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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 JO ANNE KISER: OH CANYON COTTONWOOD  
Watercolor - 18"x24"

4 JO ANNE KISER: HIS FAVORITE SPOT  
Watercolor - 15"x22"

5 JO ANNE KISER: MONASTERIAL VISTA  
Watercolor - 15"x22"

7, 14-15 WHEN LIFE IS PLAY, OUR JOURNEY  
CAN BE JOYFUL  
Loi Eberle, M.A., CPC

8-9 FEATURED POET - JAMES STANDAL

10-11 ARTISTS TO WATCH  
Students from Priest River Lamanna  
Highschool and Clark Fork High School

12 JO ANNE KISER: IVY CREEK MORNING  
Watercolor - 11"x14"  
TUNDRA REVELATION  
Watercolor - 15"x22"

13 JO ANNE KISER: EVOLVING GRACE  
Watercolor - 10"x14"  
STILL AWE INSPIRING  
Watercolor - 15"x22"

16 MIND BODY SPIRIT - Kara Douglas

17 LOSSES - Wesley McNair  
RAINY DAYS - Nancy Greindl

19 REMEMBERING - Jacob Nordby

20-21 RESTAURANTS

22 PRIDHAM STUDIO

23 BASEBALL AND LIFE - Jim Bauman

24 JO ANNE KISER: SING, OH RIBBON OF STONE  
Acrylic - 22"x30"

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# Featured Artist JO ANNE KISER

Perhaps my inclination for art started when my mom named me Jo, after the character in Louisa May Alcott's Little Women. I have a figurine of Jo with a paintbrush in the pocket of her frock. I drew a lot as a child, sketching horses in the margins of my notebooks. Since I was guided toward a more academic school curriculum, I fit art classes in here and there. In seventh grade one of my watercolors won a National Scholastic Art Award. At the University of Colorado, where I majored in Russian and Spanish, with a teacher's certificate, I managed to take one drawing class.

While being married and raising two boys, I found a little time for art projects. My then-husband is a geologist and we moved to Casper, Wyoming, after graduating from university. Among other things, I painted wildlife, including geese and elk, in watercolor on pieces of old barnwood. The texture of the wood helped feathers and fur come to life. I found a market among hunters and fishermen.

Later, back in Colorado, I taught myself to make Ukrainian Easter Eggs. It is a wonderful tradition, inviting quiet contemplation while applying the wax and dyes. I used my own designs, incorporating images from Mimbres pottery and borders from ancient Pueblo designs. They

were juried into a show titled The World of Crafts at the Denver Art Museum. We lived in Castle Rock, Colorado, for a time, where I became active in an artists' guild in nearby Parker. I invited a guest speaker, Buffalo Kaplinski, to give a talk. He became my first teacher, focusing on plein air painting.

I went through a divorce in my early 40s. I responded to that life change by going back to school, earning a Master of Humanities at the University of Colorado, Denver campus. I emphasized Fine Art. I remember Buffalo telling me to just be an artist. I was also taking classes at the Art Students League of Denver, which at the time was located in an old brick warehouse on Lawrence Street. How great the smell of oil paint and the creative energy!

I was a monitor for Buffalo, which meant I oversaw his classes on the days he was not there. I joined the Colorado Watercolor Society, getting several pieces juried into their state shows. I am a signature member of CWS. I also got a painting juried into the Rocky Mountain Watercolor Exhibition. Titled Risen Red, it was of the Colorado River. Moab and Utah became a favorite destination and subject.



“His Favorite Spot”

Watercolor - 15”x22”

From the integral studies portion of my master's degree came the idea of creating cards from my paintings and written interpretation of them for the National Parks. I was mostly painting landscapes with water media, using watercolor and acrylic paint. I was spending a great deal of time outdoors and becoming aware of the treasure of our National Parks system firsthand.

The challenge was getting the Park Service concessions to accept them. It became a family affair with my commercial artist sister, Marian Samuelson, designing a logo, Postcards from the Park. I self-published a set of eight cards, four images, for Arches and Yellowstone. Another sister, Evie Hirschberger, added her drawings along with Marian's and mine to another set of cards designed for Rocky Mountain and Arches National Parks. These are black line drawings of animals and landscapes designed for kids to color. They were printed on an old printing press with ink on paper that could be used with all media. Nephews and nieces colored them for us as examples.

