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East Suburban Artists exhibit a passion for their craft

By Rex Rutkoski, VALLEY NEWS DISPATCH
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Photos

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'All is Quiet'
 Submitted

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'Geometric Sailing'
 Submitted

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'PA Wildflowers'
 Submitted

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'Cinnamon Bay, St John'
 Submitted

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'Echo Hollow Heifer'
 Submitted

East Suburban Artists League

When: Daily, through Dec. 30, except Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. 8 a.m.-8 p.m., Mondays through Fridays; noon-5 p.m. weekends

Where: Penn State, New Kensington Campus, Upper Burrell

Admission: Free

Details: 724-334-6004

About the writer

Rex Rutkoski is a Valley News Dispatch staff writer and can be reached at 724-226-4664 or via e-mail.

Art's many expressions voice their colorful languages on the walls of Penn State, New Kensington Campus, throughout December.

The annual exhibit by members of East Suburban Artists League, which includes many Alle-Kiski Valley residents, brings together artists in a variety of mediums, including painting, drawing, photography and sculpture.

"This is an excellent show," says president Patti Giordano of Lower Burrell, "and the Penn State gallery is a wonderful place to exhibit."

She has entered two watercolors, including "All Is Quiet," her reflection on a parsonage and church, inspired by a photo taken by Bill Perry of Harmony, who teaches the Monday Morning Artists group that meets in Brackenridge. "Watercolor is a fascinating and joyful time for me and puts me in touch with many wonderful artists, who are also very special people," she says.

Murrysville artist Ed Straub, who says he finally tried painting after retiring in 2002, believes this year's is a very special show. "It is probably one of the best in recent years and really looks nice," he says. His entries includes "Cinnamon Bay, St John," a watercolor.

He paints mostly landscapes and flowers using oil and watercolor. "I enjoy the creative process and if I like the end results, that is all that matters to me," he says.

It comes down to "the fun of doing," Ted Scanga of Lower Burrell says of that act of creativity.

"I liked to see good art and thought I would like to see if I could do some of the things that I saw," he says. He has been an artist in oil and acrylic since 1964 and woodworking art since 1990.

Gordon Sarti's passion is nature photography, seen in "PA Wildflowers" in this show, his debut at Penn State.

About a dozen of his pieces also will hang in January in the Murrysville Library.

"I enjoy nature and all it offers. What better way to capture it but through photography?" asks the East Deer native who now lives in Plum. "I use the camera to capture the essence of what nature is all about. Nature is all around us and we need to appreciate it."

Bob Bickers of Murrysville also appreciates what a camera can capture. He is represented with two photos, "Clear Signal" and "Misdirection," taken on a drive to State College.

"Creating art is very satisfying, but sharing your personal vision with others has a reward all of its own," he says. He views art as a creative outlet in the purest form. "I find that it invigorates the mind and soul," he says.

Judy Kane's senses come alive when she is sailing, thus explaining her geometric watercolor resembling a sailboat in this exhibit. "I hope my art gives people a sense of what I was feeling when I painted it," says the Washington Township resident who is the group's vice president.

Allen Maloney of Murrysville holds to the sailing theme with his watercolors "Windward Shore" and "Ghost," the names of two boats. "I have always seen sailboats as the ultimate harmonious interaction of man and nature," he says. "I suppose others think that about flying or skiing."

Working in wood, Gary Bills of Plum is hopeful that when his two carvings are viewed, they "reflect part of the world through my eyes." "I hope that art can conjure a deep connection between that piece and their soul," he adds.

Lower Burrell oil painter Eileen Kopelman pays tribute to her roots and her late father with a painting of one of his heifers, "I like paintings that don't have to be explained," she says. "They are what they are and people can understand them."

Sue Foster of Export, former president of the group, has a watercolor and a pastel in the gallery. "The watercolor is a still life with vivid colors and strong contrasts. It is an effect I enjoy creating," she says. The pastel is a figure done from sketches and photos from a live model.

Nancy Nock of New Kensington, who has been interested in art since grade school, says she is satisfied if she can give people pleasure with her watercolors -- but to a point.

"One year I received a ribbon for a painting," she says. "Someone liked it so much they stole it."