

## Artist in residence comes to Lackawanna Trail

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Elizabeth Parry-Faist (left) with art teacher Dan Demora in Megan Naylor's kindergarten class with their art projects.



Third grade student Jeff Gallagher with his motorcycle-themed assemblage with found objects.



Freshmen Marty Gatto (left) and Mara Lord trace a collective mosaic silhouette during art club at Lackawanna Trail High School.

Students in the Lackawanna Trail School District don't need to go to a studio to learn about the many kinds of art. With their Artist in Residence program, students receive hands-on training from area artists.

The Artist in Residence program is sponsored by NEIU 19 and the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts. It began on Oct. 30, and will end on March 6. During that time, local artist Elizabeth Parry Faist goes to the Lackawanna Trail Elementary Center and Lackawanna Trail Jr./Sr. High School to teach special art techniques.

Faist has been going to visual art teacher Mary Belle Gilroy's Lackawanna Trail Art Club on Wednesdays from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. School liaison Tom Lengel also comes to assist the program.

Faist works with the 15 students in the art club. The students learn about artists and their techniques by watching YouTube videos. They then make art projects inspired by the artists.

"It's really nice that they come after school," said Marty Gatto, art club member and freshman. "We're not required to do it, but it's fun."

So far, the art club members have made corpse drawings and played a surrealist art game called "The Exquisite Corpse." The game is an exercise, in which the students create original writings and images inspired by the unconscious mind.

Faist also showed the students the artwork of Miriam Schapiro, an artist who painted mandalas. Mandalas are radial, geometric designs traditionally used for meditation in Hindu and Buddhist cultures. The students collaborated to make their own mandala. Each student colored and drew on their own section of the mandala based on how they use their time during art club hours.

"The students work independently but also collaboratively," Faist said.

During weeks five and six, students brought in alternative images of personal memorabilia, such as family photos, letters, texts, and records. They also had an open studio with artist demonstrations and short lectures.

The art club members are currently working with collective mosaic silhouettes in the style of artist Tony Cragg. In this art form, students organize found materials to create silhouettes. Artist John Brander will soon come to the art club to make wooden silhouettes.

"I think the art club allows more time outside of school," said Arlo Key, art club member and senior. "It gives you the opportunity to hang out with cool people."

The Lackawanna Trail Art Club members are: Kim Meckwood, Marty Gatto, Mara Lord, Danielle Petrilak, Jessica Zajac, RuthAnna Danowski, Lyn Nelson, Ashley Purdy, Ariana Drake, Staci Srebro, Ana Rivenburg, Mary Clough, Sabrina Von Ahrens, Kayla Woodcock, Beth Cosminski, Aimee Melnikoff, Katie Nealon, Cal Srebro, Arlo Key, Sierra Sprowls, and Serge Grega.

Faist also helped the art club make a community art exhibit called WWII on the Homefront: Community Art at the Everhart, which is on display in Gallery ONE of the Everhart Museum until June 16. The exhibit features work created by the art club, as well as, NEPA historical societies (Lackawanna, Luzerne, Susquehanna, Wayne, and Wyoming), regional schools, and community organizations.

The Everhart Museum is planning to conduct a workshop for the art club at the school and another workshop at the museum. Faist said some of the artwork from the club will be featured in the First Friday Art Walk on March 7 in Scranton. The art club will also make a site-specific installation at the high school in April.

Faist not only taught art to the high school students, but also elementary students. She taught third-grade students how to make All About Me boxes.

"I was really excited about this project because I like to do art and assemble stuff together," said third grader, Jeff Gallagher, whose All About Me box included a motorcycle, helmet, a bike stand, and goggles.

The fourth-grade students learned to do non-representational art. They put different kinds of shapes together. They also learned about tints and shades, which is combining colors to make one color darker or lighter.

"My favorite part is picking the shapes and putting them together like a puzzle," fourth grader Keith Dixon said.

Faist taught the sixth graders how to make transitions, an art technique inspired by sculptor Louise Nevelson. They learned to cut shapes out of the word "transition" and make them into visual symbols.

The artwork made by the students will be displayed around the halls of the elementary center.

"I love coming to the art club because the kids are so creative," Faist said. "They're not only inspired by what I introduce to them but also inspired by each other. They have a fantastic group dynamic."