

# A LOT TO CROW ABOUT!

## LBI CELEBRATES THIRD ANNUAL SCARECROW CONTEST

By SUSAN BLOOM • Correspondent

**J**ust in time for the 2010 Halloween season, participants in Southern Ocean County's third annual decorated scarecrow contest — which is heading into its final weekend before winners are decided at the conclusion of the voting period on Sunday — are bringing a fun, creative and modern twist to an age-old agricultural practice.

Sponsored by the Southern Ocean County Chamber of Commerce, the contest was launched in 2008 and continues to grow. Last year, there were 100 scarecrows in 61 different locations.

This year is shaping up to be equally if not more competitive — and the entries are anything but for the birds.

"Many of last year's entries got pretty dramatic and were truly creative reflections of the businesses entering them," said event organizer Lori Pepenella, destination marketing director for the chamber.

Last year's entries included a 20-foot scarecrow in the image of a chef submitted by Country Kettle of Beach Haven, a scarecrow presenting flowers to another by Lily in the Valley Florist of Beach Haven, and the ultimate winners in the business and nonprofit categories, respectively — a transfer bus full of happy scarecrows with a nurse presiding submitted by Seacrest Village Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Little Egg Harbor and a scarecrow spoof of Norman Rockwell's famous self-portrait submitted by Pine Shores Art Association of Manahawkin.

"We were very excited to participate in this fun, areawide contest and help promote the community," Pine Shores Art Association membership chairwoman Harriet Fink said of the nonprofit organization's 2009 win with "Nora Rockwell" (created by member Barbara Fralick). "And the win definitely brought us a lot of great publicity as well as a number of new members and visitors."

While entry to the contest is limited to businesses and nonprofits, few other hard rules apply.

"Scarecrows can be of any shape, size and material. There are no specs dictated, so the sky's the limit," Pepenella said.

The majority of scarecrows in this year's contest have been on display around the island as well as on the chamber's online photo gallery since the weekend of Chowderfest earlier this month and will remain viewable online through Sunday, at which time all of the votes that have been cast since Oct. 2 will be counted and winners determined.

Last year, 840 votes were tallied from not only LBI residents but website visitors from all over the country.

Winners will receive a trophy from the chamber, an invitation to and recognition at the chamber's monthly luncheon in November and promotion in the form of a press release announcement and other media opportunities.

"We are extremely proud of this event," Pepenella said.

"What began as a way to promote fall activities and holidays and help extend the season on LBI has turned into an event that has engaged the business community's creativity and captured the area's imagination."

To view all of the entries in the 2010 decorated scarecrow contest and to cast your vote online by Sunday, visit [www.visitlbiregion.com](http://www.visitlbiregion.com).

**Clockwise from right: Pine Shores Art Association 2010 entry; Island Wellness Center 2010 entry; Van Dyk Group 2010 entry; Seacrest Village 2009 entry, Lily in the Valley 2009 entry.** (PHOTOS: COURTESY SOUTHERN OCEAN COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE)

