

NEIGHBOR to NEIGHBOR



OCTOBER
2017

Inner-City Neighborhood Art House • 201 East Tenth Street • Erie, Pennsylvania 16503 • 814-455-5508

— A MINISTRY OF THE BENEDICTINE SISTERS OF ERIE —
www.neighborhoodarthouse.org

Focus on our Youngest Learners

Several teachers were asked to describe their experience teaching our youngest learners, those 7 & 8 years old. The words most commonly used were *enthusiasm* and *focus*, enthusiasm because the children have so much of it, and focus because this is their most difficult challenge. "It takes a great deal of patience and can be very intense,"

Debbie Sementelli (fabric arts) explained, "but it is so much fun!" "Through all our projects I make sure the children are learning life skills such as measuring and cutting with scissors; we use large needles and embroidery thread or crochet cotton so they can see what they are doing as they hand sew sock critters, bean bags, bracelets and pillows."

"Lack of attention can sometimes be frustrating, but the smiles on their faces when they show their parents what they have done makes teaching young children very fulfilling," added Sr. Susan Freitag, OSB. "I emphasize basic skills such as using and caring for tools, following directions, learning how much glue or paint to use, and, most of all, enjoying what they are doing." Barb Hauck (fiber arts) attests that as the children learn to adjust to the Art House expectations of self-control, respect and attentiveness, they discover that they are happier when the environment

is calm. "This, I believe, is a key and critical skill that the Art House gives our youngest students." One goal in Mary Lubo-



Performing - Diana 8 and Maxim 8

wicki's classes is that the children are free to love painting. Mixing colors, working large, enjoying what they are doing are all important. "I tell them, 'getting messy is okay. That's why we wear aprons.'" On a more serious note, Mary observes that these children live in a world that moves very



Learning new skills - Yadiel 7

quickly. They have a hard time blocking out the distractions. "For me, it is back to basics. Listen, ask, do, and follow through, especially when doing a project lasting several weeks." When they are finished, Mary asks them if they like their paintings. "Usually they do, but if not, I work with them to make the changes they want so that they are happy with their work. All the children, from youngest to oldest, love to see their work honored by being displayed."

Janice Marquand (music) finds rhythm and percussion to be a perfect match for her students' exuberance. She especially enjoys broadening their horizons by singing in different languages. Sarah Everett (printmaking and crafts) finds that teaching the very young requires her to take the directions down to its most basic level. "You can actually watch their abilities advance." Jen Dennehy (hoop

dance) loves this very enthusiastic age group who struggle to learn to coordinate footwork while doing something with their hands.

"Young children inherently love to be out in nature; they love to watch the seeds grow, and especially like to take home vegetables such as carrots, potatoes, lettuce and chard that they helped harvest. They are eager to sample foods that are new to them and to



Creating a pattern - Elvira 7 Seleana 7 learn where their food comes from." Sr. Pat Lupo, OSB emphasizes that learning to be respectful of tools and their care is as important as learning to use the tools correctly. "I'm especially happy to see that the children readily participate in neighborhood clean-ups, then talk about how they don't like litter. Hopefully this will begin to change their own habits and they will be a model for their friends and families."

"Most important of all," Larisa Melodinskaia (dance) insisted, "the children need to know they are loved." "Dance can seem to be all about the performance, but it is really about the children growing in confidence, developing good body mechanics, and realizing that they all need each other to be successful."



Loving it - Ivan 7

Taste of the Arts 2017



"I'd like to teach the world to sing in perfect harmony . . . rang out from the huge white tent as guests joined the children in singing this call for peace and harmony with all the peoples of the world. Whether dancing to *We Are the World*, or *One Family*, performing instrumental selections from Russia, presenting traditional Irish Dancing, or reciting *Peace Life*, a poem by Gajanan Mishra, the children gave expression to the immense cultural diversity of Erie.

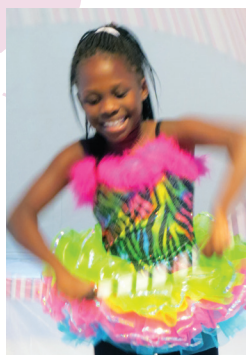
Patti Eichen, NAH Development, and Joy Knapp, Chairperson, take a moment to reflect on the beautiful evening they helped to create.



