

# LIL'BITS

## Messy Hands, Beautiful Art

BY SARAH WETZEL  
For the Plain Talk

Art isn't just for professionals as is obvious when one sees what goes on at the annual Messy Hands Art Camp at the Washington Street Arts Center.

"We do a bunch of different kinds of art," said Patrick, 11, who has participated in the camp for several years. "It's always four different classes. It's kind of like school with the periods which is cool. But we learn about famous artists and we try and do that kind of art and then we learn different kinds of art, some modern some really really old."

According to Patrick the participants work with a variety of art materials including shaving cream, paint and clay.

"We get to work with a lot of weird things," Patrick said. "Last week we did shaving cream marble. It's food coloring and shaving cream and then you put a piece of paper on it and it marbles. Then we are making coil pots where we take strips of clay and stack them on top and then we get water and mold them."

One of Patrick's favorite parts of the program actually has made a difference in his community. "Public art is really fun because you get to do stuff and then it's put somewhere cool," he said. "There was this thing where we made artwork out



COURTESY PHOTO

**Kids at the Washington Street Art Center had great experiences with different art forms and artist appreciation during the last two weeks as kids explored with messy hands and colorful results.**

of pieces of glass and stuff and it's now in the library. It was cool because there's a set layout. We all helped, even the little kids got to put pieces on."

The mosaic Patrick referred to can be seen in the children's play area of the Vermillion Public Library.

Art doesn't always have to be so meticulously planned like mosaics according to Patrick.

"It's kind of your choice," he said. "You can either draw it out with your pencil and then paint it or you can just paint. I like to just do it without planning. I hate plans because then there's no free time. If it's a little slow or goes quickly you have time to do other stuff."

Some art is almost impossible to plan how it looks like.

"We made these things where we just splattered

paint on a little piece of paper and then folded it two different ways," Patrick said. "Then we used this glue stuff called modge podge. It's like this shiny glue and then we stuck a funny picture on it or something. The guy teaching it gave us either a dog head on a person body or a cat head on a person body and they're both funny clothes and funny poses. Then we stuck that on one of the sides. Then we took an airbrush after it dried and we wrote our names with it. We called it graffiti class because it was basically teaching graffiti."

Patrick also said the camp participants had the opportunity to paint whatever they wanted on a giant canvas.

"I painted a boat, a pyramid and a person," Patrick said.

Though Patrick enjoys his time at the art camp, he doesn't consider art a personal hobby nor does he think too deeply when he does create art.

"I like art but I don't do it at my house because I don't have the materials like they do here like the pastels or the clay or all the different colors of paint," he said. "It's a way to put your ideas on paper, like a colorful or fun way, not always on paper."

So why teach and create art if it doesn't mean anything?

"It's just fun," Patrick explained. "It's fun to use all these different materials to do all these different things. You can experiment or you can just do your thing."

Patrick has personally seen a change in his view on art since he participated in the Messy Hands Art camp showing that there's something for everyone.

"It teaches there's meanings in art and then there's fun pointless art," he said.

To someone who doesn't like art, Patrick said That's ok.

"I would just say well you're either missing out or just happy the way you are. you don't have to do it but if you do you can come here," he said. "We see art everywhere like murals and art shows and stuff like that and it's cool to know the background like the backstage at a play."

## Local Family Farm Profiled In National Magazine



The national, monthly publication Acres USA recently profiled Heikes Family Farm, located in Vermillion. Father-and-daughter owners, Sam and Heidi Heikes, are highlighted for the thriving shelterbelt that surrounds their farm and supports local pollinators. It's one of the reasons their farm won the 2014 U.S.A Pollinator protector Farmer-Rancher Conservation Award.

Acres U.S.A. is the only national magazine that offers a comprehensive guide to sustainable agriculture. Drawing on knowledge accumulated in more than 40 years of continuous publication, they offer their readers the latest techniques for growing bountiful, nutritious crops and healthy, vibrant livestock. The magazine focuses on sustainable farming — what they call "eco-agriculture" — for its ecological and economical benefits, and views it as representing the real revolution in scientific food cultivation.

The article, which can be found in the current issue of the magazine, provides a glimpse into the current operations of the farm, as well as some of its history and that of its farmer — Sam Heikes. Heikes Family Farm, in its current location at 1408 317th St in Vermillion, has been in the family since 1946. After leaving the farm as a young man, Sam was a western production agrono-

mist for 35 years. In 2010, he returned to his home farm to start the sustainable "Heikes Family Farm Market" with his daughter, Heidi. The farm is comprised of 32 acres with 12 and a half acres used for the CSA which includes fruit orchards. Eleven additional acres are part of the National Resource Conservation Service's Reserve Program (CRP).

The Heikes Family Farm offers the community the opportunity to participate in a CSA, or 'Community Supported Agriculture'. In exchange for a modest investment, made seasonally, participants receive a share of the harvest each week of the week growing season. The farm's long list of early, mid- and late-season offerings include asparagus, salad mixes, various garden vegetables and fruits, berries, rhubarb, orchard fruits, culinary herbs and fresh flowers. Customers find that participating in a yearly CSA offers access to fresh, nutrient-dense produce for a fraction of the price of store-bought produce. Heikes Family Farm offers shares for individuals, families and a commercial share for retail customers and restaurants. More about the CSA can be found at their website: <http://www.heikesfamilyfarm.com/>.

For additional information, please contact Sam and Heidi Heikes at [heikesfarm@gmail.com](mailto:heikesfarm@gmail.com).

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