

Holly Karolkowski Crowned America's Most Gifted Wrapper

Wins the \$10,000 grand prize and takes home all the gifts she wrapped in the eighth annual Scotch Brand Most Gifted Wrapper Contest

Holly Karolkowski, a gift-wrapping guru from Portland, Maine, was crowned "America's Most Gifted Wrapper" for 2004 in a national gift-wrapping contest sponsored by the maker of Scotch brand tape.

Amid throngs of holiday revelers at Rockefeller Center today, Karolkowski out-wrapped seven other gift-wrapping experts - including pros with experience at department stores like Bon-Macy's and Marshall Field's - in the eighth annual Scotch Brand Most Gifted Wrapper Contest to earn the ultimate holiday prize: \$10,000 and all the brand-new KitchenAid appliances she wrapped during the competition. With bows, ribbons and Scotch brand tape in hand, Karolkowski and her worthy competitors wrapped a variety of kitchen items (seven-piece cookware set, stand mixer, stainless steel refrigerator, stainless steel range and stainless steel grill) with speed, flair and style.

"I had no idea that I was going to win," said Karolkowski. "I was up against professional gift-wrappers, and in the eight years that Scotch brand tape has been sponsoring this contest, only two amateur gift-wrappers, like myself, have won."

The first runner-up, Daniel Barker from Astoria, N.Y., a professional gift-wrapper from Kate's Paperie, received a \$2,500 cash prize. The other six contestants received smaller cash prizes as well. Contestants were judged on three criteria: appearance, technique and speed.

The judging panel consisted of experts in the art of gift-wrapping, including Ellen Timberlake, "America's Most Gifted Wrapper" in 2000, and John Saxtan, editor-in-chief of Giftware News.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: A photo of the winner will be available Friday, Dec. 3 via the Associated Press Photo Network and on the Internet at: <http://www.nycphoto.com/clients/3M/giftedwrapper>

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