

Neighbor to Neighbor

August 2006



Inner-City Neighborhood Art House
201 East Tenth Street
Erie, Pennsylvania 16503
(814)455-5508
www.eriebenedictines.org/arthouse

National Award for Erie Art House

Erie Benedictine Sister Mary Lou Kownacki, founder of the Inner-City Neighborhood Art House and its Executive Director from 1995-2005, has been awarded the 2006 Social Entrepreneurship Award from the Manhattan Institute headquartered in New York City.

The initiative honors five nonprofit leaders who have found innovative, private solutions for some of America's most pressing social problems with little or no government financial aid.

The award will be presented at a banquet in New York City in the fall and carries a gift of \$10,000 to the organization founded by the award winner.

Nominations for the annual award are submitted to the Manhattan Institute's Social Entrepreneurship

Sister Mary Lou with children from the Neighborhood Art House

Selection Committee. After review and discussion, the Committee selects up to ten nominees as semi-finalists. Each semi-finalist is then contacted by Howard Husock, Initiative Director and Manhattan Institute Vice President of Programs, who interviews the entrepreneur and arranges for a site visit. Following receipt of Husock's report, the Committee selects up to five award winners.

www.manhattaninstitute.org.

ART HOUSE EXPANDS

"More room" is what Sister Anne Wambach, OSB, Executive Director of the Neighborhood Art House, always answered when she was asked, What does the Art House need?

Sister Anne is getting her wish. Emmaus Food Pantry, which used to share space in the same building, moved to a



New storage space and additional studio space and offices become a reality at the Neighborhood Art House.

new location in early June. Construction began immediately to renovate the vacated space into four additional studios, offices for the Development staff, bathrooms and storage space.

Construction and equipment costs were helped, in part, by a grant from the Erie Community Foundation to the Benedictine Sisters of Erie Capital Campaign for their Ministry Fund (\$40,000 of a \$100,000 grant) and a \$10,000 grant from Ronald McDonald House Charities. Emmaus Ministries owns the property and supervised renovations.

Teachers in the News

Art teachers at the NAH were well represented in the juried Art Show, Panorama 2006, held as part of the Erie Summer Festival of the Arts in June at the Raymond Blasco Memorial Library. Alan Chaffee, drum teacher and photographer, exhibited *Always an Escape*; Art Becker, photographer, served as official Arts Festival Photographer and received an excellence award for *Get Off My Land*, one of his two entries; Paul DeNiro, art and drawing instructor, received a Gold Circle Award for his oil pastel, *Airs of Succession*; and, Passle Helminski, fabric art instructor, exhibited a mixed media piece, *Splash*. Only 70 art entries were selected for the show.

Mark the Date for "HATS OFF"

HATS OFF to the Arts is the theme for Taste of the Arts 2006, the annual Neighborhood Art House fundraiser, scheduled for **THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 21** beginning at 5 p.m.

Serving as honorary hosts will be four artists who have contributed to the Neighborhood Art House



Posing with the children in the Art House garden are from left, back: Joe Wieczorek, Susan Kemenyffy, Sister Mary Lou Kownacki, OSB, and Vitus Kaiser.

since its opening: Vitus Kaiser, Susan Kemenyffy, Joe Wieczorek and Sister Mary Lou Kownacki, OSB.

The event will include performances by the children, a sale of the children's art work, a silent auction and raffle, a live auction featuring an oil pastel art piece by a student from the Neighborhood Art House, as well as cocktails and a light buffet.

Contributing to this year's auction are Evan Everhart, Vitus Kaiser, Tom and Cheryl Vicary, Mary Kay Geary, Kate Schroeck and Brad Lethaby. A \$1,000 Travel Package from Miller Travel Agency or \$1,000 in cash and a Weekend Getaway for two during the 2007 Season at Chautauqua Institution will be raffled.

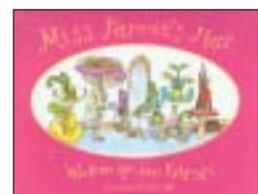
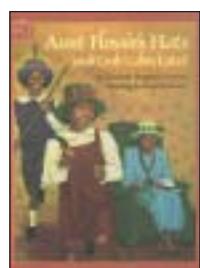
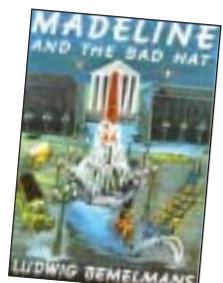
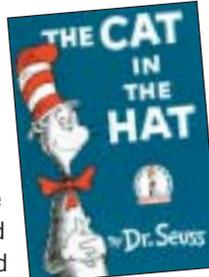
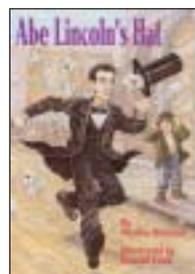
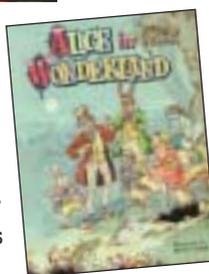
Cheryl Vicary, Jean Craige Pepper Victor and Nancy Kern are co-chairs of the event.

