

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

# Shrine parade comes to the Northside on August 18

By Earl Thayer

This year's Midwest Shrine session concludes on Saturday, August 18, at 11 am with a parade along North Sherman Avenue. The parade begins at Aberg Avenue and runs to Warner Park.

The event is free and open to the public. Plan to arrive early for parking because North Sherman Avenue and several nearby streets will be closed.

The Shriners will assemble their bands, clowns, horse and motorized units on Kropf beginning at 10 am, and everyone is welcome to watch the parade get organized.

Local host Zor Shrine expects 2,500 Shriners from 12 chapters in Iowa, Minnesota, North and South Dakota, Wisconsin, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Shrine organizations are noted for their philanthropic support of Shrine Hospitals for Children.

Zor Potentat, Mark Severson notes that the Midwest Shrine session celebrates Zor's 75th anniversary. Zor is one of three Shrine chapters in Wisconsin supporting the Shriners



Photo provided by John Thorstad

**The Zor Shrine parade is coming to Northside! Get your spot early on North Sherman Avenue!**

Hospitals for Children, a network of 20 hospitals in the U.S., and one each in Canada and Mexico, providing expert orthopedic and burn care to children at no cost to the patient or family. Zor's 2,100 members currently sponsor over 800 Wisconsin children at these hospitals.

# TIMEBANK SUCCESSES

By Terrie Anderson

The Northside News

## International Conference

In a thrilling testament to the success of the Dane County Timebank, the International Timebank Conference will be held in Madison this Nov. 1-3. Having surpassed all established goals, our Timebank has become an exciting way for neighbors to connect, and we aren't the only ones who noticed.

Over 300 Timebankers and community organizers interested in implementing the exchange system will visit Madison from throughout the United States, England, Scotland, New Zealand, Sri Lanka, Senegal, Japan, Spain, Canada and other countries.

There are several ways to join the excitement. Attend the conference, or assist with logistics during the conference and as hosts for home stay alternatives to hotels for attendees. All time supporting the conference will be reimbursed with timedollars to spend for the services offered by over 460 members.

There's plenty of time to get involved before the conference. Apply online at [www.danecountytimebank.org](http://www.danecountytimebank.org) or call 663-0400. And spread the word. Tell your friends and relatives in other places about the Timebank. They might attend the conference and set up a Timebank in their area.

## Northside Farmers Market/Timebank Events

Each fourth Sunday of the month this summer, the Timebank has spon-



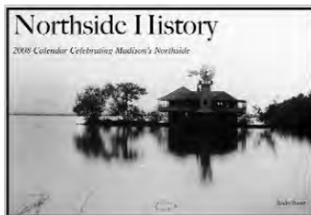
Photo by Gerry Novotny

## Bravest Pet winner Antonio and owner Anthony Young

sored a community event in conjunction with the Farmers Market.

Photos and info on the Wellness Fair, the Pet Parade and Water Wonderland are at [www.danecountytimebank.org](http://www.danecountytimebank.org). Check out who won the Best Owner/Pet Look-Alike at the Pet Parade or see some of the action from Water Wonderland. Keep coming to the market for delicious local products every Sunday, and don't miss our Back-to-School event on Aug. 26, with drawings for give-aways of school supplies every 15 minutes along with an opportunity to meet tutors, language teachers and other Timebank members who can make the transition back to school fun and successful.

Missed out on those massages and blood pressure checks in May? We'll be doing Wellness Day again on Sept. 23. See you there!



**THE 2008 NORTHSIDE HISTORY CALENDAR Is Here**  
See page 6 for more info



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NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

# Neighborhood centers abound

By Jody Schmitz  
*The Northside News*

The Northside is home to the largest concentration of neighborhood community centers in Madison. Within 10 square blocks, four active community centers are located in multi-cultural, low-income areas.

**Kennedy Heights**

The first center formed was Kennedy Heights, located at Northport Drive and Kennedy Road. The Kennedy Heights Neighborhood Association formed in 1983, and residents planned and raised money for a Community Center that opened in 1986.

