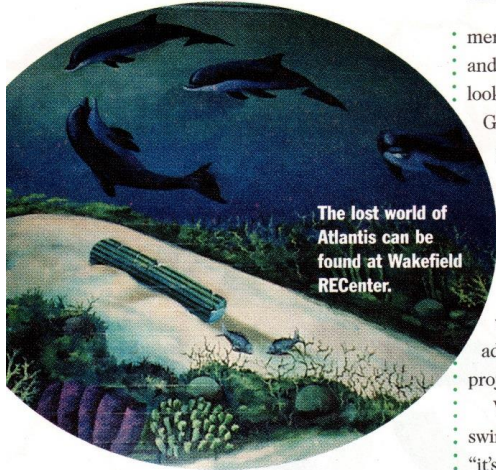


QuickTakes



Seascape Rolls Across Wakefield

Tim Grant, the artist who recreated Atlantis at Wakefield RECenter this fall, has added another 2,600-square-foot mural to brighten up the pool side scene. Now, giant sea turtles, star fish, sea lions, stingrays and eels join the dolphins, orcas and tropical fish that wind their way around the towers of the lost civilization half buried in shifting sands. Thanks to Grant's fantasy world, lap swimming, water exercise and pool play take on a new dimension. With waves washing over two walls of the big pool area, swimmers can pretend that they're gliding through the crystal blue waters of the sea instead of an ordinary indoor pool.

The second mural is a collaborative effort. This time around, the pool was open while Grant worked. As he wielded his brush atop of the scaffolding, hundreds of teenagers screamed encouragement to high school swimmers racing 20 feet below. A weekend craft show — the 21st running of the RECenter's holiday extravaganza — drew thousands of shoppers who cruised the booths that filled the gymnasium and spilled over into the pool area. When Grant was down from the scaffolding, working on the lower portion of the wall, RECenter visitors stopped regularly to chat, admire and offer their ideas. A water exerciser suggested adding a sea lion. At the behest of students in Wakefield's pottery club, there are pottery pieces scattered across a sunken courtyard. A patron who scuba dives wanted a ham-

merhead shark. Grant brushed in one shark and when the diver came back for another look at the mural's progress, he advised

Grant that hammerheads always travel in pairs. Now two sharks swim among the ruins of Atlantis.

Grant invited children to contribute to the creative effort; the bright starfish painted by young artists float gracefully above the sea bottom. "I want more involvement from kids," he added, promising that will happen as the project continues.

Working through the pandemonium of a swim meet was a challenge but otherwise, "it's been great fun," reported the muralist, who says his favorite art is public art on the grand scale like that presented by the big walls of the RECenter. ▲