I lived for 21 years in Crestone, Colorado, located in the San Luis Valley, next to the Great Sand Dunes National Park. Taos, New Mexico, about three hours south, is famous for its remarkable light, which influenced the Taos Society of Artists. Their southwest impressionism is one of my favorite schools of painting. I titled one of my paintings of lit-up rabbit brush and towering Sangre de Cristo peaks Enveloped Study. Crestone is rich with

creative people – artists, writers, and musicians. I helped start an artists' collective gallery, which has continued to thrive and grow. I took a workshop in Creede, Colorado, from another of my influential teachers, Stephen Quiller. He is a master of color theory.

My most recent endeavor is to create a series of paintings addressing different issues related to the Colorado River. In a 1987 Volkswagen Vanagon, my flat-coated retriever Bailey and I made several trips to Utah, New Mexico, and Arizona, where I gathered material and inspiration for the series. I have in mind seven paintings. This has been gestating for quite a while, as I feel into a new direction for my work.

I have always been moved by light, form, and above all, color. Painting landscapes affords me the opportunity to explore the spirit of place. My work takes form as an expression from the mind, but more importantly, the heart. I realize today that connection to the natural world around me as the Earth changes is essential -- an honoring, a remembering.

As for my connection to northern Idaho. Eight years ago, I met my life partner, Warren Santoro, and fell in love with him and his Northern Idaho landscape. We are currently living between Sandpoint, Idaho and Tubac, Arizona. Between two borders, a whole new subject.



“Monasterial Vista”  
Watercolor - 15”x22”

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# WHEN LIFE IS PLAY, OUR JOURNEY CAN BE JOYFUL

**By Loi Eberle, M.A., CPC**

Some people experience life as “play,” and advocate that it should be lived well. Embracing this idea can influence our experience in a good way, leading to joy and laughter. In contrast, dwelling on fear and depression aren’t helpful ways to generate joy. Even if not feeling playful, we can still help others to live as pleasantly as possible.

“If we change the way we think about ourselves we will become a different kind of being, and we can create a different kind of world,” states Jeff Carreira, author, meditation teacher and mystical philosopher. Certainly we can use our thoughts and actions to create a more pleasant environment for ourselves and others. When we do this, the outcomes are more enjoyable than what occurs when we use our thoughts to generate harmful interactions.

There are many examples where positive thinking helps self-healing. On the other hand, negative expectations and pessimistic thoughts can have a disruptive, negative effect. When our environment is filled with toxic substances emitted by people, industry, and negative interactions, it can have a disastrous impact on how we feel, and eventually affect the condition of our bodies. Regardless of one’s circumstances, there are decisions we make every day which either enliven us, or lead to despondency.

Science and technology have helped us harness the energy inherent in our environment, using sun, water and minerals. There’s great disparities in the choices people have for doing this. In some countries there is little or no access to electricity, while other countries generate enough electricity to export it abroad. For most of us, unless we choose to live off the grid, electricity has become a necessity. It’s easy to take its usefulness for granted until our power grid goes down. Then basic activities of life are impossible until electricity is restored or we improvise other methods with which it can be obtained. Elsewhere, no access to electricity causes academic pursuits to be difficult, if not impossible because there’s no light after sunset, and no power for computers nor other methods of communication. Even in more modernized countries, including this one, many are homeless, sometimes not by choice.

Solutions for the disparities in people’s access to electricity require ingenuity. We can either attempt to help, or turn away. When there’s a desire to assist, the enormity of the problem can drain one’s personal stamina. Some people choose to participate in spiritual



and biophysical activities in order to generate personal energy. New techniques and substances continue to be discovered that can help energy flow within one’s own body. There are also guides and teachers who focus on providing motivation and guidance to help generate personal energy.

Like the ocean’s waves, each person’s level of activity has an ebb and flow. After an immense output, there’s a need for rest and renewal. Recognizing this pattern helps keep one’s energy from being depleted. Although we can’t control all the outcomes that occur, we can learn to be mindful of our reactions to events. Noticing how our thoughts affect our emotions helps us gain more control over our reactions. The way in which we handle our anger has a huge impact on our behavior. We can learn to control our anger and use its energy in a good way. Or we can allow our reactions to cause violence and destruction. Part of bringing our angry reactions under control requires surrendering to the situation. When we can’t change events, we need to accept what’s happening, and at least control our response, rather than reacting without thinking.

