

...continue to fulfill the vision of Tuscan Elementary School, (which is) helping all students continue to grow and reach high levels of achievement.”

Mason will replace Theodore Panayoutou, who was appointed as interim assistant principal of Tuscan School on Oct. 15 after the former assistant principal, Marianne Hess, moved to fill the same position at South Mountain School in South Orange.

Mason has held multiple leadership

can's new assistant principal, Kevin Mason,” Majeed said at the meeting. “We had a broad-based interview panel with district administrators, school administrators, teachers and parents involved in the decision. Mr. Mason emerged as a caring, dedicated and student-centered educator, and truly a teacher of teachers. I look forward to sharing leadership with him, and to working together to grow programs that serve all of Tuscan's students.”

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Photo Courtesy of Suzanne Turner

The Board of Education appointed a new assistant principal for Tuscan Elementary School at the Nov. 19 board meeting. Pictured here, from left, are Tuscan Principal Malikah Majeed, new Assistant Principal Kevin Mason and Tuscan PTA President Sharon Huetz.

Local artist's organic work featured in Reservation



Photo Courtesy of Tricia Zimic

Maplewood resident Larry Dell's sculpture, 'Nature's Resolve,' is currently featured in the South Mountain Reservation.

By **Melinda Stevens**
Staff Writer

The South Mountain Conservancy and Essex County Executive Joseph DiVincenzo have dedicated the first wildflower sculpture in the Essex County South Mountain Reservation, and Maplewood artist Larry Dell could not be happier that his sculpture was chosen for the debut.

“It was very, very nice,” Dell said in a phone interview this week. “It was a very successful day and very supportive because Joe DiVincenzo was there along with South Mountain Conservancy board member Tricia Zimic and Chairman Dennis Percher, and other officials from the parks department.”

Dell's sculpture is 10 feet tall, triangular and painted silver. It was created from damaged wood and branches from the unseasonal snowstorm that hit New Jersey in October 2011.

“What I did was, after the storm there were a lot of trees down because of the particular way the snowstorm happened, and a lot of the limbs broke off and big branches were sticking up in the air,” Dell said. “They looked like sculptures to me, so I thought there had to be something that could be done with all the damage.” He said that when the opportunity came to submit his proposal for the wildflower project, he jumped at the opportunity, knowing he would be able to make his sculpture from the debris.

“I salvaged those limbs in a creative kind of way and there is also an environmental connection and that may be why the conservancy liked the idea,” Dell said.

Although Dell has been sculptor for 16 years, this project took him a long time to build. “It took a while because it was one piece, but made up of 10 different sections,” he said. “Weaving all the wood together in each section was time consuming, and I had to also work out how it would all fit together.”

Dell has showcased other sculpture locally throughout the years at the Pierro Gallery at The Baird in South Orange, the 1978 Maplewood Arts Center and the City Without Walls in Newark, an arts organization and gallery open to artists in the Tri-State Area.

Dell's sculpture was unveiled earlier this week at the Essex County South Mountain Dog Park on Crest Drive in the South Mountain Reservation and will be on display until May 2013 when another sculpture will replace it, according to Dell.

“It will be taken over by another piece of work and I am hoping, like a lot of other artists, that the project will grow and continue to be an opportunity for other artists to put work in,” Dell said. “It is good for artists in the area and good for the county.”

The sculpture was chosen for the project out of a dozen other sculptures from local artists, according to South Mountain Conservancy board member Tricia Zimic.

“I chose Mr. Dell's work because I knew of his work, as I am a sculptress as well, so I took a handful of other applicants and gave them to the State Council on the Arts,” Zimic said in a phone interview this week. “His work came out perfect and it is interesting because the background is wire

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Conservancy hosts installation ceremony at reservation

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fencing and it makes it look organic.”

Zimic said she began to brainstorm ideas last May for new projects to be incorporated into the SMC and she stumbled on the idea of starting a sculpture park.

“I talked to the board president for SMC as well as the New Jersey Council on the Arts and they all liked the idea, so we went ahead and starting the proceedings to open the park,” Zimic said.

“This is the first of yearly events for the park and we will have an event every Memorial Day,” Zimic said, adding that she will choose three artists each year to submit to the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.

The next deadline to submit an application is Saturday, Dec. 1. According to Zimic, applicants may submit applications to her for a brief period after the Dec. 1 deadline via email at mzgreengecko@yahoo.com, due to the short notice.

“The first wildflower dedication was a wonderful affair,” Zimic said exuberantly. “Dell’s sculpture is a beautiful, assembled piece and I’m sure it will look spectacular in the snow.”

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Photo Courtesy of Tricia Zimic

Larry Dell’s sculpture was chosen by the South Mountain Conservancy to be featured in the South Mountain Reservation. An installation ceremony took place Nov. 26, attended by Dell, members of the Conservancy and county officials. Pictured from left are: Dan Salvante, head of the parks department; Kate Hartwyk, director of cultural and historic affairs; Curator Tricia Zimic; County Executive Joe DiVincenzo; Dell; and Dennis Percher, Conservancy chairman.

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