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## North Ridgeville photog has pictures, stories that pop

By Michael Fitzpatrick

Every so often when you cover stories for a living, what sticks with you is not the event you covered, but what happened to you while you were covering that event.

Take, for instance, North Ridgeville's Mark Madere, a one-time photojournalist. While attending the Art Institute of Pittsburgh in 1980, Madere worked as a freelance photographer for the Associated Press and the United Press International. He was on assignment covering the city of Pittsburgh's celebration when the Steelers won Super Bowl XIV (they beat the Rams in that game). Things can get pretty wild in that situation. With that in mind, police in Pittsburgh used 45 German shepherds for crowd control. As Madere documented the celebration, he suddenly felt a tug on his leg, and then the searing pain of a dog bite. It turned out one of the canines took a hunk out of Madere's leg. He ended up needing stitches, and his story ended up being covered by the wire service.

"It's fun when you become part of the news story," said Madere as he flipped through a scrapbook where he had clipped and saved that now-yellowing news story of his night that went to the dogs.

He also received \$357 in damages from the city of Pittsburgh.

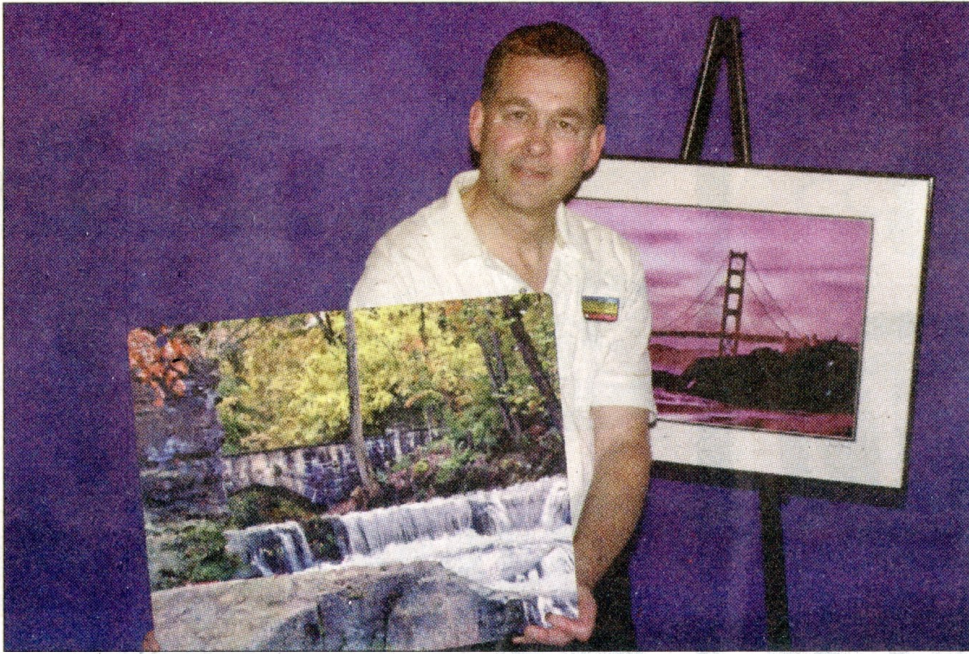
"It covered my hospital expenses," Madere said.

There are other stories, like the time he was in Cleveland on another assignment for a wire service in 1980, shooting an appearance of then Vice President Walter Mondale. He found himself right by Mondale's limo and in the perfect spot for the perfect shot. However, a member of the Secret Service asked him to move.

"I wasn't going to move from that spot," Madere said. Not long after, Madere felt two big arms wrap themselves around him and found himself bodily moved. He still ended up getting a pretty good shot of Mondale, though.

Madere gave up his dream of being a photojournalist after a six-month internship at the Elyria Chronicle-Telegram. He said he made just \$100 a week and had to use his own equipment. He knew at that point that would never be enough to live on, let alone start a family with his then-girlfriend Doreen, whom he would eventually marry. The couple have two daughters, both of whom are grown, and now Madere, 53, is a grandfather.

Eventually, after working as a staff



**MARK MADERE** uses a digital process that allows photos he's taken to look like paintings. His work was recently on display at the 13th annual Community of Fine Arts Show at the Westlake Porter Public Library. The show was sponsored by the Westlake-Westshore Arts Council. *NRP photo -Michael Fitzpatrick*

photographer at a local hospital for five years, he started his own photography business - SpectraLight Photography.

The business started when friends at the hospital asked him to shoot weddings and portraits. After awhile, the workload

became so great he had to choose between the hospital or his side business.

When cameras went digital and everyone thought they could be Annie Leibovitz, the profit margins for portrait photographers sank like a stone in a lake, he said. Leibovitz is known as one of the best portrait photographers in the world. Her work has been a staple of Rolling Stone and Vanity Fair for years.