The Center offers a full-range of children's programs, including a city-accredited Early Childhood program and after school program. Youth programs include a Girl Neighborhood Power group and various interest groups for boys and middle and high school youth.

The adult program includes a women's group, knitting group, community theater program, various field trips, series of fishing programs and an Asian Outreach program that includes parenting classes. Since 1999, the Center has sponsored a weekly food pantry every Monday from 5-6:30 pm. A nutritional education program is conducted in cooperation with UW Extension.

**Vera Court**

On the other side of Northport Drive, bordered by School Road and Troy

Drive, is Vera Court Neighborhood Center, built in 1993-94. It serves 126 apartments in Vera Court and nearby communities. Vera Court is a dynamic, revitalized neighborhood center providing children's and adult activities that make the area alive with community spirit.

Core programming includes elementary and middle school programs, community events and a new preschool for 3- to 5-year-olds, in collaboration with Mendota Elementary. A busy computer lab is valued by community residents.

The increase in Latino families resulted in the Latino Resource Center, which provides outreach and assistance in housing, employment, medical help and other family needs.

**Northport Apartments**

Farther east on Northport Drive and across from Northside TownCenter is Northport Apartments, and the community center was built in 1995. Called the Community Learning Center, the heavily-used building always puts an emphasis on education and providing training and tutoring for adults and children.

Currently busy with summer programs for children, the Center provides sailing, golf, pottery, other arts and crafts, gardening and Spanish. The children are also preparing a production of "Annie".

The Center has a career Development Center and a Computer lab open for adult use during daytime

## What's up at Vera Court?

Check it out...



**Neighborhood Clean Up Day!**  
Saturday, August 25 - 11 a.m.  
Meet in parking lot.  
Lunch & music to follow!

**Vera Court Neighborhood Association Meeting**

Thursday, September 13 - 6:30 p.m.

Are you concerned about our neighborhood? Me too!  
Together we can make a difference at Vera Court. Meet at the Center.

**Questions? Ideas? Contact:**  
Benito Juarez Olivas, 957.6652  
nonamenoone@hotmail.com  
Patricia Holmes-Doss, 469.1347  
phdoss5152@charter.net

**VERA COURT**  
*Neighborhood Association*



Photo provided by Tom Solyst

Vera Court Neighborhood Center volunteers and staff helped install a new playground on August 4. The Center raised \$26,000 for the equipment, which all the neighborhood children can enjoy.

hours until the children come home from school and take over the lab. The center provides Head Start and ESL (English as a Second Language) classes and has a Homework Club with tutors from UW Madison.

**Packer Townhouses**

On the other side of Northport Drive is Packer Townhouses. Owned by the same group as Northport Apartments, the two centers have similar goals. Since opening in 1994, the Packer Community Learning Center puts emphasis on education and employment training. The Center also has a very active computer center and offers Adult Basic Education with a team of teachers from MATC. Classes include ESL, GED and high school GED, business, English and math, with 125

to 150 students enrolled.

Children, who number 140 of the 324 people who live in the complex, have two Head Start groups and after-school homework opportunities. There is a scholarship college prep program includes tutoring and mentoring sponsored by the UW PEOPLE prep program. Also, volunteer students from the UW African Ethnic Studies department work with kindergarten through 12 grade students.

Packer community center children and teens have poetry slams and have made a film every summer since 2001. The frosting on this cake of positive activity is an on-site recording studio where young musicians can produce their own records.

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PEOPLE

# Who is Millie Mallard?

By Sue Morrison & Millie Mallard

The Northside News

As a Madison Mallard Mascot for the past seven years, you could say that Lisa Erickson is Millie. In fact, Erickson has been the only person underneath the Millie costume.

What fun it is each game to go out into the Duck Pond to greet kids, get hugs, dance, play and get paid for it.

"The best part," stated Erickson, "is being able to bring a smile to a fan's face."

