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The Art Issue

WINTER – SPRING 2021
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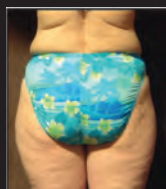
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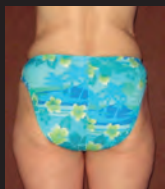
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Editor's Corner

When travelling through it, how do we get the sense of a town's soul? What are the clues?

Did it become a collection of faceless strip malls, or is it picturesque, but now morphed into a tourism economy on the husk of a once living community? Is it a financial center with its distinct family neighborhoods transforming into trendy life-style spaces, requisite high-end boutiques and chic eateries?

Or is there evidence that it held fast to longstanding social values and persists as a livable community?

Rio Vista is a rare town in these times. Its values and joys are well expressed, and thus its soul revealed, by the humble care taken in maintaining its many early and mid-century homes; its community-donated, volunteer-maintained public planters, murals, benches, tree lights and playgrounds; and its abundance of community groups and service clubs.

But most tellingly, beneath the surface, one finds that many families have been rooted here for generations. The town is not populated with people who came here simply because the price was right even though they'd rather live in the fancier next-town-over. Our neighbors to the east and west are mostly farmers, grazing cows and sheep. We're close enough to San Francisco that access is sufficiently practical, but most of us don't bother too often.

We have a highway going through town with the usual conveniences highways should offer, but unlike many towns dedicated to such convenience, we also have a highly energized and involved, literate and accomplished, self-reliant community with a distinctly American creative spirit.

It's not surprising that this environment fosters joy in the form of art and music. That spirit has been emerging here for some time, so *Discover Rio Vista* would like to share with our readers just some of Rio Vista's enthusiasm for, and immersion in, the arts and creativity.

Once planning had begun, we realized that we had so much more to highlight than could fit into this issue. Articles had been planned, such as features on some of our town's incredible photographers, musicians, another extraordinary jeweler, and a renowned artist of the past who lived and worked in Rio Vista.

We'll feature those articles in our next issue, and going forward, we'll continue to run features on the Rio Vista arts scene as it's such an important aspect of life here. Thanks to everybody mentioned in the credits below, and very significantly to volunteers Jan Vick and Robie Williams, and a special thanks to Susan Whitesell who took on the lion's share of planning and layout for this edition.

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Discover Rio Vista is a tri-annual magazine published by the RioVision Promotions and Communications team that provides information about events, activities and places of interest in and around Rio Vista. This magazine is a volunteer effort. Call RioVision at (707) 360-5244 to help!

See the *Discover Rio Vista* website at discoverriovista.com. For additional information about RioVision see riovistavision.com and facebook.com/riovistavision. RioVision is a non-profit 501(c)(3) group.

COVER: Concept and layout by Susan Whitesell.

ART BLOOMS

Writer: Jan Vick Photo of the basket above from the Fat Quarters Quilting group.

Art is human expression that appeals to the senses and emotions. As people have moved to Trilogy, they have gathered to create music, painting, sculpture, photography, storytelling, and more. Here they have found both the means and the opportunity to both create and to enjoy art together. In so doing Trilogy has become a melting pot that fosters some unique art.

Right now, it is quiet in Trilogy. No jazz band practice. No firing of ceramics in the kiln. No whirring sewing machines stitching beautiful quilts. No voices discussing art works or practicing for a play or musical. Art at Trilogy has not disappeared and will burst forth again for others' enjoyment. Behind doors, residents are producing wonderful things that will appear at the appropriate time.

Music of the Night

Music has long played a major role in unifying the community. Since 2005, the Council for Arts has produced an annual musical variety show extravaganza, called "Music of the Night." Blending musical numbers with skits and comedy, the annual production has sold-out for fifteen years. Although the productions are for Trilogy residents and guests only, the proceeds go to the wider Rio Vista community. The purpose has been to support the arts. Contributions have gone to the high school art department, the library, the Riverview School, the Food Pantry, and the Art and Music Center, providing instruments for students.

Guitar Club

Guitar music is alternately romantic, fierce, and mesmerizing. The Guitar Club at Trilogy came together in search of a group that could learn, play, and foster camaraderie. The result was the Coffee House, a time for players and

singers to get together and perform for an audience in Trilogy. The performances slowly grew from about forty in attendance to a packed room. that



Trilogy Jazz Band formal photo.

Jazz Band

Trilogy even has its very own Jazz Band. The band includes twenty-five members plus four singers and has performed numerous times at

Trilogy. They sponsor dances four times a year with music ranging from big band, jazz, rock and roll, Latin, and slow music. The holiday season has always been a remarkably busy time. They would perform at the Pops concert with the Delta Breeze choir, a Christmas Concert, and as a sax quintet or brass group at the tree lighting ceremony at the clubhouse. Currently, the band members keep in touch by email weekly.

Theater Group

The Theater Group presents professional level plays and is recognized for both serious and comedic productions. Established in 2012, the goal of the club is to explore theatrical performance styles and to share these productions with residents and guests. The club also offers acting classes and hands-on introduction to set design and construction, stage management as well as technical skills, costume, and makeup. During the pandemic they streamed a production of the Berkeley Repertory Theatre and recordings of previous plays for the enjoyment of residents. Recently they streamed "The Trip to Bountiful" from their 2018 season.

