

OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD, AND FORESTRY

2800 North Lincoln Blvd., Oklahoma City OK 73105-4298

February 1, 2018

For more information contact:

Doug Zook or Calista Stephens, 580-494-6497, fhc@beaversbend.com

Forest heritage center hosts wood art exhibit

Some of the nation's best wood artists are putting the finishing touches on unique and innovative wood art pieces for this year's "Master Woodworking Artist of the Year" exhibit, which takes place at the Forest Heritage Center Museum in the Beaver's Bend State Park in Broken Bow. The public is invited to the awards ceremony on March 4 from 1:30 – 3:30 and to view all of the art in the museum's gallery until May 6th.

Artists from around the country are invited to compete in this competition, with this year's roster featuring some of the best in their field, including Johnny Hayre of Greenville, TX; Darrell Whisenhunt of Mena, AR; Butch Lindsey of Tuttle, OK; Robert Wilson of Newalla, OK; Don Mantooth of Nicoma Park, OK and special guest Todd Halleman of Newberg, Oregon, who earned the American Association of Woodturners' "Turning to the Future" second place award July 2017 in Las Vegas.

The forest provides the medium for these artists, who use the naturally occurring "flaws" found in trees to enhance their hand crafted masterpieces. Streaks of color, knotty burls, weathering, and spalting provide contrast and interest in some pieces, while precise measurements using different species and colors of woods makes for intricate geometrical designs in others. A diverse array of techniques will be on display with wood turnings, carvings, fine furniture, and much more.

The Forest Heritage Center is the perfect setting to showcase the art of the forest, with over 50 species of trees found within a 1 mile radius of the museum's grounds in Beavers Bend State Park. Surrounding the park is a diverse sampling of commercial timber management, forestry industry, national forest land, and numerous privately owned tree farms and sawmills. Many wood artists select their material from this diverse array of native woods, choosing to harvest dead standing or fallen timber or knots and burls that are otherwise unsuitable for construction, adding untold value to Oklahoma's already booming forestry industry.

The Forest Heritage Center Museum Gallery hours are 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday and 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. on Sunday. For more information call 580-494-6497, email the museum at fhc@beaversbend.com or visit www.forestry.ok.gov/fhc. This exhibit is made possible by the Forest Heritage Center Advisory Board, Oklahoma Arts Council, Oklahoma Forestry Services, Oklahoma Tourism & Recreation Department and members of the Forest Heritage Center Association.

###