Yes, life can be risky and things might not always go the way we want. Even so, life is an amazing gift. The more I remember that, the easier it is to manage life’s challenges. My personal choice is to trust the Universe. People have different reactions to the use of certain words like “Universe” or “God.” We all define things according to our personal experience. Not knowing what trusting the Universe will lead to, I still agree with what the guru Meher Baba said years ago, “Don’t Worry, Be Happy.” Not wanting to limit my experience

**Continued on Page 14**



# JAMES STANDAL

James Standal is a father, a writer, an eater, a drinker, a fisher, and someone who is as lost as anyone else as to what we are doing on this green and blue planet of ours. He lives in North Idaho where he spends most of his time in mountain streams or behind a desk at a bookstore. He runs his own website at [www.jamesstandal.com](http://www.jamesstandal.com).

## **The Year North Idaho Burned - 1967**

To Luther P. Rodarte, Lee Collins, and Randy Langston

The fire's roar echoes against the old growth,  
limbs snapping  
like a thousand broken bones.

Roman Nose, heaven and hell behind a pall  
of deep smoke.

A specter, perverse and foul,

Inundated with storm-force winds an island  
of earthfall.

The crowned torrent pressed past

his cragged asylum above Lake 1, the black  
of scorched fuels  
incandescent  
A beacon of fear; regrowth.

## **Words for a Wedding in Boise, Idaho**

Our home may be ancient  
but these mountains are young  
this wheatgrass  
this Idaho Pine  
this Blue Mountain Penstemon  
this is all still young,  
We now look different

We look the same

We are together now

We will be again

## **Schlitz**

And that, folks, is where it ended.  
A husk and his last inhale, meaning  
-ful and deep as the waters he had quit.  
A flick, towards the tails he tended,  
Worms taken from an old cut can of Schlitz.  
April had come, and he put on his face  
in hopes of what he will put in still grows  
Cutting the cord on this last mistake,  
A newborn baby boy in his aged arms.

## **"Working Through Dad's Pain"**

The train-tracked fields of summer strain,  
The sheer annoyance of winter's rain  
and among it all, a conclave  
of clucking hens, free range  
but shackled in their own corner of the pen  
still waiting to be let go  
yet pecking at the hand with seed.

One

A lost soul behind a line  
drawn in earth, no time  
to see the other side of the coop.

Another

body full of knick knacks,  
talons now cracked,  
wandering the dry pasture  
and I watch from the fence

after I

picked the downed, dead plums  
from the fall.

Your voice was heard through the cherries south

"These next"

A deep and empty black yard bag hanging from a branch.



## Vicissitudes of the Sailor

Ho and lo in times like these  
Cast to shore by perilous seas  
I beckon, I command of thee  
Please sit here and hear my plea.

In the fog out there, catch the barge?  
He croons a song, his voice is large.  
Wicked song, but he's in charge  
A song so deep, it will dislodge

Us. You there. Man the harpoon,  
Take aim, intention of maroon.  
Careful, for that room that is festooned  
With the cash and jewels and gloom.

Into our hands, we must commit  
the spirit; bathe us in it.  
Cod of truth, bearer of shit  
We are beggars, our torch still lit.

Grisly bones will drag them down,  
So vain of them what comes from ground.  
But from that room will rise a crown  
And from there sin will propound.

Ablaze for a buck ninety nine  
the planet wept from loss of time.  
Oh, how the masses do whine  
But if you're not caught, is it crime?

## Sonett

"Grace appears most purely in that human form which either has no consciousness or an infinite consciousness." -Heinrich von Kleist, "On the Marionette Theatre"

Hark! a bastion of hope under a guise  
as a country that would bring us progress  
in the acceptance of our change; absconded!  
In Oslo where each chat felt like trespass  
to the valley district of Fagernes  
glory to He with his dark blue eyes of Christ.  
Time with Eve, bed down deep in Valdres.  
My Broken jar, her mind aligned with Kleist.  
Has this land instilled in me a theist?  
Of Her, in Bryggen, amongst the Buskers  
and fishmongers; gravlax, bread, cream cheese spiced  
sat down near the tchotchke-hocking hucksters.  
And we'll go home, cheerful and voluble  
without the serenity of Bakkebu.

## Folk Song from a Cherry Tree in Marx Subdivision

Be wary of how we choose to perceive  
melancholic leaves, spindly  
on our blossomed cherry trees.  
The blue birds sung, like  
a family fighting  
on the stairs after their father died,  
in the long-winded hop fields  
of north 95.

"Little birds of the sun  
of Moon  
of Azoth  
We are but the beloved son he saw."