VIP Drama Club

On the lighter side, the VIP Drama Club provides a lot of laughs with their tongue-in-cheek light-hearted melodramas. The cast has as much fun as the audience. They usually raise money for the



Billy Kemp and son of the Guitar Club.



Music of the Night production.

INTRILOGY



productions with a spaghetti feed. They have worked hard on a new production that they had to halt due to the pandemic. They hope to have the show in August of 2021.

Fat Quarters Quilting

Artistic expression takes many forms. Sometimes it is shared with the community and sometimes kept within the creative group. One of these groups is Fat Quarters Quilting. Quilting throughout the ages has often been a community endeavor consisting of groups of individuals working on their own quilt or together to finish the sewing on a large one. It was always a time for laughter, sharing, and support. Fat Quarters carries on this tradition by gathering once a week with needles, sewing machines, and thread to produce colorful and beautiful creations: quilts of all sizes and types, but also such things as fabric bowls. Since the group cannot meet now in person, they have a Zoom meeting once per week to share ideas and learn from others.

Ceramics

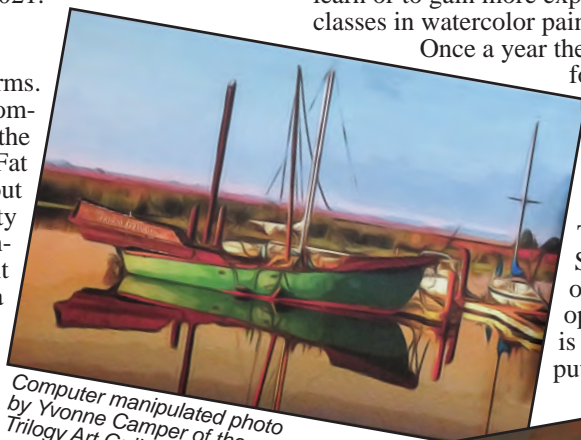
An extension of sculpture is ceramics. The homeowner's association (HOA) installed a small kiln in one of the clubhouses, which gave the members the opportunity to paint and fire their creations. The members buy their own bisque (pottery fired once without a ceramic glaze/paint) and paints and other supplies are provided by the club through annual dues. Late this summer, the HOA agreed to let one person fire the kiln and pick up paints so the artists can work at home and get their work fired. They are trying to get permission to work at the club in small groups of six people – socially distanced with one person to a table.

Trilogy Art Guild (TAG)

Fine arts come in a variety of forms: watercolor, acrylic and oil painting, 3-D works, photography, and mixed media. The Trilogy Art Guild (TAG) members partake in one or more of those art forms and have been a part of Trilogy for over fifteen years. The group meets once per month for a business/planning meeting followed most months by a presentation, workshop, or other informative discussion.

Occasionally workshops are arranged with an outside artist to give hands-on instruction, often in a media some want to learn or to gain more expertise. Several artists provide ongoing classes in watercolor painting, shibori dying, and card making.

Once a year there is an art competition with awards for each category of art. There is an overall Best of Show and a People's Choice award. A raffle of beautiful baskets holding all kinds of goodies raises money to help support art in Rio Vista's middle and high school. The well-attended show is held on Saturday for Trilogy residents and is open to the public on Sunday. Another opportunity for showing and selling art is the annual Wine, Music and Art show put on by the HOA. Trilogy artists have been spending time during the shutdown creating new works. A few TAG members and other Trilogy artists show and sell their work in the RioVision Gallery on Main Street.



Computer manipulated photo by Yvonne Camper of the Trilogy Art Guild.



"Sunset Red Skies" by Phil Strong of the Photography Club.

Photography

Photography is highly popular everywhere, including at Trilogy. The Photography Club meets monthly to share their photographs, get new ideas, and occasionally have speakers. There is a monthly theme and submitted pictures are placed on the club pages on Trilogy's web site. There have been

some successful field trips, including one to the Glasshof Sculpture Ranch in Fairfield, as well as a ferry ride to San Francisco to take pictures along the Embarcadero. Having the best photographic gear is not important—learning how to best use it and enjoying the search for new photo opportunities are the goals. The current chair is an expert in using an iPhone to take high quality photographs and teaches others this skill. Some of the members participate in the Trilogy Art Guild shows, and often donate photographs to fundraisers by other groups inside and outside of Trilogy.



Cathy-Ann Yekel and Dave Bellamy in a scene from a Drama Club production.

The artists of Trilogy can hardly wait to get back to "normal" and meet. By meeting in groups, artists increase their creativity and are encouraged to explore new areas of interest. May the spring bring new and important opportunities for all the artists at Trilogy.

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Art & Music Center



Just across the street from the Rio Vista Library is a building that embraces a lot of activity. Even during COVID-19, the creative people behind the Art & Music Center have found ways to keep their students moving, grooving, drawing and painting.

Meet the Pearson's – Kelli, Doug, Sr. (aka "Daddy Doug") and Douglas, Jr. They aren't new to the arts. They started their California 501(C)(3) with a Fine Art School in the Pines of Placerville back in 2013.

Rio Vista's Center for the Arts was established in 2017 by Amanda Jenni, whose career shortly thereafter called her out of the area. Fortunately, the search for a successor soon ended when Doug, Sr., a Trilogy resident and volunteer instructor at Jenni's Center, along with his talented family, decided to seize the opportunity. Once determining they would be adding music to the offering, they changed

There is always work being done behind the scenes. The Board of Directors consists of the



the name to Art & Music Center.