Yes, it does get a little warm wearing the costume. The basic costume has changed little in seven years. A cheerleader skirt and a crown were added with help of Erickson's grandmother and Savidusky's Furs. All it takes is a needle and thread to sew up a few holes in her "wings" so she can always slap five, shake hands or give hugs.

A typical game means working with the other three mascots - Maynard, Bonehead and Chewie. They greet fans at the gate. While the line is called, Millie does the "who" for the opposing team and cheers for the Mallards. She also escorts the first pitch fans, dances with the Mascot band on Fridays, assists with promotions between innings and meets and greets with the audience.

Walking the stands does create a small problem since she cannot judge who or what is on the side of her, so she appreciates when she is greeted in



Photo by Sue Morrison

Millie Mallard poses with a young Mallards fan

the front.

A few years ago, the wedding of Maynard and Millie was a big event. Erickson's grandmother also created a custom wedding dress for Millie. Where are the little ducklings? The future only knows, but for now, Maynard and Millie are busy keeping up with the crowd.

"Millie is a fun job. All it takes is getting into the costume and seeing the fans have a good time to brighten up even the worst of days," said Erickson. She gained confidence in herself and enjoys making a fool of herself. She plans on continuing to be Millie for a few more years. She is finishing college and hopes to work with children. Until then, she hopes to see more new faces out at the Duck Pond.

# Johnny and His Rose

Couple begins new chapter sharing their story

By Dana Slowiak

The Northside News

North Star winner Johnny L. Ellis has two new titles to add to his life story - author and publisher. He, along with his wife Abraham Rose, wrote and published three books this year.

The pride of their recent work is *Johnny and his Rose: A True Love Story of Eternal Love*. The couple has been together 16 years, through many trials and tribulations that did more than test their relationship. It strengthened their bond and helped Ellis through his prison term. The book tells their story of how extreme challenges were overcome with their love for each other and their faith in God.

Happiness radiates from the couple, and a deep sense of contentment, understanding and faith is apparent. They see their relationship as a means to help others.

"Love, truth, beauty," said Rose. "We are entering a new arena. We've accomplished a lot. We want to share our love with the world. We have an obligation to share, without fear or shame."

Their second book, *The First Twenty-Nine Days*, chronicles personal stories of adversity and challenges people face after they are released from prison. Ellis shares his own story. He now serves as a coordinator and facilitator for Voices Beyond Bars, an organization that helps returning ex-prisoners and their families share their successes and struggles.

The couple also published *The Legacy Campaign*, personal accounts of people diagnosed with HIV and



Johnny L. Ellis and Abraham Rose

Photo provided by J. Ellis and A. Rose

AIDS. Both share their personal stories, sharing their hope and rediscovery after their diagnosis. The stories are moving and powerful. While people share their emotional roller coasters dealing with their diseases, an underlying theme reverberates - diagnosis is not a death sentence but a new beginning.

Rose and Ellis also founded His Rose, Inc., which is "dedicated to raising awareness of spiritual principles through personal ministry and inspired literature, offering 'living proof' that God is alive and well, and that His Word is faithful and true." The couple shares their life story with others to help every person discover his or her true potential.

"I'm not going back," Ellis said, referring to an old life. He sees his work with His Rose as a key component by helping others and remaining true to his commitment.

Visit their website at [www.hisrose.org](http://www.hisrose.org). The couple is also featured at [www.atlasbooks.com](http://www.atlasbooks.com) during August.

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## Climate

the Northside,” said Savidusky. “Businesses are cropping up as fast as they go down. Most of the retail stores are family-owned, people who come from this area. They don’t have the deep pockets of a big business. They work hard. But sometimes it doesn’t pan out. When several businesses close, it might seem like the whole area is in trouble.”

Steve Nelson, owner of DuWayne’s Salon, has plenty of customers but feels the district could benefit from a clothing store or a unique business such as a cinema-cafe.

