

Art Matters

# “Amateur” artists a misnomer



By Janet Sellers

*“To the general public, you artists are the people who ran away to join the circus!”—Anonymous*

Do you ever think about what attracts you the most about art? As an artist, I enjoy the “thinking drawings” that artists make as they grope for what they want to share. Seeing the artist’s imagination at work even in failures, such as heartfelt drawings can be more satisfying than finished paintings, which can be missing the impetus and thrust of brilliant ideas that rocketed through the universe to Earth through the artist’s heart and hands.

Learning fundamentals in art through art classes with dedicated practice is a powerful beginning and helps to fulfill ideas and dreams in art. The exploration in the beginning efforts has a very special power to it, aiding not only making art but also appreciating beyond the art more fully what we perceive in other areas of our lives.

In all my years of looking at art and especially looking at so-called amateur artists’ efforts, I know that there

must be thousands if not millions of artists who are not professionals but make art for the love of it. That love stays right there in the artwork. The moniker of “amateur” is a misnomer; many people are capable of making truly beautiful, thought-provoking works that reach the hearts of others. We have a lot of great art and through it great minds that we can visit in our area.

My students and I had a wonderful time with our art class field trips over spring break. We went to local forests and Garden of the Gods to be in nature. I also met my students (ages 11 to well over 39) at the Broadmoor Hotel and grounds where we saw an extraordinary collection of Western art.

These annual field trips began years ago with my children and students enjoying these paintings and sculptures by Charles Russell, Thomas Moran, Frederic Remington, Maxfield Parrish, and trompe l’oeil (optical illusion) murals. We examined the east wing architectural drawings with the old school penciling of trees and buildings, then went outdoors lakeside. While sketching

the swans and restored 1800s Italian architecture, we enjoyed the warm sunny weather—truly restorative.

Perhaps we aren’t around art enough in our daily lives, the genuine kind of art that is heartfelt and even bumbling and struggling, created with great effort. The heart of the person and their labor is right there in the art, showing they struggled to portray something and finally worked through that exertion to a completed artwork loaded with emotion and effort. This is exemplified in the Western art of the 1800s. Historic artists reach out to us from long ago with authenticity, sending us that power of nature and the immediacy of their experiences, immortalized.

*Janet Sellers is an artist, writer, and teacher, offering local art and photo classes and bucket list world travels. 2019: You can join her in Bordeaux and see the earliest art in the world, the caves near the village of Montignac in southwestern France. Sellers can be reached at janetsellers@ocn.me.*

## Snapshots of Our Community

### Visions of Light



**Above:** The parking lot was packed for the opening reception of the 2019 *Visions of Light* show at Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts in Palmer Lake on March 1. Thirty-six photographers entered over 70 photographs for the juried show. Wendy Gedack, a Colorado Springs-based photographer, judged the show that was sponsored by the Palmer Divide Photography group. Photographers were challenged to use light as a way to define their image and invoke the emotions they wish to convey to the audience. *Photo by Allison Robenstein.*

### Meet & Greet at PWES



**Above:** From left are current Prairie Winds Elementary School (PWES) Principal Aileen Finnegan, parents, students and future Principal Alicia Welch on March 5. After 13 years as principal at PWES, Finnegan will retire in the local area at the end of the 2018-19 school year. Incoming Principal Welch joins District 38 for school year 2019-20 with over 20 years of experience in education. Welch has served as principal of Global Village Academy in Colorado Springs since 2013 and believes “that an educator’s mission is to make school enjoyable and exciting—if students look forward to attending school, they will want to learn.” *Photo by Natalie Barszcz.*

### Palmer Divide Photographers



**Above:** Guest speaker Ken Childress, right, and host Lynn Roth are pictured at the Palmer Divide Photographers Group monthly event March 11. Childress, a nature photographer, offered important tips and information on photography for global bucket list locations to a standing-room-only crowd. He is a partner at American Photo Treks with Dave Soldano, Dave Maynor, and Lars Leber. Palmer Divide Photographers meets on the second Monday each month hosting guest professionals to educate and elucidate the enjoyment of fine art photography. Guests are always welcome to join the Monday night meetings. *Photo by Janet Sellers.*

### Meet & Greet at PRHS



**Above:** From left are Dr. Lori Benton, executive director of Learning Services, incoming Palmer Ridge High School (PRHS) Principal Dr. Terry Bramschreiber, and Cathy Wilcox, District 38 grant writer. On March 6, parents and students of Palmer Ridge had the opportunity to meet Bramschreiber during spring conferences. Since 2009, Bramschreiber has served as assistant principal at Discovery Canyon Campus High School in District 20. He values “helping multiple stakeholders come to consensus about new ideas and strategies while preserving the culture” that makes a school unique. Bramschreiber will take the reins for the 2019-20 school year with 25 years of experience in education. Outgoing Principal Gary Gable is set to retire at the end of the 2018-19 school year. *Photo by Natalie Barszcz.*

## Strong D38 Community hosts discussion of rapid Tri-Lakes area growth



**Left:** On March 20, Strong D38 Community hosted a community meeting with Tom Vierzba to discuss the approved and planned residential developments coming to the Tri-Lakes area. Vierzba is with NEPCO, the Northern El Paso County Coalition of Community Associations, a coalition of 40 homeowners’ associations and residential areas not officially formed, representing more than 17,000 voting residents. NEPCO’s Land Use Committee has been doing in-depth reviews of county planning proposals such as rezoning or new development plans since its formation in 2000. Vierzba’s presentation included an overview of each planned and approved development within D38 boundaries. View his slides and a video of the presentation, including questions and answers, at <http://bit.ly/tl-growth>. Learn more about Strong D38 Community at [www.strongd38.com](http://www.strongd38.com) and at [www.facebook.com/strongd38](http://www.facebook.com/strongd38). *Photo by Amy Shertzer.*