The song becomes a rage aria  
in sotto voce  
and one bird,  
the bluest bird of all,  
has stopped his voice  
only incorporating a  
head shake  
or  
a  
head  
nod

Soon the other voices were smoking.  
Piddled out, a cigarette for one  
a bottle of Crow for the other  
tears, worries, resentment of them all.

From here  
I'll retreat pell-mell.  
This spring will be a hard one.  
But I would rather stay with a good tree and a rock nearby  
rather than be a foolish man  
and choose the sun and loose sand.

# ARTISTS TO WATCH

Young artists shown here from Priest River Lamanna High School and Clark Fork High School represent the pinnacle of talent, skill, and achievement within their respective disciplines. From paintings to sculptures, digital art to mixed media creations, these pieces offer a diverse array of artistic expressions to captivate and inspire, showcasing the boundless creativity thriving within our academic communities.



*Cow* with Acrylics  
Kylee Swoboda, Grade 11



*Scenery* with Acrylics  
Landin Pierson, Grade 12



*Kandinsky Circles* with Fibers  
Lillian Clifton, Grade 11



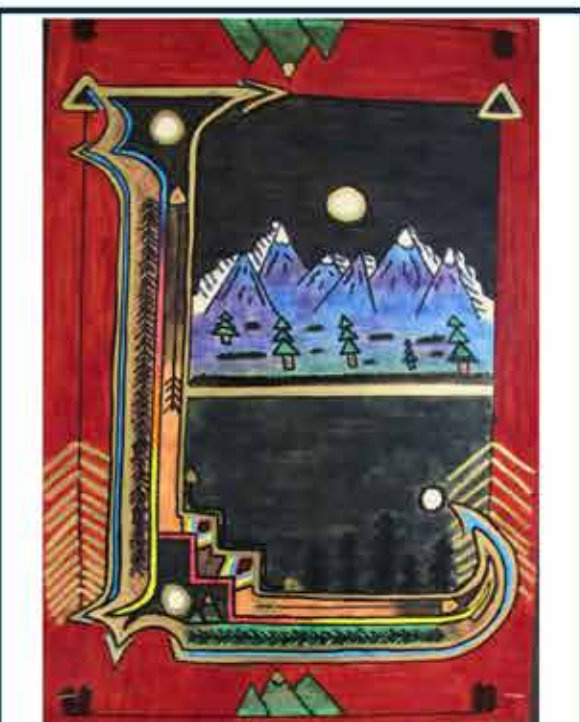
*Muse* with Cardboard & Acrylics  
Erica Mattila, Grade 10



*Scorpion* with Metals  
Blake Livingston, Grade 12



*Dudes* with Metals  
Blake Livingston, Grade 12



*L* with Colored Pencils  
Linden Rainwater, Grade 10



*Musical Picasso* with Chalk Pastels  
Linden Rainwater, Grade 10



*Colton* with Acrylics  
Colton Brooks, Grade 12

# YOUNG ARTIST SHOWCASE



*Bicycle with Acrylics*  
Clara Kennedy, Grade 11



*Motorcycle with Acrylics*  
Magan Lasley, Grade 12



*The Drummer, Cardboard Sculpture*  
Stormy-Eileen Ray, Grade 9



*Giraffe with Acrylics*  
Clara Kennedy, Grade 11



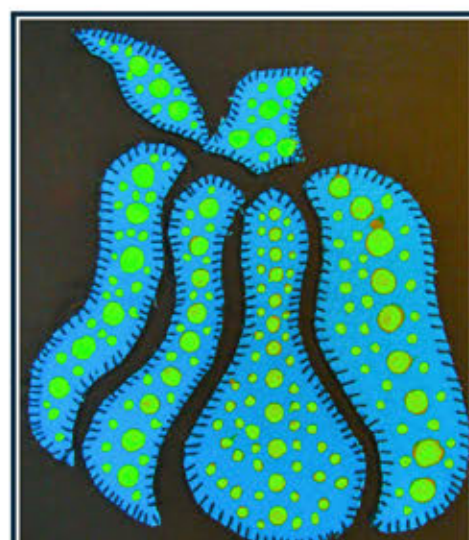
*Clara with Acrylics*  
Clara Kennedy, Grade 11