“The problem on the Northside has always been awareness, although it’s getting better. Newspapers have stopped referring to Warner Park and the Mallards as being on the East side,” he said. “A bigger issue now is that due to economic times, people are keeping a closer eye on their finances.”

The business district’s appearance is also driving some negative perceptions. While some owners have remodeled their aging buildings, the Northside is a neglected corner of the city when it comes to City-supported economic development, according to several sources.

“I’m feeling disappointed in the attention given by the City to the Northside,” said developer Marty Rifken, owner of Lakewood Plaza.

“The City should throw some dollars at this area, allow more mixed use development, and get clear on zoning,”



he said. “The City could look at putting in a TIF district. When you have so much low-income housing, you drive down the median income for the area. There should be a focus on master planning, and on improving roads like Northport and Packers, and putting in a bike path.”

Jim Powell, Northside Planning Council lead organizer, said that while parts of Madison and nearby suburbs are growing, infill development is not happening on the Northside. He noted that despite the presence of some large employers like Oscar Mayer and the Dane County Airport, there are many areas the City has identified in its master plan for infill and redevelopment.

“Quality of life is linked to a healthy business climate,” said Powell. “There’s a desire to keep people connected to the community they live in so they can work and shop close to home.”

He makes a case for interested parties to start a dialogue about a community vision. With aging shopping centers and numerous deteriorating build-



**Lakeview Plaza** (located at N. Sherman and Commercial Avenues) is welcoming two new businesses: a beauty salon (**Helen’s**) and a **wine and cigar bar**, which isn’t affected by Madison’s smoking ban because the shopping center is in Maple Bluff. The center still has a space that could accommodate a restaurant, if anyone is looking.

**The Cost Cutters** hair salon in the **Northgate Shopping Center** closed in early July.

**The Martinson Real Estate** building on North Sherman Avenue is coming down. Owner Dan Martinson is working on replacing it with an attractively designed, green-constructed building with space for tenants. Anyone looking for office space should contact Dan.

**The El Corral Bar and Restaurant**, located in the former Runway Bar and Grill, is expected to open in late August and will serve Mexican food and drinks.

**The Sunburst Preschool** at 2017 Londonderry Drive has been re-named “**KinderCare Learning Center**” to reflect the re-branding efforts of the parent company, Knowledge Learning Corporation, according to a spokeswoman.

The company is the nation’s leading private provider of early childhood and school-age education and care, according to its website at [www.knowledge-learning.com](http://www.knowledge-learning.com). The company has about 19,000 centers nationwide with more than 90 brand names, which were consolidated into the “KinderCare Learning Center” name in April.

KinderCare still doesn’t have city childcare accreditation, but hopes that management and curriculum changes will help it earn it.

- Compiled by Mary Schumacher, Dana Slowiak and Jim Powell

ings, he said, “We have the potential for thinking about the next 20 to 30 years.”

John Kavanaugh, owner of the Esquire Club restaurant, has this advice for Northsiders: “Spend your money in the neighborhood when you can. Support local businesses. It doesn’t always cost more, and in this neighborhood, you can expect value, service, and friendliness. That’s worth a couple pennies more.”

**What businesses do you want to see on the Northside?**

**TAKE THE NORTHSIDE CONSUMER SURVEY!**

*See details on page 3*

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COMMUNITY ISSUES

cont. from page 1

Condos

the development “will make water movement better than it was before” because of additions of a detention pond, rain gardens, native plantings, vegetative buffers and crushed stone driveway shoulders that are part of the project.

Nevertheless, at a July 23 Plan Commission hearing, Muriel Simm of the Friends requested that the City Parks Division ensure that the storm water plan adequately protects the marsh and that the new condo association be required to maintain the retention pond, rain gardens and buffers.

Other neighborhood residents testified that they wanted single family dwellings more in character with the neighborhood rather than large condominium buildings.

However Ald. Schumacher pointed out in a subsequent interview that if the duplex condominiums had not been approved, “CPI could have built six single family homes on separate lots which would impact the environment more than the condos.” He also recognized that the City often places a priority on higher density construction in the urban area and that the two-family units fall within the allotted density of the SAP.