According to their website, "The Center was founded to foster and enrich the artistic and musical development in people of all ages, children, teens, adults and seniors. The Center is inspired by the natural beauty of its surroundings, from the winding Delta waterways, to the friendly and quaint towns that encompass it. The Center's purpose, and with great passion and ambition, is to manifest the creative aspirations and abilities within ourselves and our community both young and old." Sounds like a tall order, but they pull it off with what looks like ease!

Pearson's with Kelli as the executive Director, Doug, Sr. the President, Renae Kinney the Treasurer and Secretary and Directors Bob Kinney, Douglas, Jr. along with Rob and Michelle Stahlman round out the decision-makers. You can't just provide the place, you also have to provide a plan. That's where this team comes in because they have great ideas.

Kelli and team want to provide art and music to socioeconomically disadvantaged children and adults. They rely completely on grants and donations to fund the center. That in itself requires work to find a continuous source of funding to provide music and art to students who may not otherwise be able to have that experience.



Writer: Robie Williams

Walking into the Art & Music Center offers a realm of sensory excitement. There is color and texture wherever you look. There is sound coming from ukuleles, guitars and pianos. At the same time, it's a calming experience, emotionally lifting and yet vibrant. An artist's and musician's paradise, if you will.

Bob Kinney is the music director with 35 years of teaching experience. Presently, the music instruction includes guitar, piano, ukulele and bass.

Rob Stahlman also provides guitar lessons and has developed exercises and techniques to improve learning the guitar. The Center also teaches drums, violin, flute and saxophone when instructors are available; they are currently looking for teachers for those musical specialties. Their students range in age from 4 and up. Beginners to learning new genres, you are welcome here! Lessons are done one-on-one to maximize the



learning experience. The Center is also able to rent instruments to their students thanks to

generous donors of instruments. They even have small body guitars that are sized for children. So, if you're looking for a home for an instrument that's taking up space in the closet, just give Art & Music Center a call to see if they can use it.

One of the youngest students at the Center is five-year-old Skylar. While the center wasn't quite sure if Skylar was ready to learn an instrument, her mother had no doubt it was time to try. She started with them at the age of 4 and has been taking lessons for a year. Skylar looks forward to her lessons and she is playing the ukulele like it was made just for her.

Doug, Sr. is the art instructor. He teaches sketching, oil, acrylics and water color. Most of the art lessons are one-on-one, however, occasionally it's one teacher to two students. Students in the art classes range from 4 to 92. The Center is looking for an additional art instructor to provide art lessons.

Fely is the Center's oldest student at 92. She is an artist who loves working in oil and acrylic mediums. Since the COVID-19 pandemic she hasn't been able to attend her classes, but the staff checks on her regularly to see how she's getting along and she can't wait to be able to get back to the Center and paint again.

Zach and Amy are two of the Center's younger art students who enjoy coming for their classes. Zach has been painting with acrylics and one of his favorite subjects is his cat. Amy, posted the first sketch she did of her favorite music singer, Billie Eilish, and got 20,000 "likes" on her Facebook account!

One of the Art & Music Center's community painting projects has been newspaper racks. They started with the local Beacon newspaper rack by the post office in Rio Vista, and by the time you read this, there should be more. These painted newspaper racks add a little brightness in our town with a simple idea from the creative minds at the Art & Music Center.

The Center also welcomes online and home-schooled children. They have partnered with Visions in Education, an online independent high school program, at www.viedu.org/ and the Home School Mom, a popular home schooling site with lots of resources, at www.thehomeschoolmom.com/.



Continued on page 19

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Writer: Gordon Whiting

Photographer: Katrina Musick

Baker on the Rise

Delta Baking Company

When Katrina Musick was five years old, she saw a TV commercial for the Kenner Easy-Bake Oven—and a life-long passion was born.

She eventually wore out her Easy-Bake and moved into the family kitchen, baking for family functions, and eventually, for friends and neighbors soirées as well.

Katrina obtained professional training in her twenties, and in 2017 she started Delta Baking Company in Rio Vista.

Born in Sacramento and raised in the Sierra foothill community of Jamestown, Katrina is now a married mother of three boys, two of whom she home-schools.

Her husband, Air Force Tech Sgt. Daniel Musick, is stationed at nearby Travis Air Base. Sons Blake 13, Kable 10, and Piers 7, serve enthusiastically in the kitchen as quality control tasters.

When Katrina decided to enter the world of specialty baking, her first move was to craft a batch of gourmet cupcakes, offering free samples door-to-door to drum up business. That's how she inadvertently met and befriended Rio Vista Chamber president (and owner of Robin's Nest Thrift and Robin's Dogs) Robin Sibert, who connected her to a new network of friends and customers, boosting the fledgling company.

Later, her pastor at Grace Pointe Church, Sean McDonald, supported the idea of using the church's commercial kitchen to improve workflow for her then newly licensed catering company. "That really got the ball rolling," Katrina says.

Later that first year she got a request to create a special commemorative cake for the City of Rio Vista's 125th Anniversary, and set to work building an incomparable five-tiered, fifty-pound show-stopper. The cake was featured in a local news article, leading to more orders.

"[In Rio Vista], I get inspiration from the views, colors and textures – from the Delta waves to a walk downtown. The pathways and bridges inspire the architecture of some of my designs and tiered cakes."