Children carrying inflated world globes wind through the audience - One World One Family

Joy Knapp, Chairperson, the Taste of the Arts Committee, the Women's Core Committee and the Benedictine Sisters of Erie are very grateful to our sponsors, in-kind donors, volunteers, those who participated by mail and everyone who attended this, the

20th annual Taste of the Arts. Most especially, we are grateful to the teachers and the children for their enthusiastic embrace of this special celebratory evening.



Caught in motion, Mary's (age 8) expression shouts "hoop dancing is great fun!"



Kyla (age 12), Franco (13), Ryanah (13) and Nadia (14) enjoy Irish dancing.



Rave reviews to Sabella's for their presentation of tasty foods from around the world.

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In this season of gratitude,
we give special thanks for your
friendship & support.

May you enjoy a
Bountiful Thanksgiving Day,
a Joyous Holiday Season,
and a New Year
filled with love and peace.

Summer Field Trips

Classes in digital photography, drawing, painting and environmental action took on a whole new dimension of excitement and purpose this summer as the children boarded the bus to be out "in the field" where they could experience the beauty and wonder of nature. The first week of Field Trips took the children to various areas at Glinodo Center where they explored the lake and beach, Sevenmile Creek, forest, and field. The Environmental Action class investigated ecosystems in each of the areas; they also did a trails service project and took some time for reflection and journaling. The art classes chose the area they wished to use as inspiration for their various disciplines. During the second week of Field Trips the children went fishing at Liberty Park with the SONS (Save our Native Species) of Lake Erie, had a habitat tour at the Erie Zoo, explored wetlands at Presque Isle State Park, and were creek-side at Headwaters Park at the Erie County Conservation District. Possibly the most exciting of the field trips was fossiling at Penn Dixie Natural History Museum in Hamburg

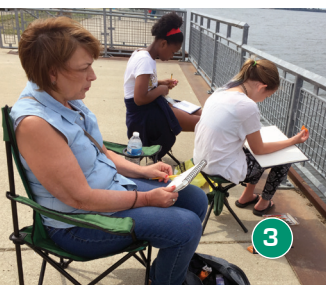


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NY where they were encouraged to take home the fossils that they found. Transportation for the Fishing Trip was provided by the SONS; on-line crowd-funding raised over \$1,100 to take care of most of the rest of the bus fees.



2



3

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4

- 1 Fossiling at Penn Dixie Natural History Museum near Hamburg, NY Sr. Pat, Shaan (10) and Owen (13)
- 2 Photography students attempting to capture the beauty of a Sevenmile Creek waterfall
- 3 Mary Kay Geary and students enjoying Chalk Pastel Drawing at Presque Isle State Park
- 4 TeVionne (12) and classmates conducting a macroinvertebrate study at a Presque Isle pond

DATES OF NOTE

November 10 7:00 pm Discover Your Inner Artist: Acrylic Painting Classes for Adults
 December 7 7:00 pm Open House
 December 22 - January 1 NAH Office closed
 January 2 Winter/Spring Term Begins

Discover Your Inner Artist



Tap into that "inner artist" under the direction of artist and Neighborhood Art House teacher, Mary Kay Geary. This acrylic painting class for adults will be held November 10, 7:00 - 9:00 pm. It will not exceed 15 participants, so register early: 455-5508 or nah@neighborhoodarthouse.org. Your registration with \$35 includes all materials, snacks and soft drinks.

WISH LIST

- Each December Holiday Care Packages are prepared for some of our financially challenged families. If you would like to contribute to this effort or assist with shopping, please contact Sr. Peg at program@neighborhoodarthouse.org or call 455-5508.
- Bus passes for Art House students attending one of the Middle Schools. Many do not qualify for District-provided transportation; the long walk will be even more difficult once the cold weather hits.
- Healthy snacks (pretzels, cheese crackers, animal crackers, etc.)
- Boxes of tissues, cleaning cloths
- Blu-ray/DVD player
- Children's films (DVD) - shown as children wait for classes to begin
- Gift cards to stores carrying art or office supplies
- Art supplies: Quick Dry Tacky Glue, poly-fill, polymer clay, masking tape (1" wide), scotch tape, Crayola Model Magic Clay, Air Dry Clay, zip closure plastic bags (sandwich, quart and gallon), markers (wide and narrow)
- Suet and Birdseed

STEM at the Art House



Wind Machines: With the assistance of Miss Sarah, Janiesha 9 (left) tests her wind machine by listening to music powered by the wind.

