



Expanding the World of Possibilities for Aging



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CONNECT



Inspiration can come from anywhere, a person's own experience, an inanimate object, a simple thought or anything that ignites the mind's ability to imagine. But to find and hold on to inspiration and cultivate it into a beautiful work of art is a magnificent portrayal of a person's artistic ability. The tremendous response from residents throughout the communities of our membership was astounding. The Aging Services of Washington's Resident Art Calendar, 'Art in the Park' could not have been a greater success without the talented work of all the residents that participated.

Over the past five months, 140 pieces of artwork from 25 communities were submitted by entry form and photo, then categorized into sculptures, wood carving, needlework, painting, sketches, paper craft, creative writing and more, then it was all cataloged by community. Once the cataloging was complete it was time to get the artwork to the Aging Services office for judging. Finally, the artwork was displayed in the conference room so that every single piece of art could be seen.

It was obvious to see that inspiration flourished throughout the room because all the art was created with passion and love; each one different from the other. "I really like the diversity of the artwork and I was very excited to get to look at it all," said judge, Angie Napier.

The judges were tasked to evaluate each piece on creativity, craftsmanship, elements of art, composition, unity and variety and use of space. It was a challenging process for the judges as they meticulously went through and judged on all the submissions but an enjoyable experience all the same. "I really tried to look at all of the criteria on the judging form and ultimately how the art made me feel," Napier said. "I was really amazed at the quality of the artwork and the age of the artists."



Judge Josie Brown said it took her between 2-3 hours to give every piece it's just judging. "You could feel the love and passion they put into it and now they have an opportunity to show it off," Brown said. "I wanted to give everybody 10s; but I couldn't."

The inspiration behind each entry differed greatly from one to the next and while all of them are intriguing stories that helped create amazing works of art, the judges had to narrow it down to 27 finalists and 24 semi-finalists to be featured in the 24-month calendar. Here are just a few of the featured artists.



Jean Dantzer, 79, resident of Crista Shores found her inspiration from her hometown of Port Townsend, WA and titled it *'Victorian Snowfall'*. It's a scene straight out of the old horse and buggy days when women wore corsets and bonnets and men donned top hats and coat tails. Categorized as a soft craft piece, Jean learned how to cross-stitch in 1995 and has been honing her skills over the years. She continues to challenge herself by working on very complex and detailed designs.

Sheila Allen, 71, resident at The Gardens at Juanita Bay started painting and making paper collages when she was 65. The work that won her a spot in the resident art calendar was inspired by her granddaughter Paris Grace and is appropriately title *'Paris Grace.'* Constructed from newspaper and watercolors, Sheila portrayed her granddaughter with an old world antique charm.

Orland Olson, 92, resident of Cristwood Park has been wood carving since he was 14 years old. After a recent trip to Hawaii ignited his inspiration, Orland went home mesmerized by the group of dolphins swimming together. He took an old cherry root he had and carved it into a beautiful statute of dolphins jumping out of the water and back into it and entitled it *'Born Free'*.

Edna Rideout, 93, resident of Emerald Heights has been painting since she was 7 years old and her piece titled *'Rings'* was inspired by her interest in the solar system and universe. She painted the rings of Saturn as she imagined them to be, with big sweeping lines of color looping around the planet. Edna grew up mostly in Colorado and Washington so nature has been another big inspiration in her artwork.



Ruth A. McCahon, 86, resident of Warm Beach Senior Community has been painting still life portraits since 1954. Mentored by Conger A. Metcalf, an art professor from Boston University, he taught Ruth how to sharpen her drawing and design skills. The painting Ruth submitted, entitled *'Legacy'* was a tribute to Conger Metcalf as part of her Crane Collection Gallery exhibit. A stunning still life portrait of a desk with books lined up against the back and a pair of reading glasses placed gently on an open book with a touch of light that allows for depth in the painting. Sadly, Conger passed before he could see the completed work but it was hung in the *'Memory of Conger Metcalf'* exhibit.

If it was possible to put all 140 pieces of submitted artwork in the calendar it would have been done because every single artist deserves to be recognized for their artistic ability. Even the staff at each community who helped coordinate the submissions for their talented residents deserves a round of applause. "The staff at Aging Services would like to acknowledge the staff support we had at each Community to make our 'Art in the Park' a huge success," said Pat Sylvia, Director of Member Development. "And a special thank you to all the amazing residents who participated. We couldn't have done it without you!"

An art reception will take place on Thursday, February 23rd from 1-3 p.m. at 1495 Wilmington Drive, Suite 340, DuPont, WA 98327 to showcase all the finalists and semi-finalists. It also serves as an opportunity to have an open house to see the new Aging Services' office. For further information and details please contact Cassi Meritt at (253) 964-8870 or cmeritt@agingwa.org.