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night (and occasionally Sunday afternoons) in the winters. Owner Rebecca Kraft plans to add the event as a cruise ship excursion this May and has considered adding more Topsy Painting nights this summer as well.

“Our Topsy Painting events expose new people to my business, and the popularity has grown quickly,” Kraft said. “We’re often sold out, and sometimes they’re practically painting outside the door!”

WineKraft is situated on Pier 11 at the edge of the Columbia River. Along with a glass of wine or beverage of their choice, participants enjoy the expertise of experienced local artists like Jo Pomeroy-Crockett and Ronni Harris. Topsy Painting teacher Harris has been an artist for over 40 years and lends her vast experience and techniques during each event. “At the very end, they can’t believe what they’ve created,” Harris said. “I’ve had people dragged into the event by a friend who talked them into coming. Before they leave at the end of the night they’re signing up for the next three events.”

Sheridan has also seen her share of repeat customers. After attending her first Paint with a Pint night, local Laurel Sullivan quickly signed up for three more events. “I feel you get a lot of bang for your buck with a two-hour session, drinks, plenty of time to paint and great conversations. I would not call myself creative, but you would never know by looking at the paintings I bring home at the end of the night,” she said.

Harris spoke further on the attraction of tippy painting. “Everyone gets their paint groove on and finds their personal style. The paintings all come out different but wonderful,” she said. “Anyone can come out and enjoy without having to invest in art supplies. It can be a safe, comfortable place for a single woman to enjoy a night out, perfect for date night, mom’s night out, co-workers’ night out and girls’ night out.”

In Seaside, the Ashore Hotel is hoping to encourage camaraderie in the community between hotel guests and locals with plans to host its own inaugural Paint Night at Ashore Bar on Thursday, Feb. 2. Hosted by experienced art teacher Ben Schlattman from Buddha Kat Winery, also in Sea-



PHOTOS BY DAMIAN MULINIX

Above: Local artist Janet Sheridan applies brush strokes to a recent painting. At paint and sip events, students start with a blank canvas and create a painting, following along with a teacher who gives step-by-step instructions.

Left: Knappa High School art teacher Janet Sheridan in her home studio in Svenson. Sheridan teaches a class called Paint with a Pint at Fort George Brewery.

side, the new event will be an ongoing paint night every first Thursday of the month from 6 to 9 p.m. and will include all art supplies and light appetizers.

Ashore Hotel Operations Director Linh DePledge said, “We want both our hotel guests and our locals to take advantage of this little gem — our great wine and espresso bar here at Ashore. We have local craft brews and organic/biodynamic wines from around the world with great music and delicious provisions.”

The concept of letting go and having fun, along with a previously undiscovered creativity, is another frequent reason given by teachers and participants for the popularity of paint and sip events.

“A comment I frequently hear from adults is, ‘We had so much fun,’” Sheridan said. “I’ve observed this across the board as an art teacher: As we grow older, we become self-conscious, and it suddenly becomes easy to say we

are not creative. Because of this, I start the beginning of every Paint with a Pint class by addressing that we tend to lose touch with our creativity as we grow older. I encourage everyone to forget that inner critic and give it a try.”

At the end of any given two-hour Paint with a Pint night (which doesn’t include hours of prep and clean up that go into each event), Sheridan typically walks over with her husband, Lenny, to the Fort George Brewery to wind down before heading home. She spoke of seeing her students also doing the same thing at the Fort with their paintings in hand. “One night, I saw one of my students come down the stairs with her painting, and she just seemed so proud. I have people who are blown away with what they are able to paint — it’s super rewarding to witness.”

Sheridan added, “In reality, we all have an inner artist no matter what our experience. It’s one of the reasons why I love these events so much — I’m always surprised to see 35 people get ready for class, watch it unfold from start to finish and see them proudly walk out with a finished painting. Their faces light up, and that never gets old.”

TAKE A CLASS YOURSELF

Paint Night at Ashore Bar

Ashore Hotel

125 Oceanway, Seaside

Next class: 6 to 9 p.m. Feb. 2

ashorehotel.com

503-568-7506

\$40



PHOTO BY JOSHUA BESSEX

The Ashore Hotel in Seaside, owned by Brady and Tiffany Turner, will hold its first paint and sip night Feb. 2. The paint nights are scheduled for the first Thursday of each month.

Topsy Painting

WineKraft Wine Bar

80 10th St., Astoria

Next class: 6:30 p.m.

Feb. 8

winekraftpnw.com

503-468-0206

\$35

Paint with a Pint

Fort George Lovell
Showroom

426 14th St., Astoria

Next class: 6 p.m.

March 10

paintwithapint.com

\$40



PHOTO BY JOSHUA BESSEX

April Thorgramson, left, and her mother Rebecca Kraft, right, are co-owners of WineKraft, a wine bar on the west end of the Pier 11 building. WineKraft holds Topsy Painting nights several times a month.

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