Her weekly routine is disciplined, as one might imagine. "I finish the home school day at noon and then I start in on my baking. I work 12 to 14 hour days, Wednesday through Saturday. I package all the orders in special pastry boxes with my sticker on the outside, and do all the deliveries in my SUV."

"Cakes are very trendy now," says Katrina. "Customers want unique things. In the old days you would just buy a sheet cake and that would be that. Now, whole events are planned around a cake."



Katrina says her most requested item is the drip cake. "I can do the fondant, sculpted look, often with faces and designs. People frequently ask for that, as well as my gourmet cupcakes."

Although appreciative of classic flavors, Katrina is most excited by experimentation. Her maple-bacon-bourbon cupcakes are a favorite of husband Daniel and his team at Travis. At press time, Katrina had most recently launched a whiskey chocolate cupcake.


How would she rate doing business in Rio Vista? "Almost no other place would have been as good. There isn't much big corporate presence here, so a smaller, independent, and initially shoestring operation like mine can get off the ground."

Katrina's Facebook page has more than 2,000 followers, and she gets orders from all over the Delta and Bay Area, including San Francisco. Last year, Delta Baking won the Chamber of Commerce "Rio Vista Business of the Year" award, one of the first without a storefront to achieve the honor.

Katrina says, "there's no better place to be than Rio Vista if you want to be inspired by your surroundings and enjoy your creativity. I told my husband I don't ever want to leave."

If you have a sweet tooth and an eye for the unusual, check out Delta Baking Company and its proprietor Katrina Musick—a baker on the rise. Delta Baking Company is on Instagram @instagram.com/delta_baking_company, the web at www.deltabakingcompany.com, and Facebook at www.facebook.com/DeltaBakingCompany.

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Profiles of Two Rio Vista Painters

SUNSHINE & SHADOW

Writer: Amy Schmidt

Dorie Solomon

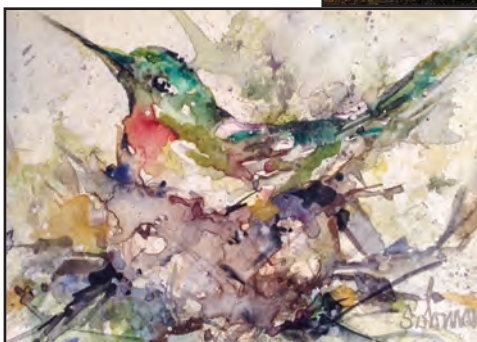
Mainly self-taught, Rio Vista painter Dorie Solomon says that French Impressionism has been a major influence. Originally from Missouri, Dorie has honed her striking style and technique over the past fifty years.

Dorie's Impressionist surfaces are soft and flowing, often with deceptively loose, kinetic brushwork underpinned by remarkably accountable draftsmanship. This optimal tension between abstraction and illustration allows Dorie's style to adapt well to a variety of subjects.

"Since I was born in Missouri I am drawn to the country—farms, barns, old shacks and all the wonderful flowering plants, bougainvillea and sunflowers being my favorite. And the abundance of animals, cows and sheep. Everywhere you look [in the Delta] there's a great scene to capture. I would like to preserve the things that will not last forever. For me, it brings back fond memories of my childhood."

Before she starts a painting, Dorie tries to understand her subject matter completely, and begins to form an idea for its translation. She says, "I have made a lifetime commitment to my work—knowledge, enthusiasm and hard work are a must for any artist to succeed."

Dorie continues, "Since moving to Rio Vista I was quite pleased to find so many artists that share my love of making and collecting art, and to discover how much talent our small town has—actors, sculptors, wood workers, jewelry artists, painters, photographers and even a gourd artist. There are so many artists to meet and get to know. I would love to be able to have a community plein air group to help us bring out the best of what we do and what is around us. Also, artist's round table talks would be fun."



"I feel that all these subject matters could appeal to the young and old"



In recent years, Dorie has worked primarily with watercolors and oils. She has won numerous awards over the years,



"There is endless subject matter all around us (in the Delta) that can inspire any artist—so much wildlife and such spectacular scenes to capture."

including Best In Show and First Prize at Trilogy's annual Art Guild show.

Recently, Dorie licensed some of her paintings to be used by the Leanin' Tree Card Company and Designers Showcase.

Hagen Hills Cellars in Valley Springs has contracted with Dorie to feature one

of her paintings on their label. Her work was included in the "Encyclopedia of Living Artists" 11th edition.

Originals and prints of Dorie's (and Harvey's) work are on display and for sale at the RioVision Gallery in Rio Vista.

Harvey Steinhaus

Harvey Steinhaus was born in Iowa and lived there until graduating from college. He had an interest in art and creative projects from an early age. He minored in art at St Ambrose University in Davenport, Iowa, focusing on drawing, calligraphy and watercolor painting.



After college Harvey continued to draw and paint in his spare time until demands of work and family moved his focus elsewhere. Once digital photography was accessible, he started taking photos from which he created his own large format prints. Upon retiring and moving from Oakland to Rio Vista six years ago, "to get out of the big metro sprawl," Harvey had more time available for art. In early 2017 he returned to watercolor painting.



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Jewelry

Cassandra Bonner

Cassandra was born and raised in this area, attending local schools and graduating Rio Vista High School in 2008. She is married to Quinn Bonner and has a son, Roan Tillisch, by her former husband. Art runs in the family... Cassandra's husband is attending the Academy of Art in San Francisco, working towards a degree in Jewelry and Metal Arts.

