

## Artist of the Month—Diane Boos



I was born in Levittown, Long Island, NY, a suburb outside New York City. When I was age 2, we moved to Bethpage, L.I., where we stayed until I graduated from high school. I never took an art class in high school and it was something I never thought about doing. Following our move to eastern Long Island, I became a secretary in a high school and there I met my husband, Howard. We have one daughter, Heather, who is now a Colonel in the U.S. Air Force. She is married and is now stationed in San Antonio, Texas with her husband, Jaret.

I didn't go to college until my daughter was age 5, when she went to kindergarten. I was a stay-at-home Mom since my husband had a good job as a teacher. It was at that time I decided I wanted to continue my education and I attended Suffolk Community College. I was always interested in American Sign Language. They had a 3-year program for an Interpreter for the Deaf. I started my journey and fell in love with the language, and graduated with my AAS degree. I was an educational interpreter for deaf students and I was their communication to the hearing world. I interpreted for 10 years, and as I sat in the classrooms each year, I realized I wanted to become a teacher. That is when I went back to college to get my teaching degree. I took my first "Art Therapy" class at St. Joseph's College in Patchogue, L.I. I designed my first lesson for mature people with arthritis who could not hold a paint brush. I created an outline of one of George Sauret's paintings, and showed them how to paint with Q-tips. Finally, I graduated with honors and received my teaching degree. I started with elementary education and was able to incorporate my sign language into their curriculum. It was then I knew I wanted to teach American Sign Language.



I had to earn a Master's Degree in order to keep my teaching certification. I enrolled in Stony Brook University in Stony Brook, L.I. I earned my Master's Degree in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of other Languages). I got a job teaching American Sign Language in high schools. It satisfied their requirement for taking a 3-year language in order to graduate. It is something that is still a part of me, and I was tutoring ASL when I came to the Villages. There was so much to offer here, including art classes. I had already done sewing, calligraphy, crafts, and card making, but I decided to try something different - watercolor painting. I saw Julie's class listed in the paper and thought I would give it a try. The rest is history. Julie's patience and talent had me yearning for more. It is still a challenge for me, but I never in a million years would have believed I could even hold a paintbrush and make it look like something. Thank you, Julie. You are a gem. My paintings decorate my whole house, I have given them as gifts, and donated them to charities to raffle off. I feel honored to be considered an artist. You, my friends, are all gifted and talented and your many mediums have inspired me to continue this journey.