"With digital photography, more and more people are confident they can get the pictures because they can see instantly if the picture turned out or not," he said.

But if one truly wants the best shots, Madere said, it may be wise to spend the money and hire a pro.

"Just because the camera can capture the image doesn't make you a photographer. It still requires an eye for composition, knowing how to pose people. Anyone can do a picture of a group of people. But posing them so it's an interesting composition is key," Madere said.

He now runs that business part time and earns a living taking pictures of eyes at University Hospital. Specifici-

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## 38th Corn Festival deemed a success by organizers

By Michael Fitzpatrick

The memories associated with the 38th annual North Ridgeville Corn Festival may still be fresh in the minds of those who attended, but it won't be long until the planning committee gets busy planning the 39th Corn Festival.

"We'll have a meeting and go over what went well, what didn't go well and then with that information we'll start planning for next year," Corn Festival Committee member John Butkowski said. The first planning meeting will likely occur in September, said Butkowski, who is credited with creating the event in 1975.

Approximately 110 vendors attended this season's festival, which is about the maximum amount the festival grounds can hold.

"We couldn't have put too many

more out there. Outside of trying to go into the park (South Central), which would cause a few logistical issues, it's probably a good idea to keep it the size it is," Butkowski said.

The festival was well-attended, said Butkowski, although the threat of rain on the opening night of the event (Aug. 10) kept some folks away.

"Saturday attendance was real good and Sunday attendance was real good," said Butkowski. "Overall, we were pleased with attendance."

No official numbers of how many people attend the event are kept. Butkowski said there is no way to keep track because there are no entrance and exit gates.

The people who did attend were well-behaved. North Ridgeville police reported no incidents in connection with the festival.

"There were no disturbances that

I'm aware of," North Ridgeville police Capt. Marti Garrow said. "Everything went pretty smooth."

Sunday appeared to be the highest-attended day of the festival, which ran from Aug. 10-12. Many families who lined Center Ridge Road to watch the parade, which stepped off at 2 p.m., then made their way over to the festival.

The parade was conducted in sun-drenched conditions, a far cry from the downpour the 2011 parade experienced. More than 70 groups took part in the parade.

Butkowski said at this point there are no plans to turn the festival into a four-day event. Many of the workers used by vendors have full-time jobs and would likely have a conflict and could not work the extra day.

"That's probably why we would not go to four days," Butkowski said.

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cally, what he does is called ophthalmic photography.

"We document macular degeneration and glaucoma," Madere said.

Important work, no doubt.

But Madere continues to look for that perfect shot. Just recently, three pieces in his digital art collection were on display at the 13th annual Community of Fine Arts Show at Westlake Porter Public Library.

Madere uses photos he's snapped, like one of a fog-draped Golden Gate Bridge, and then digitally alters them to look like a "faux painting."

Other pictures on display at the Westlake show were the Grand Hotel on Mackinac Island, in Michigan, and a horseless snow-covered buggy at Grand Pacific Junction in Olmsted Falls.

"I've always wanted to create beautiful images of landscapes and unusual architecture," Madere said.

Madere said he was never able to master drawing, but realized his eye, with the aid of a camera, can help him "capture amazing scenes."

He developed his digital process over three years. When he applied it to

his photos, all of a sudden he was able to produce what looked like the work of a skilled painter.

Madere also has the pictures embedded into aluminum panels. That process allows the colors to "pop," he said.

Madere and a friend traveled to San Francisco last year on what he called a "photo safari" to get pictures of the Golden Gate Bridge.

"I thought it would be cool to take pictures at our own pace," he said of the five-day trip.

"I wanted to try to do things with the Golden Gate Bridge that haven't been done," he added.

Madere is also an expert at restoring old photos. He uses his mastery of digital photo editing to turn treasured damaged photos into beautiful keepsakes. And if someone needs that family portrait, he guarantees he'll produce a photo they'll treasure. He said often times in group shots, someone in the picture invariably will end up with their eyes closed or with a sour expression. But Madere said he's mastered what he calls head swaps. Let's say someone in the picture may have been yawning; Madere can take that person's head from a better shot and swap it on

to the overall-best group shot.

"I can take their head from another shot and digitally replace it. A lot of people can do that, but you can sometimes see the seams. I dare anyone to see where I did it. I've learned how to blend the seams so you can't tell," Madere said.

Madere's first love was movies. After learning to edit his father's 8mm movies while growing up in Du Bois, Pa., about 100 miles northeast of Pittsburgh, he envisioned himself being a cinematographer.

In high school he started taking pictures of the school's cheerleaders and athletes and selling them, and realized he could make money doing it. He would shoot pictures for the local

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