Cassandra's entrée into jewelry making was fostered by her then mother-in-law, Nancy Tillisch.

As her art evolved Cassandra discovered electroforming. Electroforming (as opposed to electroplating) is a way to turn natural and other materials into metal jewelry components. "I like to use natural things in my work like raw crystals. I can immortalize natural elements." She is fascinated by ancient cultures, history, folklore and magical practices. "I like my jewelry to feel like an ancient talisman." Cassandra is now experimenting with silver-smithing and wax casting. "The thing I like about jewelry is that you can do so many different things with it. That's why I'm so connected to making jewelry. I can do something different every day and it's never the same." As to her process, "Whatever I'm feeling at that moment—I build on that."

The Delta influences Cassandra's art in many ways. "I really like the scenery. I like going to the river. I look to nature for inspiration, especially around here." The area also supplies some of her materials. "Sometimes I'll find bones and feathers or leaves and different things that I electroform in my artwork." Cassandra also likes the shop, Fool Crow. "I like historical things. I'm an 'antiquey' kind of person. I use stuff from Fool Crow for jewelry props like old post cards and things like that. I try to support the community here as much as I can."

Cassandra incorporates only ethically sourced stones and gems into her jewelry. I love rutilitated quartz, opals and

tourmalines. "I like everything that's raw and natural. To me it looks like someone plucked it from the earth."

Cassandra sees Rio Vista as a good place for artists, musicians or other creative types to settle. "It's such a small town and everybody knows each other. The community is so tight knit that it's easy to communicate."

Cassandra does see the need for more groups, events and workshops that would appeal to creative people, especially children. She also notes, "I'd love to be part of a jewelry event."

Cassandra displays her art at a shop in Nevada City but her largest presence is online. You can see her work on Instagram @thesacreddimension, her website at www.thesacreddimension.com and Facebook at www.facebook.com/The-Sacred-Dimension.



Cassandra with her son, Roan. Photo: www.thesacreddimension.com.

"I was a stay-at-home mom. I would see Nancy create her beaded jewelry at home and it just was so inspiring. She gave me my first pair of [jewelry] pliers and other little tools and beads and that's how I got started. I made a few

things for fun and posted them on my Facebook and I sold a few things right away." After discovering Instagram, Cassandra's art took off. In her words, "I went a little viral selling my work and I never went back." She now has over 241,000 Instagram followers and a thriving business. She also notes, "My main inspiration is my son. I started jewelry making when I was pregnant with my son and he still inspires me every day."

Artisans

Writer: Susan Whitesell

Nancy Tillisch's parents, Jack and Lola Baumann, moved to Rio Vista in the early 50's. Jack purchased the Ford Motor Company dealership as part of a business initiative offered by the Ford Motor Company to GIs returning from World War II. Later, Jack developed the land and waterfront that is now the Delta Marina complex. Nancy and her brother grew up in Rio Vista. In her words, "I grew up during a time in Rio Vista where you knew everyone in town. It was like a big family where everyone looks out for, and shows up to support one another. I am so grateful for the support I have received from my community." Nancy attended the schools in town, graduating from Rio Vista High School. She attended Chico State majoring in Art, however, she soon realized that writing was her primary creative outlet, changing her major and graduating with a B.A. in Humanities for Creative Writing.

When Nancy returned home from college, she needed to make money. "I went to my brother [Jim] for advice and he asked, 'What do you like to do?' I answered, 'make things.' 'Then that's what you should do,' he said."

She later married an "Army guy," Bob Tillisch. Apart from a short stay in Virginia, Nancy was able to stay in the area to raise their family while her husband was deployed.

Growing up in Rio Vista Nancy had a lot of friends in Isleton, and that's where the Asian influence came from. "I loved the history, the old pottery and old artwork." Her brother was living in Locke and she became friends with his friends, many of whom were artists. There she met Noël Michelson, a well-known jewelry designer at the time. Nancy says, "Her jewelry inspired me. I loved what she was doing and she became kind of a mentor."

In her art, Nancy gravitates to symbols of protection. "When I wear something it has meaning to me—something positive, good spirits good vibes, whatever you want to call it—it translates to feelings of well-being." Nancy loves the ancient culture of China, their symbolism and rituals and these are reflected in her art. "I love to use old world talismans and charms that protect the wearer and symbolize good fortune."

Nancy incorporates authentic beads, many vintage pieces, genuine gemstones and lots of pearls. She attends gem shows searching for ancient treasures and beads from other cultures, especially those from Asia. The metal seed beads featured in her work began as beaded handbags popular at the turn of the century. The beads are no longer manufactured – the machines that made them destroyed in the war. As Nancy describes her process, "I take them apart and sort the beads. Rusty beads are set aside to be plated in gold or sterling. The other ones are brass. These I put in a tumbler. The necklaces can look pretty

delicate but they have a weight to them... The beads are very integral to the fluidity and feeling of the piece and they drape beautifully when worn."

Nancy often begins her creations based on the materials she chooses. "Then I can have an idea about the piece and it takes on whatever it takes on and it can be way different than my original idea. Sometimes it's slow going and sometimes it's not."



Nancy at work. Photo: Mary Alice Maldonado.

