

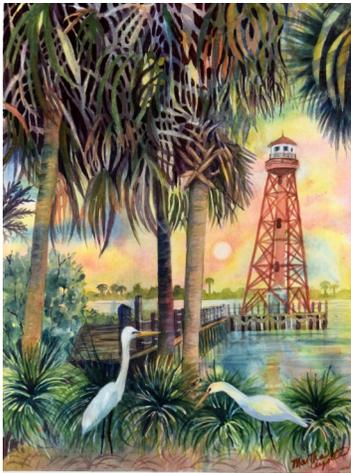
Artist of the Month—Martha Ayotte



I have always been interested in art. In eighth grade, I won a scholarship to the John Herron Art Museum in Indianapolis for a summer art program. One of our assignments was to do a charcoal drawing of another student. That is when I sold my first painting to the student's mother for fifty cents.

Later, when I was married with children, I dabbled in oils and pastels. I earned a little money on the side by painting portraits for people in pastel. After the children got older, I went back to school and finished college with a degree in Computer Science and Business Management. I worked for a number of years in the business world designing software applications.

After retiring, I took an interest in watercolor, which is my medium of choice now. I would get together with friends to paint and also at the senior center in my hometown.



Then we moved to The Villages. While living here, I have taken many watercolor classes. I have been greatly inspired by its teachers, specifically Judi Adams, Julie McGlone, and Wanda Boyd. I am also inspired by the world-renowned artist Lian Quan Zhen, who comes to The Villages every year to teach a workshop. It is from him I learned the technique of negative painting. As a result, I try to incorporate negative painting in all my paintings and have even been asked to teach classes in negative painting.



As a second interest, I am a nature photographer. Living on a pond, I am blessed with the opportunity to view and photograph nature in my own backyard. That, and frequent visits to zoos, animal rescues, and nature trails, I have acquired a considerable inventory of nature photographs, enabling me to paint my own original paintings.

I hope to keep growing as an artist and share with others my love of nature.

