

Artist Studio tour on tap in Sisters

By **Helen Schmidling**
Correspondent

Danae Bennett-Miller, bronze artist, ran her fingers through the shallow water in her worktable. Then she dipped a cup into an old turkey-roasting pan filled with melted wax and skillfully poured a curved shape into the water on the table. The cool water smoothed the side of the hot wax it touched, but sent artful bubbles and swirls to the surface. The wax took form quickly, as she lifted it from the water and shaped it into graceful curves as it cooled and hardened. This shape would eventually be cast in bronze. It is just one of hundreds of forms that will be joined to others, like a three-dimensional puzzle, to form the body of one of four animals in the Sisters roundabout.

According to Bennett-Miller, “Doing art, making beautiful things — can often be solitary and a bit lonely. Sometimes a single work can take me weeks or months to complete.”

That’s why she is looking forward to rolling up the big door of her studio, greeting visitors and demonstrating her process during the second Artist Studio Tour on Saturday, July 28 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The tour is open to the public and is sponsored by the Sisters Arts Association. It will feature 18 local artists in 16 otherwise private studios.

The Artist Studio Tour is designed to give visitors a chance to see what it’s like in an artist’s working studio. The artists get a chance to meet and spend time with the people who love their work and want to see how it is done.

Eight of the studios are within Sisters city limits, and the rest are within easy driving distance. Participating artists include Paul Alan Bennett (knit-style painter), Clarke Berryman (oil painter), JoAnn Burgess (pastel painter), Gary Cooley (bronze sculptor), Caroline Stratton-Crow (watercolor and acrylic painter and sculptor), Mitch and Michelle Deaderick (ceramic artists), Winnie Givot (watercolor painter), Jennifer Hartwig (scratchboard artist), Norma Holmes (pastel painter), Steve Mathews (mixed media), Ken Merrill (ceramic artist), Danae Bennett-Miller (bronze sculptor), Chris Nelson (oil painter), Wendy Bax (metal artist), Dan Rickards (oil painter), Randall Tillery (oil painter) and Susie Zeitner (glass artist).

Art takes on new meaning when you are able to interact with its creator. Paul Alan Bennett will demonstrate how he creates his newest Constellation Series, and the Deadericks may let you try your hand at the pottery wheel, time permitting. Zeitner’s Z Glass Act studio is another highlight with sparkling glass being formed in giant firing kilns.

Right along Hood Avenue, Nelson and Bax will welcome you to the wonders of their Wildflower Studio. Hartwig will have sample boards and tools for visitors to try their hand at scratch art, and will be taking signups for an upcoming class. Cooley will have sculpting kits for kids of all ages.

Ken Merrill will lead you through Canyon Creek Pottery, demonstrating how he’s been turning clay to flatware and fancy lamps



PHOTO BY DENNIS SCHMIDLING

Danae Bennett-Miller is at work on her roundabout art.

and bowls for more than 30 years. Rickards, Berryman, Mathews, Tillery, Givot and Holmes will welcome you into their home-based studios. Stratton-Crow has moved her creative space from the kitchen table to a brand-new studio, and Burgess’s studio upstairs in her barn is always filled with light reflecting off trays filled with pastel chalk in every rainbow color.

Bennett-Miller will be hard at work on her Sisters roundabout sculpture.

Earlier this year, her proposal for this large installation called “A Journey Through a Land of Contrasts” was chosen for the centerpiece of the roundabout. It will feature an elk and three antelope amidst a natural setting of basalt columns, rock, and trees. The rocks and basalt columns have been chosen and are in storage in Sisters. Some of the wax pieces have already been sent

off to the foundry for casting in bronze. Everything will be in place by late October this year.

Admission to the tour is free, but donations are always welcome, and support the educational work of the Sisters Arts Association with schools and community. Visitors can stop at one or as many of the 16 studios as they wish during the tour hours.

Maps listing all of the Open Studios and directions to each are available at Hood Avenue Art, Gary Cooley Collection Gallery, Clearwater Gallery, Sisters Gallery & Frame, Paulina Springs Books, Wildflower Studio, Raven Makes Gallery, Canyon Creek Pottery, Sisters Art Works, the Chamber of Commerce and at www.sistersarts.org. There will be blue-and-white signs with big red arrows to guide you on the day of the tour.

Learn proper use of child safety seats

The Sisters-Camp Sherman Fire Department will hold a free clinic on Friday, July 27, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the main fire station at 301 S. Elm St. to inspect and educate caregivers on how to install and properly use their child safety seats.

While caregivers of babies often seek help, the fire department would also like to reach out to caregivers of children who ride in booster seats. To be properly restrained in a booster seat, the shoulder belt should cross the center of the collarbone, while the lap belt is flat across the child’s upper thighs.

The public is invited to stop by and let safety personnel help make sure your car seat and booster seat are being used properly.

No appointments are necessary for the clinic. For more information, call 541-549-0771.

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ARTIST
STUDIO
TOUR

JULY 28, 10 to 4

Paul Alan Bennett
Clarke Berryman
JoAnn Burgess
Gary Cooley
Caroline Stratton Crow
Mitch & Michelle Deaderick
Winnie Givot
Jennifer Hartwig
Norma Holmes
Steve Mathews
Ken Merrill
Danae Miller
Chris Nelson & Wendy Bax
Dan Rickards
Randall Tillery
Susie Zeitner

Maps available at
Hood Ave. Galleries
Chamber of Commerce
and online at
www.sistersarts.org

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