Presently, due to COVID-19, Nancy is not showing her jewelry at a physical location, preferring an online presence. Nancy recently created an online site at www.nancytillischhandmade.com. She's available on Facebook at www.facebook.com/pg/nancytillischhandmade and Instagram at [@nancytillischhandmade](https://www.instagram.com/nancytillischhandmade). Once COVID-19 passes, Nancy hopes to display at a public event, because in her words, "It's fun to see and to talk to people who like your jewelry or like your artwork. I love this community, I love the Delta. The Delta does support art."





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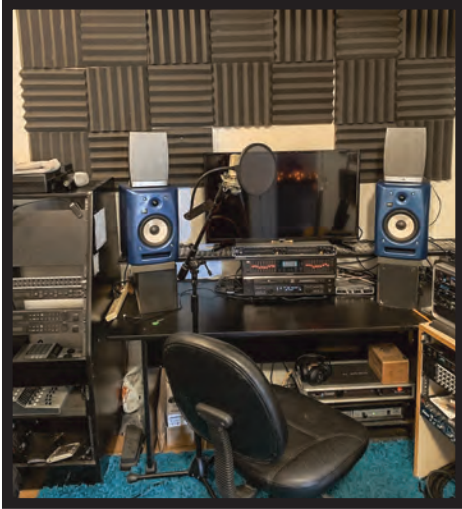
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Art & Music Center

Continued from page 9

Other activities that the Center enjoys providing are events. Group events include Paint & Pour and Paint Your Pet for the over 21 crowd, open mic night for all age groups and art contests for any age. Group sizes vary, however they have had up to eighteen people for some of the painting events that can be just for fun, a team builder or even a birthday party.



The new recording studio that can be used to record instrumentals and vocals.

Pre-COVID-19 the center had 67 students. About one third have returned since their re-opening in June. However, during the closure they were able to connect with some students via Zoom to continue music lessons. Still, in person is the best way to learn.

The latest addition to the Center is a state of the art professional recording studio. Whether you're looking to lay down one track or record an entire album, the studio is well equipped to get the job done for instrumentals and vocals.

As one of the Center's main goals is to provide art and music opportunities to socioeconomically disadvantaged students, they are always looking for people who would like to sponsor someone for classes through their tax deductible Gift a Child Program. Kids Rock is the music program starting at \$85 for a month of lessons and Little Picasso's is the art program, which is \$100 for a month of lessons. The sponsor receives email updates of how their sponsored child is progressing.

The Center enjoys interacting and being part of the town. Whenever possible they participate in events such as the Bass Derby and Hog August Bites. During the 2019 Bass Derby & Festival they were in the parade and had a vendor stall to spread the word about their various events and programs.

Treasurer Renae Kinney says that her favorite thing about the Art & Music Center is the atmosphere and people. Everyone is wonderful from the students to the staff and it's a warm cozy homelike place. Renae invites folks to stop by and check it out for themselves.

Check out their website at www.artandmusiccenter.com/ and their Facebook Page at www.facebook.com/ArtAndMusicCenterRioVista for more information or to get involved. The Center is located at 219 Montezuma Street, Rio Vista, CA and can be reached by phone at (707) 219-6002.

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Painted and photographed by Stephanie Cabrales.

Painting rocks is a “thing.” In fact, it’s a pretty big thing here in Rio Vista. The idea is simple. Paint your rocks with positive messages and images, then take them for a walk.

Julie Griffin lives in Trilogy and paints rocks with a small group of friends (her personal bubble friend-group during this COVID-19 epidemic) every Tuesday. One of Julie’s friends, Ronnie Kamps, is a professional artist who paints and sells her rocks on her Etsy web page. Ronnie’s first stone was painted last year as a gift for one of her neighbors. Her mandala designs are exceptional.

Rock painting can be a family affair. Painting, hunting and hiding are great activities for families and kids. Although group activities have had to be suspended during the epidemic, the Rio Vista Rocks group plans to renew Painting in the Park and participation in other community events as soon as health conditions allow. Previous activities have also included contests and awards for trash cleanup while on their walks.

Jenifer Nicole Tally has only been painting for about



Painter unknown. This well-traveled rock has a cute Facebook post:
I took Dory to Salsun shopping center. A little boy found her. He was so excited. Made my day 🐠



Painted and photographed by Stephanie Cabrales. Facebook posts say this rock has been seen around town in many places.

Spreading Kindness



Painted and photographed by Stephanie Cabrales.

Hide your rocks (but make them easy to find) as you walk through town and hunt for rocks that other people have painted.

When you find one, enjoy! You may choose to either keep or re-hide

a rock. You can take photos and share them on Facebook at Rio Vista Rocks California. It’s all about having fun—so much fun that now the Rio Vista Rocks California Facebook group has over 1,200 members.

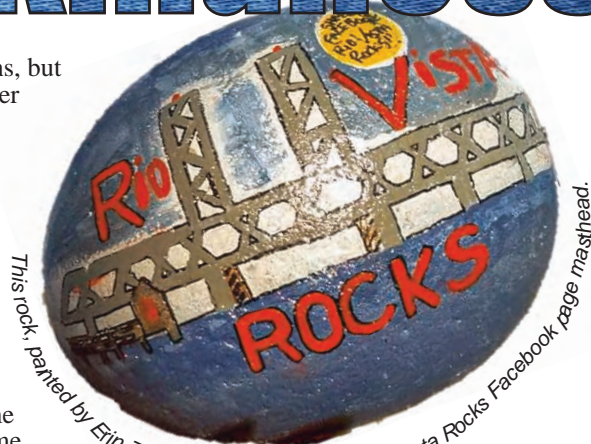
According to Erin Thomasen, it started for her in 2017 when she found her first painted rock at work (she’s an ICU nurse). She turned it over and found it had been placed there by someone from Stockton. Finding that rock just made her really happy. When she looked at the Stockton Rocks Facebook page, she decided that Rio Vista should have a rock painters Facebook group too and Rio Vista Rocks California was launched. (The name is Rio Vista Rocks California because there’s another Rio Vista...in Texas.) Within a few weeks, the group began receiving requests to join and the steady stream of new “rockers” continues. “Spreading kindness, one rock at a time” is the group’s motto.

