial competition in July for Bridges of Boone County, with an opening reception on 6 p.m. July 19 at Boone County Bank. The show will run from July 19-August 23.

"The theme of the contest is "Bridges of Boone County," said Ashland Artists Group spokesperson Tracy Eichhorn. "The art can be of any medium," she said, explaining that the group includes painters, photographers, and pottery artists, among others.

The group was founded about a year ago by several artists who recognize the talent level in the Southern Boone Community.

"So many of us enjoyed art in high school or college and are now coming back to it," Eichhorn said. "We would like to see our member-

ship grow" through the contest. The show will be judged by a Stephens College art professor and prizes will be awarded. Entry fee is \$5 for members and \$10 for non-members of the art group. There is a limit of two entries per artist. Prizes will be awarded for first, second and third and a People's Choice Award will be recognized.

While this annual competition will be judged, the art group's intent is more focused on promoting art.

Membership in the art group is \$25 per year. Meetings are the second Wednesday of each month and often include locations for drawing or painting.

"We have a presenting artist each month," Eichhorn said, "and we talk about their art, how they do certain things - it is more of a learning process for everyone, not at all a critique."

The local artists will show their art this summer at Mainstreet Bank and have a number of rotating pieces. "We are not trying to be the Co-



"Bridges of Boone County" will be the theme of the first Ashland Artists Group competition and show in July.

lumbia Art League - we want to keep it simple and fun," Eichhorn said.

A small studio space somewhere in Ashland is

a dream for Eichhorn, but she says that is far down the road. For now, the group will be very happy if they can increase membership and participation in their organization.

Eichhorn says she knows there are plenty of potential member for the local art club, and that it is often a matter of getting artists past their fear of being judged.

"We would just like to bring our community of artists together," she said.

To contact the Ashland Artists Group for information on membership or the contest, Email them at: ashlandartistgroup@gmail.com.