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Saturday, JUL 04, 2009

News via Email



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News

- Front Page
- Houston & Environs
- Texas
- Israel
- World
- Nation

Columns



**In the middle of
almost everything**
By
Joseph W. Samuels



A & E
By Aaron Howard



Food
By Ted Powers



Sports Rap
By Matt Samuels

Features

- Arts & Entertainment
- Business
- FreeStyle
- Health
- Jewish Federation
- Military Life
- Party Pages
- Religion
- Seniors
- Singles

Opinion/Editorial

- Editorial
- Commentary
- Letters

Calendars

- Community-wide
- Singles

Life Cycle

- Mazel Tov, Graduates
- Anniversary
- Birthdays

Saks wins first prize in American Heritage Contest



Published 25.JUN.09

Judith-Ann Saks has won the National First Prize for her collage, "Our Heritage-A Patchwork of Our Past," in the American Heritage Contest. The entry was sponsored by the Lady Washington Chapter, NSDAR. The collage will be on exhibit July 8 through 12 at Constitution Hall in Washington. Two years ago, she won the National First prize for her acrylic painting, "A New Day: A Heritage Remembered."

This colorful collage, a unified assemblage of various elements to form a

new whole, shows a patchwork of American life through photographs of her own paintings and her drawing containing views of life at various times in American history. Each image is centered on a collective family tree of our country. In the tree's branches are citizens of today, in its trunk are a mother and child, and in its roots are our ancestors. If one looks in the roots, one can find a viking, Christopher Columbus, several presidents, generals, a pilgrim, colonial figures, a frontiersman, a cowboy, an Indian, and others representative of the nation's collective history.

Starting at the top left and going clockwise around the nation's collective family tree are: 1) the settling of Jamestown, the first permanent English settlement in America in 1607; 2) the birth of the city of Houston's water transportation system in January, 1837, but could be the birth of any U.S. port or city; 3) the spirit of unity in the family working and eating together; 4) a scene at Allen's Landing around the year 1870, as the nation approached its Centennial; 5) the bicentennial year at the Port of Houston, 1976, showing a busy dock scene symbolic of the activities of any port; 6) three bells ringing in the heavens reminding us of the spirit of the patriotic heroes of the American Revolution. (In the first bell, Betsy Ross, represents all the women who worked and sacrificed during the war; in the second, George Washington calls his men to arms and leads them to victory; in the third, the Declaration of Independence, the document declaring our freedom from tyranny, which inspired the foundations of our country; 7) the Cruiser Houston, named in 1929, known as the Galloping Ghost of the Java Coast (so named because it had been reported sunk several times, but mysteriously reappeared), the flagship of the U.S. Fleet in 1938; the flagship of the Hawaiian Detachment in 1939; the flagship of Admiral Hart, Commander Asiatic Fleet in 1940 and finally sunk in a valiant battle with the Japanese fleet in World War II; 8) the women at Valley Forge featuring Molly Pitcher with a wounded artillery soldier to whom she has just given food and water; 9) a Martha Washington cameo depicting a young "Lady" Washington embodying the spirit of hospitality, moral fiber,



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- B'nai Mitzvahs
- Engagements
- Honors
- Graduations
- Weddings
- Deaths
- Unveilings

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- Day Schools
- Teen
- College

Special Sections

- Israel at 61
- Recovering from Ike
- IKErumba!
- Centennial Countdown
- Day schools and Camps
- genNEXT
- Israel at 59
- Maccabi Games
- Raising a Jewish Child
- Planning for Passover

Photo Galleries

- Mitzvah Day

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- Passover Magazine
- Rosh Hashanah 2006
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kindness, generosity, and patriotism of our past; 10) the Liberty Bell, symbolizing the spirit of freedom, with Paul Revere sounding the alarm to his countrymen that the British are coming; 10) a young woman searching the dusty attic for her roots and heritage; and 11) the Fourth of July Celebration, based on how many families celebrated the birthday of the United States of America with pomp and celebrations. These images form a collage of some of the patchwork of our nation's past.

Saks is the wife of Haskell Rosenthal. Her lithographs of the Houston Ship Channel for their Bicentennial Project of the Port of Houston are in the Archives of American Art of the Smithsonian Institution, the library at Windsor Castle, President Jimmy Carter's collection, and other museums and historical societies in the United States. Other awards include first prize, watercolor, Art League of Houston; first prize, graphics, Art League of Houston; first prize, sculpture, Art League of Houston; Arthur Q. Davis prize for drawing; National Honorable Mention, drawing, Del Mar College; first prize, drawing, honorable mention, eighth annual East Alabama Art Exhibit, and others. She has been included in Who's Who in American Art, Who's Who in America, Who's Who in the World, and others.

To see other artworks, go to
www.saksart.net.

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02.JUL.09 JDate hosts 'biggest singles event of year'
02.JUL.09 At HMM, former Nuremberg Trials court reporter to discuss Nazi doctors' crimes
02.JUL.09 Young Judaea celebrates 100 years
25.JUN.09 Swine flu confirmed at three Texas Jewish camps
25.JUN.09 Jewish Family Services repeating job search
25.JUN.09 Houstonians protest Iranian 'selection'
25.JUN.09 Iran turmoil likely to benefit Israel
18.JUN.09 Beth Jacob charts a recovery
18.JUN.09 Houstonians protest Iranian presidential election
18.JUN.09 Houstonians honor slain Holocaust museum security officer
18.JUN.09 Case dismissed against school rabbi
18.JUN.09 Netanyahu OK with a demilitarized Palestinian state
12.JUN.09 Houstonians to honor slain security officer
12.JUN.09 No Closures in wake of Washington Holocaust Museum Shooting
11.JUN.09 Fatal shooting at Holocaust museum in Washington
11.JUN.09 Charges dropped against EWS rabbi
11.JUN.09 Obama calls Buchenwald 'the ultimate rebuke' to deniers
11.JUN.09 AJC receives Ford Foundation grant for immigration reform advocacy
11.JUN.09 Diverse crowd motivated at HMM
04.JUN.09 School rabbi arrested and released after traffic incident involving 'mixed signals'
04.JUN.09 Orthodox Union will feature Houston as relocation site
04.JUN.09 JFS working to connect job seekers with hiring employers
04.JUN.09 Texas-Israel connection to be celebrated at Israel Bonds dinner

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