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Catch of the day

By *WILL KANGAS*
Editor

HOLT — He can't swim, but Gill continues to make a big splash around Holt.

He seemed to be everywhere after he was built last May. The Holt Farmer's Market, the tree lighting festival, schools, and open houses.

Gill even went down to the Mason Holiday Celebration Light Parade in December and stole the show — winning the Mason American Legion Browne/Cavender Post 148 "Legion Trophy" for best float not affiliated with the Mason Chamber of Commerce.

Mason American Legion members made it official by coming to the Delhi Charter Township Board of Trustees meeting on Feb. 17 to hand over the trophy.

Making a 10-foot-tall fish made of recycled laundry detergent containers and other materials was the idea of Joe Keeley, a maintenance mechanic for the Delhi Township Department of Public Services.

"Joe was the one who came up with the idea," said Sandra Diorka, director of the department. "Gill is something special."

It started last May, when the colorful sculpture was the focal point of the 2008 Water Quality Awareness Week Open House and Re-Use Rally, on May 10, at the Delhi Township Recycling Center.

On the day of the open house, visitors helped attach approximately 2,500 empty laundry detergent bottles to a pre-built frame that was 25-feet long and 15-feet high.

"Gill was meant to draw attention to recycling, water quality, and other environmental issues," Diorka said. "He was a good fit with the purpose of the open house itself which is to educate in a fun way."

After that Gill was expected to fade away. Instead he has been dubbed "Holt's fish on four wheels" by Holt Community Arts Council Director Kara Hope.

The council oversaw the creation as a local art form and adopted Gill as its mascot.

At the council's recent meeting, Hope said youngsters in Holt "probably like Gill more than the arts council."

And thus, a star is born.

Will Kangas can be reached at wkangas@gannett.com or (517) 541-2503.
