

March Artist of the Month: Sam Hoppe

Sam Hoppe, the fifth of seven girls, was born and lived in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania for thirty years. Art was not a factor in her formative years, other



than the usual coloring book and pasting projects. When she was a young adult, Sam attempted painting with oils in a class at Carnegie Museum of Art. For the first lesson, the

instructor demonstrated how to paint a ballerina, and then requested that the students paint subjects of their own choosing. Sam had no idea what to paint and ended up doing the ballerina again. Discouraged that she was lacking in creativity, Sam dropped out of the class and decided art wasn't for her.

Early in 1969, Jay Hoppe came into Sam's life. At that time, she was a single mother of two and an employee at Mellon Bank. After a short courtship, Jay was hired to fly for National Airlines in Miami, Florida. Finding long distance courtship to be difficult, they married on December 18, 1969 and moved the new family to Miami.

In the mid-seventies, Sam began taking classes at Miami-Dade Community College to earn a degree in business. She soon discovered that she liked art classes more than business and ended up with an AA degree in both subjects. She then attended the Art Institute in Miami, studying oils and soft pastels. Watercolors were introduced later by a private teacher.

In 1986, after seventeen years in Miami, Jay and Sam moved to Apopka, Florida. Sam became very involved in her church and took a hiatus from art. She also became an avid bird watcher and spent much time at Wekiva Springs State Park that was practically in her backyard. She joined the Audubon Society and traveled with them around the Southern United States, in Costa Rica and Arizona pursuing birds.

In 2001, the year she moved to The Villages, Sam enrolled in Nan Klein's first colored pencil class at The Villages Lifelong Learning College. Having no idea what to expect, Sam soon realized that she liked working with pencil, enjoying the control and layering of colors. It was through Nan's classes that she discovered and developed the ability to paint portraits. Sam's colored pencil works have received many awards.

Sam's interest has recently gravitated to oil pastel, which is oil paint in stick or crayon form, similar to lipstick. She finds the vibrant colors and ease of application to be extremely appealing. Her second oil pastel painting received an Honorable Mention award in the Oil Pastel Society's 2009 Show. That show can be viewed at www.oilpastelsociety.com. Sam's entries will be found in the Associates category.

The fifth of her oil pastel paintings received a 3rd Place ribbon at La Galleria Winter Show, which



opened in January. That painting, entitled *Goldenglo*, can be viewed through March 26.

Sam is grateful to both The Villages Art League and Visual Arts Association, which provide an abundance of opportunities for artists to show and sell artwork, to take classes and develop skills, as well as to encourage camaraderie with fellow artists. For her, The Villages has become an artist's paradise.