

Hallet Oak Gallery's Second Annual Conference

Alyssa Morris



Al York, FAIA and Sharon Fleming, AIA, with adult first place winner Darrell Wachel.

The Hallet Oak Gallery sponsored a conference and art contest on June 9–10. After last year's focus on the area's J. Riely Gordon courthouses, this year's theme was "Celebrating—through art—the Life and Work of Eugene T. Heiner." Heiner was another courthouse and jail architect for the state of Texas, who practiced here in the late 1800s. He designed the Gonzales County Jail and the Lavaca County Courthouse, both of which are included on the National Register of Historic Places.

Historical Commission, and York is a principal at Austin's McKinney York Architects. All three spoke about the process of restoration and rehabilitation. Participants also toured the Lavaca County Courthouse.

Sarah Bludau was awarded Best Over All in the contest for her photograph of the Gonzales County Jail Corridor. Bludau is a student at Sacred Heart Catholic School. Speakers Fleming and York served as the competition judges.

York describes: "I personally deepened my respect for and understanding of Heiner and his place in the architectural history of Texas. We were also very impressed with the quality of the entries photography contest. The entries were diverse with some capturing the special nature of small town life and others a haunting aura of the past. Finally, the town of Hallettsville was lovely and the Heiner courthouse a true Texas gem."

The Hallet Oak Gallery intends to continue this new tradition next year, shining a light on another architect whose work has had a fundamental impact on the state of Texas and Lavaca County in particular.

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