Tiziani stated that the units will be upscale condominiums which buyers will be able to customize to suit their needs. He also confirmed that the Burning Wood Way development, scheduled for completion early next year, would likely be the only con-

struction undertaken by CPI this year with the focus probably shifting to the Wheeler Triangle and the Fifth Addition in 2008. However he also noted that “the real estate market is not so good right now” and that CPI would wait to see how these units sell before making specific plans for further development.

Saying that the decision process was about balancing what is best for Cherokee Marsh with what is best for the community, Ald. Schumacher expressed his support for the final plan as it adds more public green space to the neighborhood and the luxury condominiums will also add significantly to the tax base for the city.

In a related item, Si Widstrand from the Madison Parks Division reported that the process for obtaining funds for the purchase of wetlands in the area as outlined in the Cherokee Special Area Plan “is going well, but we’re not ready for an announcement yet.”

The City’s application for state Stewardship Funds has been submitted and received a high ranking. A preliminary presentation to the Dane County Grants Commission was also well received.

*If you’d like to suggest a favorite Northside resident to be profiled in the Northside News, call us at 661-0060*

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Schools

talk with a small group of friends and neighbors to see where we can agree on what we want for our schools.

“Our public schools should be about mining the creative genius of all of our children,” said Rebecca Kemble, a Lindbergh Elementary and East High parent. “It feels like we’re wasting a lot of our time and energy bickering about resources when we could be creatively collaborating with each other to create an education system that works.” Kemble, a PTO Coalition member, and her husband Adam Chern are holding several house meetings this month.

So far two themes have emerged. People want all schools kept open to ensure a good quality of life in all neighborhoods, even poorer ones. People also want a more transparent budget process in which the School Board asks the Superintendent to deliver a budget that meets its priorities, rather than the other way around.

Using the results of the house meetings, the Council and PTO Coalition will hold Community Round Tables in each of the four schools attendance area in September. A final District-wide Forum will be held in October to present the results of the campaign



Photo by Jacki Thomas

One hundred twenty-five people marched in protest of the proposed closing of Lindbergh Elementary School in April.

**SCHOOLS CAMPAIGN**

*What do you want for our schools?*

**Attend a House Meeting or Come to a Community Round Table!**

Contact Julie Spears or Jim Powell at the Northside Planning Council (661-0060) for more information.

and Community Round Tables and to get public commitments from School Board members to take action.

The Council and the PTO Coalition will also be actively encouraging other PTO's to organize parent-led tours modeled after the success of the tour led by

Lindbergh parents for Maya Cole and Beth Moss who were newcomers to the School Board last spring. As part of this larger campaign, these tours will give School Board members the opportunity to connect with parents while seeing each school first hand.

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# Rain barrels make difference

By Judy Metz  
Master Gardener

My husband surprised me in June for my birthday with a rain barrel and installed it over one weekend. Then we waited for rain. When it did rain, ¾ of an inch, the barrel filled from water draining off our roof. We now have a soaker hose connected to the barrel and to water our west side garden.

When it rains, water is lost by going down the sewer into our lakes, causing problems. All you have to do is look at all of the green scum on the lakes and the smell from the decaying vegetation to understand the problem. Diverting water from your downspout into a rain barrel helps with watering your garden. There are several advan-

tages to using rain barrels. They reduce the volume of water flowing into the sewer. They are also a backup water source during drought. They store naturally softened water. They help lower your water bill. The chlorine free water maintains a healthy lawn.

I am so impressed by our rain barrel that I wouldn't mind having one on the other corners of the house. I plan to rearrange some plants in the corners, take out old daylilies and plant tall Fountain Grass around the barrel to hide it.

To find out more about installing a Rain Barrel go to Jung's Garden Center on Northport Drive, visit Sustain Dane at [www.sustaindane.org](http://www.sustaindane.org) or contact Isthmus Handyman LLC at [im-handy@sbcglobal.net](mailto:im-handy@sbcglobal.net).

