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BSU prof documents a vanishing America

By MELISSA SKOPELJA
For The Star Press



His photography remembers the abandoned and the forgotten.

Photographer John Dailey's images of vanishing America are featured on Apple iCards.

"We build things, and then the places are left to dissolve into the earth," said John Dailey, assistant professor of multimedia at Ball State University. "Most of my pictures are about what people took and what nature's taking back."

Dailey's photography was recognized this month as a featured artist on Apple's iCards Web site. Viewers can send Dailey's photographs as greeting cards via e-mail.

The featured 12 photographs range from an aged barn latch to brightly painted chairs.

"It's a great recognition of artistic ability of the photographic skill of one of our faculty," said Michael Holmes, interim dean of the College of Communication, Information and Media. Holmes's personal favorite is the shot of a rusted Lincoln Zephyr.

The Featured Artist Program started in 2000 and is flooded with hundreds of submissions each year, said Derick Mains, spokesman for iTunes and iApps. Members of the iCards and iMac teams at Apple select three or four artists' work. The work is posted for about three months.

Dailey explained that he decided to submit his work to Apple after friends and family persuaded him. Although he does not have any formal training in photography, he thought he would take a shot at the national exposure.

"He taught himself everything about photography," said his wife, Mary. "He's



very talented with everything he does."

Mains said Dailey was honored because of the high quality of his photographic work and suitability of images for electronic greetings.

Mary said both sides of their family hang his natural and peaceful pictures in their homes. (She playfully admitted her pictures focus on their two cats.) Dailey makes an impression even when he's not behind the camera.

Nancy Carlson, chairperson of Ball State's Department of Telecommunications, said she had no idea Dailey was such a talented photographer when he joined the staff in fall 2002.

"John's our multimedia guy," she said, describing Dailey as an extrovert who loves to teach. She said he gives up weekends to teach students how to use new programs as the student advisor of Clickers.

"He's a really nice guy who'd bend over backwards to help you out," graduate student Marty Tormoehlen said. Tormoehlen worked with Dailey as the project manager for an electronic children's book when he was an undergraduate.

Although Dailey teaches and experiments with the newest technologies, his featured work was done on a Nikon F3, a manual camera.

"By doing things digitally, I think we have a lot more people able to take well-focused pictures," the 48-year-old said. Dailey, who owns a digital camera, said they rob the photographer of his or her creativity.

Dailey's respect for past technology is evident when visitors to his office are greeted by a 1966 ham radio, a VCR and an original Macintosh computer. Dailey said he remembered his grandfather taking photographs with Kodachrome as a young child.

"I think subconsciously I admired him for it," he said.

A black and white poster of Jim Henson and Kermit the Frog peered down at Dailey in his office in the basement of Ball Communications. The words "Think Different" were printed on it.

Dailey surfed his wide-screen Mac with his mouse as he searched for the reason he does not depend on his photography for an income.

"Like any art, when you're called to make your living off of it, it just dies a little," he said.

Contact Melissa Skopelja at features@thestarpress.com .

On the Web

www.mac.com/WebObjects/iCards/

under "Art and Photography," click on "Featured Artist"

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