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## East Suburban Artists share their work at Penn State exhibit

**TRIB LIVE** REX RUTKOSKI | Saturday, November 25, 2017 2:21 p.m.



SUBMITTED

Bob Bickers of Murrysville oil painting, "Around the Corner," a winter scene where nature itself creates a nearly monotone setting. Bickers is displaying his work all month at a solo show at the Monroeville Public Library and as part of the East Suburban Artists League's exhibit at Penn State New Kensington.



Art, says Murrysville artist and photographer Bob Bickers, might as well not exist if it isn't shared with other people.

"Sharing is the point," he says. "I can only hope that others will enjoy my art as I have, and for the most part, they do. But that is not always a sure thing. So I keep trying new things. It makes life so much more interesting."

Bickers and his colleagues in the East Suburban Artists League will share some of their newest work at the organization's annual free showcase, Dec. 1 to 28 at Penn State, New Kensington's gallery.

About 60 watercolor, oil and acrylic paintings, photos, woodwork and more will be on display and many items will be for sale.

East Suburban Artists League was founded in 1965 as a nonprofit fostering the arts and crafts.

"The group showcases their talents at many venues throughout the year and this exhibition is a capstone of the year," says David Milanak of Allegheny Township, co-chair, with Larry Klukaszewski, of Upper Burrell, of the show. Milanak recently retired as an art teacher from Kiski Area School District and Klukaszewski is an art teacher there.

"I appreciate the warmth and genuine goodness of the ESAL family, not to mention the world class talents of the participating artists," Klukaszewski says.

Bickers' passion for sharing his work is in full bloom in December as he exhibits at both Penn State and presents "New Horizons: Landscapes in Oil by Bob Bickers" Dec. 1 to 31, at the Elaine Biondi Gallery Space at the Monroeville Public Library, with an opening reception from 6 to 8 p.m. Dec. 9.

"I enjoy creating art," he says. "I love the challenge of using all my experience and abilities to make something that did not exist before, or to capture and preserve something interesting or unique that would otherwise be lost forever."

He has two oil on canvas paintings in the Penn State exhibit — "Wyoming Shadows," inspired while observing the solar eclipse this summer in Wyoming, and "Around the Corner," a winter scene where nature itself creates a nearly monotone setting.

It really is a joy to create and share art, says Delmont's Sue Yaklich, ESAL program chairwoman, who calls herself an "obsessive" photographer.

"I am so delighted with so many things I see that I have to take photos," she says. "I always marvel in the amazing creations in our world and I wish to share that good feeling of wonder with others."

### DETAILS

#### EAST SUBURBAN ARTISTS LEAGUE

When: Dec. 1-28, open daily.  
Meet-the-artist reception, 6-9 p.m. Dec. 2.

Admission: Free

Where: Penn State, New Kensington, art gallery, Upper Burrell

Details: 724-334-6056

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Sometimes she renders a pastel pencil drawing or an acrylic painting of the subject of a photo.

"I like to capture beautiful compositions, colors, shapes. I nearly always start with taking photos," Yaklich says. "I appreciate the opportunities this show and ESAL provides for me to share creation with others."

East Suburban Artists League members share a common bond to be creative, says Patti Giordano of Lower Burrell, who has two watercolors — "Creation" and "Twilight Immersion" — in the exhibit. "We encourage and support each other," she says.

Gordon Sarti of Plum, represented with two photographs of the Slippery Rock gorge, says he has never studied art. "I photograph that which moves me," he says. "I look for the creations of nature and God. I hope to show people that life is not all about money, status, etc."

Author-artist Terri Bertha of Allegheny Township, displaying a pair of watercolors, is always looking for something to paint that will improve and hone her creativity.

"When people smile and say, 'You do nice work,' I feel I've accomplished something special bringing enjoyment to them," Bertha says.

Being a member of the East Suburban Artists League offers many opportunities to improve one's art, as well as to learn from other artists, says its president Joy Anglin of Murrysville.

She has been painting in watercolor for 12 years and still considers herself a student of the art.

"I hope people experience the emotion I feel in my work," she says.

### **Other artists represented**

- Larry "Klu" Klukaszewski, of Upper Burrell, is entering a portrait of Ben Roethlisberger and a hand-painted Terrible Towel. "I hope when people view my art that they see the great passion and struggles that it took to create it. I hope to convey that if they buy it, they are purchasing a small piece of my heart and soul. ... Sharing the joy of artistic creation with children is one of my greatest accomplishments in life."

- Ted Scanga, Lower Burrell, works in oil and acrylic paint, glass mosaic, wood intarsia and wood inlay (mosaic): "I'm motivated by the fun of creating something that others might enjoy." He will have "Milk Cows at the Saw Mill," a wood intarsia, and "Squirrel Problems," an inlay, in the exhibit.

- Pamela Price, Monroeville, who is hanging a pair of paintings — "At the Louvre" and "Rwanda Woman" — in the show, describes her style as a mix of realism and the magical world of the imagination. "I love to focus in on a person at a particular moment in time," she says. "I hope to please the viewer, letting them see my view of the world."

- Cindy Downard, Lower Burrell, is represented with "Parrots," a watercolor and color pencil rendering, and "Fall Harvest," an acrylic painting. "I hope people get a sense of joy looking at my work. ... Associating with other artists inspires and encourages me to be creative."

- Eileen Kopelman, Lower Burrell, is entering two paintings, "Backyard Woodpecker" and "Holiday Bouquet." "I like my paintings to have a 'wow!' factor. I paint things I see and enjoy, or that reflect stories that interest me. I first noticed the woodpecker when he was on my neighbor's tree and I was on my way to the mailbox. He stuck his head out from the tree he was working on, several times, as if to ask what I was doing in his neighborhood. He seemed very inquisitive. Later he moved to the apple tree in my backyard where I took his picture and painted it."

- Peter Cehily, Allegheny Township, whose work in the show includes "Sparklin Rose," an acrylic and ink, says, "I hope my work interests people in some way and perhaps speaks to something in their life experience. I hope that they find some beauty or connection with it," he says.

- Phiris Kathryn Sickels, Plum, a watercolor artist experimenting with acrylic inks, says, "My art allows me to communicate with all my senses, seeing, feeling, hearing, imagining." Her collage painting of the Newfield Mine in Plum expresses her concern about old mines.

Rex Rutkoski is a Tribune Review contributing writer.