# Friends of Lake View Hill Park Upcoming Events

[www.madison.com/communities/FriendsOfLakeViewHill/](http://www.madison.com/communities/FriendsOfLakeViewHill/)



Photo by Hill C. Ritter

Volunteers pose last May before beginning work. Restoration work continues in the park while perserving the park and its natural life.

### Community Field Work Days

Join the Friends for two days of fieldwork. Meet at the water tower trailhead, near the northeast portion of the parking lot. All ages welcome (youth must be accompanied by a responsible adult who can sign the county park's volunteer form). For more information, please contact Shannon Wall (335-2959 or [wallshannon@sbcglobal.net](mailto:wallshannon@sbcglobal.net)).

**Sat., Sept. 15, 10 am-12 pm Seeds Gone Wild!** Help collect native plant seed. The work will be "light". Beverages and snacks provided.

**Sat., Oct. 13, 9 am-12pm Autumn Pull-a-Thon!** Remove plants that don't belong, as well restoration work, and there'll be a mix light and heavy tasks. Cider and snacks provided.

### Tabling

Park and the Friends information will be provided at Sunday Northside Farmers Market.

### Pets and Other Critters

Two red foxes have dened in a residential yard near the park and are reported to have four kits. Foxes, like coyotes and hawks, are capable preying on small animals and have recently been reported to have downed both a skunk and a young fawn. Owners of small pets, especially cats that may roam, should take appropriate steps.

Responsible dog owners leash their pets when walking them in the park and also pick up behind them. Recently, animal droppings near the Nurses. It is uncertain if the droppings are from dogs or other critters, such as the raccoons or other animals that make the park their home. Contact with either doggie doo or

wild animal "scat" can be dangerous because of disease. The county's campus facility staff is, for now, responding to this serious problem with an "inform-the-public" approach, and would appreciate the help of responsible dog-owners in spreading the word. If you see an owner who is letting their dog roam off-leash or who is not picking up behind their pet, please share the park's rules with them.

### Celebration!

The complex process of changing county and city zoning of the park to reflect conservancy status will likely be completed in September. Watch for future news of a mid-to-late October event marking the successful conclusion of a decades-long effort to protect Lake View Hill, preserving it instead as a conservation park.

### Master Plan

Later this year, the public will be invited to join a county-led master planning process for the park.

### Board Meetings

The Friends' Board of Directors meets 7-9 pm the second Thursday of each month in Room 110 of the Dane County Human Services Building, 1202 Northport Drive (in Lake View Hill Park). The Directors will not meet in August but will resume meetings Sept. 13. As time permits, brief public comment is taken at the beginning of each meeting, or may also be mailed to (please note new hardmail address): Friends of Lake View Hill Park, Inc., ATTN: Secretary, Board of Directors, PO Box 3272, Madison, WI, 53704 or phone 244-2055 or email [neisman@yahoo.com](mailto:neisman@yahoo.com).

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NORTHSIDE HAPPENINGS

# Lake View Hill planning

Conservation, opportunities ahead

By Dana Slowiak  
The Northside News

Master planning for Lake View Hill Park will begin later this fall to determine the long-term vision for the park.

A kick-off meeting for public input will take place in October, said Sara Kwitek, Acquisition and Planning Specialist for Dane County Parks. Community input is welcome and encouraged at this meeting, and residents can share their visions and concerns for Lake View Hill Park.

Extensive background work will be completed prior to the meeting to provide as much information as possible to the community. Many factors determine what opportunities and constraints exist for the final plan.

Kwitek said the kick off meeting will share the history and background of Lake View Hill Park, which includes the woods, lawn and Esch Addition. A site inventory and analysis will be presented, which will include documented park features including vegetation, soils, wildlife and typography.

At the kick off meeting, Kwitek recommends residents share any information they find relevant and important. This meeting is the optimum time for people to ask questions and offer input and any additional information that may have been missed in the site inventory and analysis. All information helps "reach a consensus and



This spring, this prairie trillium blossomed in Lake View Hill Park.

