

Loffler art class works now on display at Lexington Park Library

Posted by [Alan Van Wormer](#) On 02/05/2019

Leonardtown, MD - Art students from the Loffler Senior Activity Center have been selected for the latest art installation at the Lexington Park Library Art Gallery. Their work will be on display throughout the month of February.

"We're challenging [the students] to take their art to the next level," said instructor Jamie Naluai. In this instance, the next level means having the courage to put their artwork forward in a public venue.

A lifelong artist and art teacher, Naluai began teaching at the Loffler Senior Activity Center six years ago. Like the art being displayed, her approach to the class has evolved over time. At first, she made herself available to help students work on their own projects and provided weekly artistic themes. Now, she guides students in month-long, deep-dive, explorations of different artistic techniques, mediums, and styles.

"She teaches us to do things we thought we could never do," said longtime participant Beth Wright.

Previous studies have included painting Pablo Picasso-inspired self-portraits and works utilizing India ink. Students are currently working on a study of Vincent van Gogh and works inspired by the painting Starry Night. For the past few years, a growing collection of the students' artwork has been on display in the hallways of the Loffler Senior Activity Center.

Linda Fry, a member of the St. Mary's County Commission on Aging and an active volunteer and participant with the Department's Senior Activity Centers, saw the art on display at the Lexington Park Library and believed it would be a good opportunity for the class and her fellow students. She brought the idea to the St. Mary's County Arts Council Executive Director, Nell Elder, and Naluai, who agreed with her.

To choose pieces for the exhibit at the Lexington Park Library, Naluai asked each student to bring in three of their favorite works, which were narrowed down to a single collaboration between Naluai and Elder.

According to Elder, the St. Mary's County Arts Council took over management of the gallery in 2014. The space is used to showcase local artists and community pieces. Shows at the Lexington Park Library last between a month and six weeks, Elder said.

The display at the Lexington Park Library is "a culmination of what we've been doing," according to Marietta Van Natta, who has been taking the class along with her husband, Richard Van Natta, since 2016. "It just keeps getting better and better," she said.

The Loffler Senior Activity Center, located at 21905 Chancellors Run Road in Great Mills, is one of three activity centers in the county for adults age 50 and over and is operated by the St. Mary's County Department of Aging & Human Services. Art classes are also offered at the Garvey Senior Activity Center in Leonardtown and the Northern Senior Activity Center in Charlotte Hall.

The artwork will be on display through the month of February at the Lexington Park Library, located at 21677 FDR Blvd in Lexington Park, MD. For more information about art classes at the Loffler Senior Activity Center, call 301-475-4200, ext. 71658. For a full schedule of events, including classes offered at the Northern and Garvey Senior Activity Centers, visit www.stmarysmd.com/aging.

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