Stephanie Cabrales says she was pregnant and bored when she found her first painted rock. It felt like a treasure and made her day. And it gave her the idea for a new hobby. After a quick trip to buy some paint and brushes, she was on her way. Even though she hadn’t ever thought of herself as artistic, she found painting rocks both relaxing and exciting. Now, she paints and she and her daughter hide rocks around town on a regular basis. When Erin moved from Rio Vista, she turned over Rio Vista Rocks California to Stephanie, who serves as administrator for the group.

six months, but she and her children (who are 11 and 20 years old) all paint

together. It gives them some family time, and she finds it to be a source of healing and peace. Julie is a moderator for the Facebook group and says that getting started was easy since the cost is low. The best paints to use are acrylics that can cost as little as 50 cents. Brushes, paints and other supplies are all inexpensive and easy to find. While rocks can be found in your own yard, when you become a true addict, they are also available for purchase from nearby suppliers. Just start painting, you don’t need to be an artist. There are some “how to” videos online or ask your questions on the Facebook page and folks from the group are happy to help with ideas and information. Always label your rocks with Rio Vista Rocks (California) and “keep or re-hide.” Labeling your rock gives finders information that will direct them to the group so they can post a picture. It’s fun to see where your rock travels.

While there are many towns that have similar rock painting groups, Rio Vista is a great place for rock hunting because the town is small and there are some great places to hunt and hide them.



This rock, painted by Erin Thomasen, is used in the Rio Vista Rocks Facebook page masthead.

The Promenade along the river is a favorite spot since it is a beautiful place to walk and has lots of nooks and crannies. Main Street is also popular and in front of the businesses along Front Street, 2nd and 3rd Streets. Look up and look down. Rocks are sometimes placed in trees, or on signs, or windowsills. Deacon Susan Reeve says she was delighted to find a painted rock in the center of the St. Brigid's cross at the church when she came for the Animal Blessing last October.

A special place for all of the rock painters in town is the "fairy garden" in front of the Rio Vista Fire

Painted and photographed by Jenifer Nicole Tally.



make sure they are completely dry. River rocks are sold in bulk from landscaping supply stores, stone yards and stone depots. (Make sure to bring a bucket!) Some local stores are Star Nursery locations with rock yards. California Landscaping in Lodi sells rocks for \$3 in cash for a 5-gallon bucket. Stores such as Michaels Craft Stores, Walmart and The Dollar Store often have smaller rocks available. And, of course, Amazon has some great options such as 3"-5" smooth stones and 2"-3" smooth rocks.

Tips About Paint, Brushes and Markers

The best paint to use on rocks is acrylic paint. It cleans up easily while wet and is permanent when dry. The key to painting details on your rocks is small brush sizes. You don't need to spend a fortune on your brushes, the most important factor is keeping the brush size small. Another great option for decorating rocks (especially if you struggle with painting) are paint pens and markers. Posca paint pens are the most popular.

Sealing Your Painted Rocks

To avoid having your artwork ruined, you should seal your painted rocks with at least one coat of decoupage (Mod Podge) before using a spray sealer. The Mod Podge provides

One Rock at a Time

Writer: Linda Jensen

Department where rocks are placed for trading. It's an ideal place to bring small children. (Be sure to leave a rock for the next person if you take one away.) Another rock garden is under development at the Rio Vista Police Department. This will be a place to display rocks created and donated by Rio Vistans (not a place for trading.) Sandi Tierney, a police department volunteer, is seeking painted rocks for the wildflower and rock garden they are developing in the parking area. Please bring your painted rock into the office as they have just planted new flowers. (Poppies of course, since it is on Poppy Hill Road!) Sandi has special tongs that allow her to place the rocks into the garden without disturbing the new landscaping.

So, are you ready to rock? Here are some tips from the Rio Vista Rocks California Facebook group:

General Guidelines

Keep your designs positive and written messages clean. Don't hide rocks inside stores. Hide rocks anywhere outside but don't put them in grass where they might be hit by a lawnmower. Take care not to damage plants or landscaping while hiding or hunting for rocks. Hide them in safe places, not in dark alleys or abandoned buildings. And always, HAVE FUN!

Where to Get Rocks

First, take a little walk around the neighborhood... you may be surprised by what you find. If you decide to buy rocks, avoid buying rocks that have a shiny wax film as it makes it difficult for paint or markers to adhere to the rock. Give your rocks a quick rinse/wash before painting them to remove any dirt and



Painted and photographed by Stephanie Cabrales.

a protective barrier between your artwork and the spray sealer and the sealer makes your rock weatherproof and outdoor safe.