Photo by C. Ritter

common vision," Kwitek said. The next steps in the planning process are determined after the meeting.

An inventory of stakeholders that should be involved in developing the master plan will also be established. Input from Dane County Department Human Services campus master plan and the City of Madison (which owns the water tower) is expected, along with input from Friends of Lake View Hill Park, residents living near the park and the wider Northside community.

Check the next issue of the *Northside News* for more information about the kick-off meeting.

Wheels for Winners



More than 30 volunteers participated in the **Wheels for Winners 24-hour "Wrench-a-Thon"** on the weekend of July 28-29. Wheels for Winners is a nonprofit organization on the edge of the Northside (2310 Pennsylvania Ave.) in which volunteers repair donated bicycles to be made available to area youth as part of the group's "Earn-a-Bike" program. Dane County youth can earn a bicycle, complete with helmet, lock, and (if needed) Madison bicycle license, by performing 15 hours of supervised volunteer service in the community.

For information on donating bicycles, volunteering with repairs (training provided), or earning a bike, see <http://wheelsforwinners.org> or call 249-2418.

~ Text and Photos by Bob Paolino

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# Stealing from nature

## Railroad tracks lead the way

By Tom Blake  
The Northside News

"You'll shoot your eye out!" is every mom's fear who lets her son play with a BB gun. For Charlie Smith, that fear became a reality, and it changed his life. At age nine, he injured his eye with a BB gun. While convalescing from his injuries he began to sketch, and it was discovered that he had an eye for art and a gift to draw. Later that year he began taking courses at the Chicago Art Institute.

Born in Dubuque, Iowa, he grew up in Gary, Ind. His life's ambition to be a pilot like his uncle, who flew the "Burma Hump," came to an end with that fateful BB, redirecting his life by revealing his artistic gift. A graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Platteville in 1972, he traveled the state from the Mississippi River to Lake Michigan as a substitute teacher. Later he worked as a track supervisor for the Chicago &

Northwestern Railway and the Union Pacific Railroad, retiring after 30 years.

"Many of my pastels are views from the tracks," said Smith. "I feel like I am stealing from nature." Many of his sketches are "excerpts of nature."

There is a special bond that connects his uncle (who flew missions to China during WWII) to his daughter Emily (who worked in China) and his own service (in the Infantry during Viet Nam).

"It is a three generation Asian connection," Smith added. "While aboard the transport ship to Nam, I sketched a lot of portraits with various aspects of the ship's equipment in the background. I hate to draw from memory or from photos. You always miss something." Referring to a sketch of his daughter, he said, "Less is sometimes more. I over-worked something that was very good and ruined it with color."

Smith takes a geometric approach to



Artwork by Charlie Smith

Artist Charlie Smith uses pastels and often captures outdoor images in a race against changing daylight.

his sketches. He also works in pencil drawings and oils. Viewing his landscapes and still life works, you can see geometric shapes that frame the subject matter.

"There is always something unexpected happening. Because light is constantly changing, when working outdoors, it is a race against time. A cloud will move and an instant decision must be made — incorporate or wait. The scene takes on a life of its own because it is fluid. The art term is chiaroscuro,

finding depth through light and dark. Taking things out is as important as adding in new things," he said.

Following the technique of Edgar Degas, Smith rolls his pastels in the sun, exposing them to sunlight to soften harsh new chalk.

"They are the living dead, lying in their tombs, waiting to be resurrected on a sketch," Smith said. "Degas attacks the human form. I am not in his league."

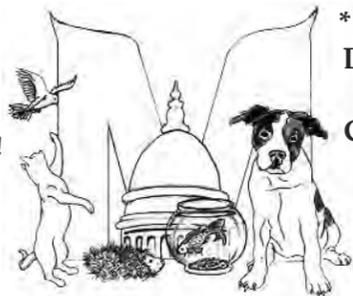
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