The Art House seems like an unlikely place for STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) projects, but that didn't stop Sarah Gaczewski, Mercyhurst University senior, from developing an environmental class named "Build." Sarah's students vary in age from 7 - 14 years old, but the enthusiasm seems to be



Solar Cars: Sarah's father traveled from Buffalo to assist students to build solar powered cars Owen 12 (l-r), Ryanah 13 and Garrett 14

universal, especially for the projects requiring imagination such as creating rafts out of natural materials, then testing them with weights (cargo) to see whose would stay afloat the best.

From the Desk Of Sr. Annette



Today you are you, that is truer than true. There is no one alive who is youer than you!

Dr. Seuss

Ah! The wisdom of Dr. Seuss! Self-knowledge and self-acceptance lead

to the freedom to develop into one's best self. When groups of such self-actualized persons come together, the free-flow of ideas from many perspectives may produce a much more positive outcome than each one working alone. "Strength lies in differences, not in similarities," Stephen Covey reminds us, as he coaches business leaders in their quest for excellence.

The influences that guide us when we are young are critical to how we will develop. We are each unique and need to be loved individually, while at the same time we need to be part of a loving and nurturing community that helps to define our values and lifestyle. Receiving and giving love, freedom is born; receiving and spreading hate, binds the spirit and shackles the imagination.

No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite.

Nelson Mandela

The Art House children learn, develop, create and perform together. They are learning to respect their own talents while celebrating those of others. Sometimes we take it for granted that children who are developing their own sense of self and who come from so many ethnic heritage backgrounds share much the same hopes, dreams, fears and ambitions. Perhaps as we continue to be a safe place for children to express themselves, the Art House will become a microcosm of a world where diversity is embraced and 'the other' is seen as gift rather than an intrusion to be feared.

Sister Annette

Congratulations to Mary Ann and Jim Toohey



Congratulations to Mary Ann and Jim Toohey who were recently honored as "Ageless Remarkable Erieites" at the Saint Mary's Follies held in September. Mary Ann, a founding member of the Women's Core Committee, then known as the Women of Vision, continues her service on this volunteer board. She was largely responsible for bringing St. Benedict Academy Alumnae together for *Encore '94*, a choral performance that raised the initial \$40,000 that helped move the Art House from dream to reality. Mary Ann and Jim have been faithful Neighborhood Art House supporters. They are shown above at the 2016 Taste of the Arts.

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Welcome New Faculty Member Charles Brown

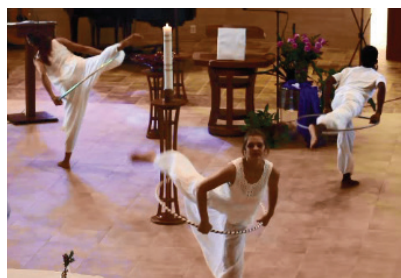


Charles Brown, well-known rap artist in Erie and recent inductee in the RocketErie Hall of Fame, joined the NAH faculty in September. Teaching a class entitled "Creating with Words," Charles is committed to helping students develop skills and confidence as they express themselves through various forms of creative writing.

Congratulations, Sister Peg!

Our congratulations and best wishes, Sister Peg, as you mark 50 years as a Benedictine Sister!

Sister Peg, NAH Program Director and member of the faculty since the Art House's beginning in 1994, celebrated her Golden Jubilee in September. Integrated into the monastic prayer was a beautiful rendition of *Chrystallize* by Lindsey Sterling danced by Jen Dennehy and her students.



During the reception following the vow renewal ceremony, Sister Peg stopped to thank the NAH hoop dancers: Franco (13), Ella (13), Jen Dennehy (teacher) and Kyla (12).

DONOR CORNER

ERIEBANK Golfers Dave Zimmer, Ed Szczyk, Paul Sallie and Bill DeLuca placed fourth in a field of twenty-three foursomes at the Erie Insurance Charity Golf Classic held September 11. Their success on the course brought the Neighborhood Art House a donation of \$6,000 which was presented to Sister Annette Marshall by Tim NeCastro, President and CEO of Erie Insurance. We are grateful to Erie Insurance for sponsoring this event, and to **ERIEBANK** for choosing the Art House as their charity. **Congratulations and thank you to our team!**