Label Your Rocks

Put Rio Vista Rocks (California) and "keep

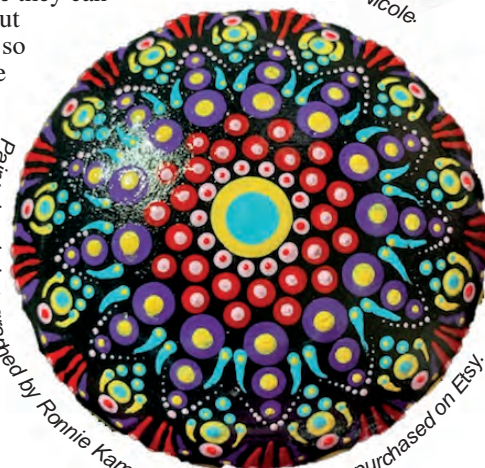
or re-hide" on the back

either with a sharpie or by printing labels and using Mod Podge to adhere them to the rock. Labeling your rocks gives finders some information and hopefully directs them to the group where they can post a picture about finding your rock so you can see where it travels.

2021 is a great time to start a new hobby. Discover rock painting in Rio Vista and always remember to "Spread kindness, one rock at a time."



Painted and photographed by Stephanie Cabrales.



Painted and photographed by Ronnie Kamps. Her creations can be purchased on Etsy.

RioVision Roundup

Spotlight on the RioVision Gallery

Writers: Tom Surh & Robie Williams

Photographers: Jan Vick & Robie Williams

The RioVision Gallery began as part of the Visitor Center & Art Gallery that was a joint project of the Rio Vista Chamber of Commerce and RioVision. It opened October 6, 2016 at 33 N. 2nd St. Linda Solomon, a RioVision volunteer and artist in many genres, jumped in as curator of the Gallery. She helped organize the artwork, bring in artists and create displays. Linda also managed to find volunteers to donate their time hosting the Gallery

during afternoon hours. In the Winter of 2018, an attractive space became available on the most active commercial street in town, at 116 Main St. The Gallery has happily remained there ever since.



Those first days were exciting as the RioVision Board of Directors and the artists planned how to best utilize this new space. Board member Jim Pezzaglia was instrumental in bringing the idea to fruition as he had previously owned online art galleries. The Gallery held its grand opening December 13, 2018. From the outset, the Gallery wanted to exhibit the work of local artists and they continue to meet that goal even as some artists have moved away and others have taken their place. With the larger space and longer hours, Amy Schmidt and Gail Pennebaker joined Linda as co-curators. At the beginning of each month, the



different genres of art offered for sale are changed out by the curators, so the Gallery remains fresh and appealing. Many of the artists also have bins of unframed works, mainly prints that visitors can peruse and purchase. Other genres, including jewelry, gourd art, felted flowers, fine knitted scarves and greeting cards round out the offerings presented for sale. The Gallery has become a living demonstration of the number,

diversity and talent of artists in Rio Vista. The sweetener for sale is the nice selection of See's Candies, so no one need leave the Gallery empty-handed.

The Gallery has also sponsored contests to compliment some of RioVision's events. There has been a call for artists to paint sheep dog pictures for the local McCormack Sheep Dog Trial as well as a small art challenge that was entered by over forty contestants. The artists have also been generous in their donation of artwork to use as raffle prizes at RioVision events.

Every month (when there isn't a pandemic) the Gallery honors one of its artists as Artist of the Month at a wine and cheese reception. Artists who have been so honored include:

- *Painting* – Lori Azzolino, Linda Huene-Solomon, Dorie Solomon (oil), Harvey Steinhaus (watercolor)
- *Pastel* – Lori Azzolino
- *Graphic Arts* – Linda Huene-Solomon
- *Assemblage, Multimedia & Other Media* – Kathie Boissiere, Karen Franscioni, Ann Jacobs, Gail Pennebaker (poured acrylic), Diana Peugh (cattail gourds), Jan Vick
- *Jewelry* – Kathy Gross, Maryann Mowat, Susan Prince, Amy Schmidt, Nancy Tillisch
- *Photography* – Linda Huene-Solomon, Harvey Steinhaus, Jan Vick

Linda and Gail have moved on to a new chapter in their lives, leaving Amy to curate the Gallery each month with the assistance of Kris Hall, an artist/volunteer.

A good number of featured artists have become well known and their works sell briskly. Some have been producing works for many years. Others, especially those who have been attracted by Rio Vista's retirement community, have turned a hobby into a thriving vocation. Still others have only recently taken up creating art. It has been fascinating to see some of these fledgling artists evolve as they try out new techniques, mediums, themes and styles and blossom into very accomplished artists.



As with all RioVision activities, the Gallery is staffed entirely by volunteers. Most of these volunteers are artists, so visitors to the Gallery are able to learn something about the art they are seeing. The Gallery has a note book giving the background on the artists. There's also a guest book to sign so that RioVision can keep our art connoisseurs in the know about events and contests. Since the Gallery also serves as a headquarters for RioVision, a number of other activities go on here including sales of tickets and information on RioVision events. The Gallery also maintains a location guide to the hundreds of memorial bricks found in the planters on Main Street so people may find a brick by the name of the person who bought it during the RioVision planter renovation project. Beginning this year, the Gallery now accepts art on consignment from art collectors. You can also view information about the Gallery on the RioVision Gallery web page at www.rivisiongallery.com and Facebook page at [facebook.com/rivisiongallery.com](https://www.facebook.com/rivisiongallery.com).

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