

An Interview with Barbara Farrell

“Art & Life”

Edited by Nick Cibrario

The Kenosha Art Association invites the public to attend the Annual Spring Art Event on Sunday, April 8 at the Kenosha Public Museum. The museum is located at 5500, First Ave in downtown Kenosha. KAA members, area artists, and children of all ages are invited to register their art work from 12:00 -1:00 pm. The reception will be from 12:30-1:30 pm. The presentation by Barbara Farrell, “Art & Life will take place from 1:45-2:45pm. Awards and prizes will be given from 2:45-3:15 pm. For further information call 262-654-0065.



I was born in Crown Prince Indiana. My parents were Howard and Winefred, Delink. I also came from a large family with five sisters and five brothers. We lived out in the country, which could be called a small farm. My mother loved to garden, and my father was employed as a plasterer, who worked on the ornate buildings in downtown Chicago. We had lots of freedom as children in the county. I am also the youngest girl in the family.

I think I was always an artist because I associated color with everything. I was so disappointed when I was little, because my tricycle was just red and not a rainbow of colors. I really liked people’s names associated with color. I did artwork at St. Michaels Catholic School on Friday afternoon without instructors .Finishing a piece of good artwork made me feel happy and powerful.

I went to Dyer Indiana, where I attended Dyer High School, focusing on Business Courses, training for Office Work,” said Barbara. I also studied Art classes with Bill Parks, who taught me figure drawing at the Chicago Academy of

Art. I enjoyed taking workshops with several watercolor artists, including Lou Taylor, Phil Austin, Bert Bester, Tom Lynch, and Gordon McKenzie.

John Farrell came into my life in 1962. We were married in February 1963 when John F. Kennedy was President. At that time I was working in Chicago, at the Title and Trust Company and John and I met at a party in my Apartment Building. We started a family, and our first child was born in December 1963.

After Janet came Robert, Caroline, and David. I became interested in Art after my marriage. I wanted art for my walls. At the time my sister Catherine was taking a class in pastels on Velour paper and showed me some of her techniques. I got a set of pastels and would work while my children were napping.

My children are my biggest collectors. They are proud of my skills and my accomplishments. My daughter, Caroline showed great promise as cartoonist. Her daughter, Stephie, graduated from Maine College of Art, and Katherine also has a natural artistic talent. Their beautiful and creative pictures hang in my house.

My son, David, also likes to draw Animals and is interested in music. My daughter, Janet's son Stephen is majoring in music, and Wyatt plays the bass guitar. Janet's daughter Sarah is a horticulturist creating her own beautiful gardens in Oregon. Her other daughter, Stella, creates and loves art, and is interested in art history. I currently teach art for the Kenosha Art Association and at the Public Museum.

My favorite medium is watercolor. I have a class at the end of October at the Clearing, and a workshop in September in Morris, Illinois. I have also taught for the Deer Path Art League in Lake Forest, Washington Island Art Association, Demonstrations and Workshops in Northern Illinois and South Eastern Wisconsin.

Barbara said, "I exhibit and am a member of the Lemon Street Gallery in Kenosha. I have also exhibited my work at the KAA "Good Old Summertime Art Show and the Public Museum's Summer Show. I am also interested in The Starving Artist Show in Racine.

My favorite artists are Phil Austin for his beautiful paintings of the seasons at Door County and Andrew Wyeth for his somber and haunting images of life in Pennsylvania and Maine. I also get my inspiration from objects and scenes around

me. My personal objects are vases, table cloths, fruits, vegetables, garden scenes, birds, sunsets and sunrises. I also love to paint rural scenes and barns.

I tell my students in art my art classes to keep trying. Creating art is mileage. We are in an age where we can watch demonstrations on U-Tube, read art instruction books, and buy the best materials you can afford, talk and hang out with other artists. We like to travel in groups so that we can see and appreciation new ideas. Failing an art project isn't so bad. It gives insight to change and develop new way to approach a project. Take a nap and try again. Creativity doesn't always make us happy. I don't look back. My life as an artist has been a journey. I have had mentors who have helped me progress in my art career. My art life wasn't planned, but it flowed.

Even though I love watercolor painting and teaching art, my happiest moments have been when all of my students and family members were alive, happy and well.