Tickets are \$50/person and can be obtained by calling 455-5508.

MAD HATTERS

The Cat in the Hat visited the Neighborhood Art House this summer. So did characters from dozens of "hat" books. The Mad Hatter from Alice in Wonderland came, followed by Madeline and the Bad Hat. All of Aunt Flossie's Hats showed up. Abe Lincoln tipped his hat, Miss Fannie's Hat changed styles and The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins strutted through the doors.

All of the children became hat makers. You'll see copies of all of these hats, and more, at **HATS OFF to the Arts Taste of the Arts 2006.**



HOOKED ON BOOKS



Volunteer readers are needed at the Inner-City Neighborhood Art House. Please call 871-7422.

SHORTS

James Spiegel received the Edward C. Doll Community Service Award from the Erie Community Foundation and designated part of the \$10,000 gift to the Neighborhood Art House.

A new Development Committee has been initiated to assist the Neighborhood Art House. Its members are: **Diane Blake, Matt Catrabone, Matt Lechner, Marne Roche, Dan Teed, Nick Ward, and Core Committee members Mary Alice Doolin and Mary Lincoln.**

Sister Anne Wambach and the Neighborhood Art House staff received this note of gratitude from Sister Michele Schroeck, RSM:

Thanks for opening your doors to 20 children from the House of Mercy neighborhood. They really enjoyed it and all the children wanted to come longer than a week. Interestingly, they often talked about the good food! They really appreciated the lunches.

A PARKING LOT PICNIC

Every summer session at the Art House ends with a picnic, but this was my first one. I went early to help out. All the while I was trying to imagine a parking lot picnic in the blazing sun. And yet, it was a day to remember: the students, hardly able to contain themselves, so excited to show off their projects; the moms and dads, grandmothers and grandfathers, brothers and sisters, so full of pride and joy and admiration for the remarkable paintings and poems and drawings and



weavings and clay pieces and, oh, so many lovely things. Nobody saw the black top; nobody felt hot once they had a hot dog and a bag of treats, not to mention a special donut and drink donated by Tim Horton's.

The most memorable moment for me was watching a family of five children and their mother who was expecting baby number six within days. The oldest boy, age 10, is a student at the Art House and he helped the family get everything they needed, being particularly attentive to his mom and his youngest sibling, a babe in arms. Polite and saying thank you over and over as they moved through the food line, the family paraded to a tree bordering the parking lot, laid down a blanket and had a picnic. They ooh-ed and aah-ed over the hot dog treats and frosted donuts; they chatted and chewed; they laughed and played. They were the first to come and the last to leave. How could I ever have thought a parking lot picnic would not be special?

—**Charlotte Anne Zalot, OSB, Music Instructor**

Memorials

We are grateful to families who designated memorials to the Inner-City Neighborhood Art House in the name of deceased loved ones:

Dennis L. Salsbury
Catherine V. McHugh Kathman

Inner-City Neighborhood Art House



Benedictine Sisters of Erie
201 East Tenth Street
Erie, Pennsylvania 16503-1007



We created ceramic bowls.

We painted.

We made poetry boxes with Pam.

We went door to door for Earth Force to ask

people not to litter.

We played the cello.

We danced.

We asked some NAH teachers:

What did you do during your summer vacation?

During my summer vacation I taught a photography workshop for two weeks. I think the camera is a great tool for creativity and I was surprised by how much talent I found here. I taught the basics; hold the camera steady, eliminate clutter, think about what you're doing and don't be afraid to get real close to your subject. I had the students take lots of pictures and with each session, the photographs improved. I earn my living as a professional photographer and so I love introducing this art to young people. I was impressed with how quickly they learned. —**Art Becker**



Photography class with Art Becker

During my summer vacation I offered to teach two different courses in weaving and puppets. I taught seven- and eight-year olds how to make puppets using simple materials like Popsicle sticks, small paper cylinders, socks and bits of cloth. They then created small stories involving their puppets. My advanced degree is in Speech and Communications and I hope that maybe the puppets can help the children talk through their problems. I was surprised at how well the children responded to weaving which is the art that I practice. I haven't been teaching at the Art House for several years and then a year-and-a-half ago my husband, Rick, died unexpectedly. I thought about my priorities and what was important to me and decided the Art House had to be part of my life. I think that what happens at the Art House is sacred because the arts are guardians of the soul. —**Barb Hauck**

During my summer vacation I continued working at my dream job, teaching art to the young people here. My mother brought me to the Art House in 2004 and the minute I walked through the doors I knew it was a perfect fit. This is a high-energy



place with a lot of talented people. I taught the entire six weeks and we did printmaking, still life painting with fruit and flowers, splatter paint, wire sculpture, introductory and advanced drawing and a course called Painting from Life. The most interesting course was called Collaboration Art where each child painted part of a different hat on a plaster tile. When we put them together we had a collage of hats. I'm going to teach during the fall session as part of my student teaching before graduating in January with a degree in Art Education from Edinboro University of Pennsylvania.

—**Kata Schroeck**



Barb Hauck's puppet class