

FEBRUARY ARTIST OF THE MONTH—RALPH COSTER

The old adage: “*I couldn’t spell artist now I are one*” kind of describes my entry into the artist world. I was a doodler and scribbler, which helped me in my industrial career. Doodling and scribbling new designs and problem solutions.

My formal education is a Bachelors degree from Bradley University, Peoria, Illinois, in Industrial Arts, Engineering and Education.

My work career of some 40 years was as a sales engineer for a work platform manufacturer where I was called upon to design access platforms to reach and solve overhead problems. *It was a ‘lofty career’.*



East Coast

I have designed platforms for Jacques Cousteau to explore the ocean depths; Hughes Aircraft to assemble the Lunar Lander; Telemetry Control Towers for the Merritt Island Moon Launch; even did the scaffold platforms for the clean up of the Ascension Mural in the Sistine Chapel, Rome. I have had the good fortune of being able to travel most of the world and designing many platform challenges.

Upon retirement, I realized I could make straight lines, diagonal lines, boxes, squares, etc. but no “S”. That’s when I picked up a paint brush and made an “S”, I had the opportunity to study with an artist designer who taught me to paint in oils. That lasted for about 18 months, and I was hooked.



West Coast

Residing in Southern California, I enrolled at Irvine Valley College School of Art where I met Professor Jeff Horn who introduced me to En Plein Air, (outdoor painting).

I have taken art instruction at Mira Costa College, Laguna Plein Air Artists work shops, art classes in Northern California and San Diego and now The Villages, Florida. The level of art in the Villages has inspired me to observe, learn and further my desire to improve as well as try other mediums, (water color, acrylic, pastels).



Laguna Beach

I am teaching an En Plein Air class through the Villages Learning College and thoroughly enjoying the scenes that are available all around us here in the “Friendliest Hometown”. Art has become my passion and I would share that passion with my students and fellow painters.



Book Nook

Plein Air has allowed me to find my style, meet all walks of people from strangers to new found friends.

Painting outdoors is live it’s happening as your work.”

(Artist’s photo not available at this time)

In the Middle Ages, young men and women drew names from a bowl to see who would be their Valentine. They would wear this name pinned onto their sleeves for one week for everyone to see. This was the origin of the expression "to wear your heart on your sleeve."