



NEWS RELEASE

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ARTISTS CHALLENGED TO UPCYCLE TRASH INTO TREASURE

Some people look at discarded items and thrown-out materials and see trash.

Others are inspired by their shape, texture, and colour and - with a little resourcefulness - can transform them into something useful and attractive.

“It’s not garbage: it just needs a new idea,” said Shirley Fralick, an artist from south Langley. “You just have to use your imagination and look at it out of context from what it really is. A box of nuts and bolts aren’t just nuts and bolts – they are circles and octagons that can be used to create art. That’s the fun part.”

For the past two years, Fralick, who uses found items such as glass, stone, jewelry, and dishes to create mosaics, has been participating in the Upcycling Design Challenge. Launched by the Township of Langley and the Langley Arts Council in 2013, the event inspires residents to become eco-artists and use waste material destined for the landfill to make something new.

The fourth annual Upcycling Design Challenge will be held this April at Willowbrook Shopping Center, and Fralick hopes local residents will get inspired, use their imaginations, and turn trash into treasure for the event.

“I’ve always liked to do that kind of stuff,” said Fralick. “When I was young, we passed things on to family and friends; now we just throw things away. I’ve always thought, ‘Don’t throw that away – there has got to be another use for that. We can make something out of it.’”

For the first Upcycling Challenge, Fralick submitted a window made out of tempered glass and chandelier crystals. In 2014, she won third prize for “Grandma’s Dishes,” fashioned from stained glass, crystal coasters, old crystal dishes, and vintage mason jar lids. Last year, she created an eye-catching red flower made from a ceiling fan and broken car taillights.

“I’m always thinking,” said Fralick, who once turned an old pine futon frame into a gate. “I had always wanted to make a flower out of a ceiling fan and thought, ‘What can I do to make it interesting?’ I was driving to work and there it was, right in front of me: taillights.”

Noticing the different shades and patterns of the various models, Fralick asked a local auto body shop to save her the taillights it would otherwise throw out. She fashioned the pieces onto the fan, and after last year’s Upcycling Challenge, donated her artwork to Urban Impact Recycling, one of the event’s sponsors, to demonstrate what can be created through recycling.

Krista Daniszewski, Langley Township’s Sustainability Programs Specialist, encourages residents to follow Fralick’s lead and try their hands at creating something for this year’s Challenge.

“The amount of waste thrown away each day is staggering. We are overusing our resources and filling up our landfills at an incredible rate,” she said. “The Upcycling Design Challenge aims to remind people that, with a little creativity, what was old can be new again - perhaps even better than it once was.”

The Challenge is open to anyone aged 10 and up, and entries must be made from at least 75 per cent found or recovered material.

Deadline for submissions is Saturday, April 9, and entries will be displayed at Willowbrook Shopping Centre from Tuesday, April 19 to Sunday, May 1. Prize categories include Best in Show, Most Practical, Best Use of Material (clothing), and Best Youth. The public is invited to view the exhibit and vote for their favourite in the People’s Choice Award.

Cash and prizes valued at \$1,300 will be awarded and winners will be announced at a reception on Thursday, April 28, 6 – 9pm.

For more information, visit tol.ca/upcycling or call 604.532.7300.