*Numbers in Space with Color Pencils*  
Lucas Matthews, Grade 10



*Jellyfish with Acrylics*  
Az Anderson, Grade 10



*Yayoi with Fibers*  
Harley Gumaer, Grade 9



*Ezra with Ceramics*  
Ezra Vollendorff, Grade 9



*Rechenka's Egg with Ceramics*  
Mara Handeland, Grade 12

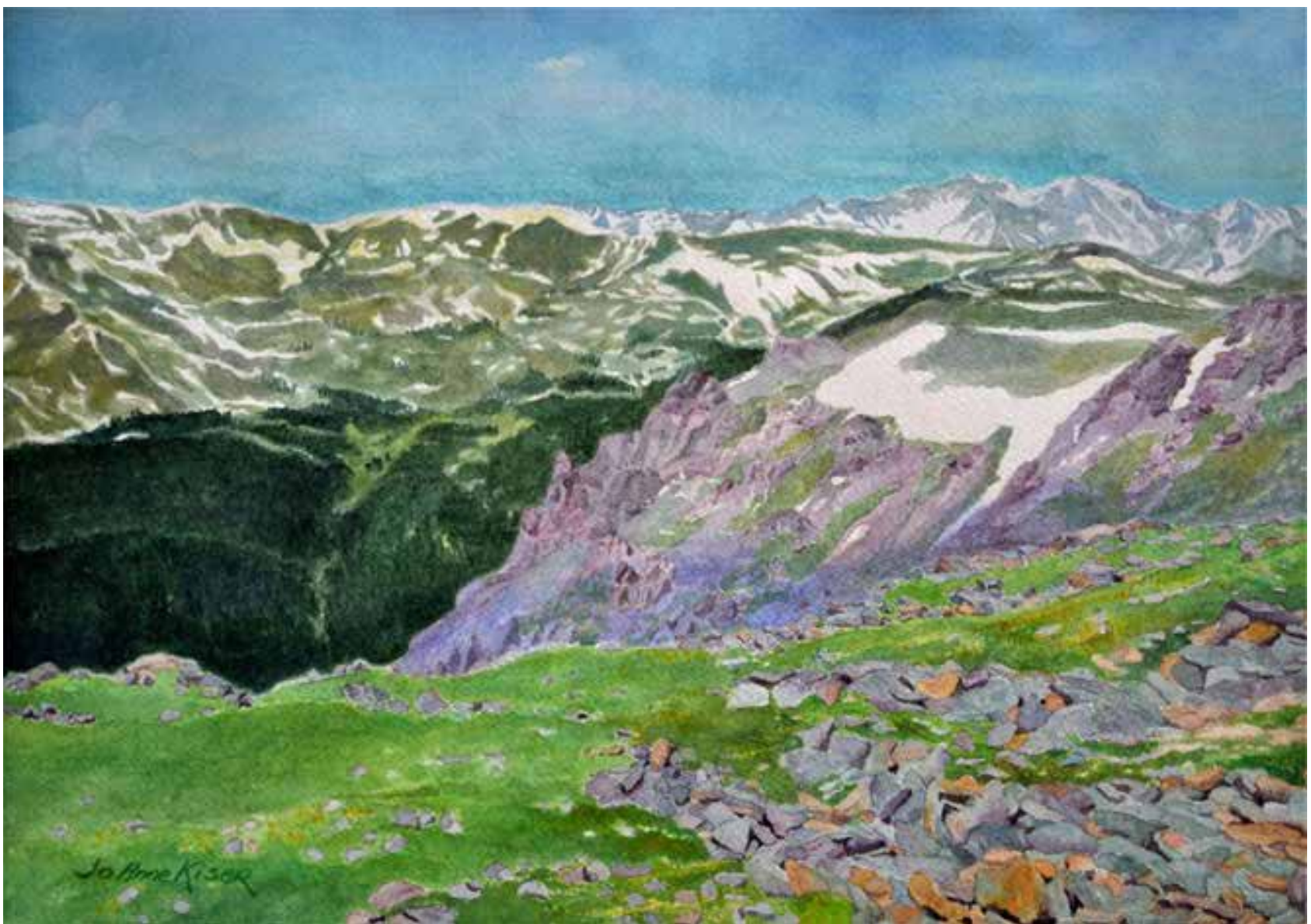
This carefully curated selection provides a glimpse into the art world's future, offering a chance to appreciate and celebrate the emerging talents shaping our landscape. By providing students with opportunities to express themselves creatively, they develop critical thinking skills and cultivate a deeper understanding of the world around them.

We showcase young talents to help each artist feel a sense of pride and accomplishment in their hard work. Helping to boost self-esteem and make each artist more confident in their abilities, we hope to foster increased creativity and encourage young talents to try new techniques or experiment with different materials. By developing their artistic skills and learning new ways to express themselves, this creates a sense of unity and belonging. Together with art we can create a stronger sense of community for all ages!

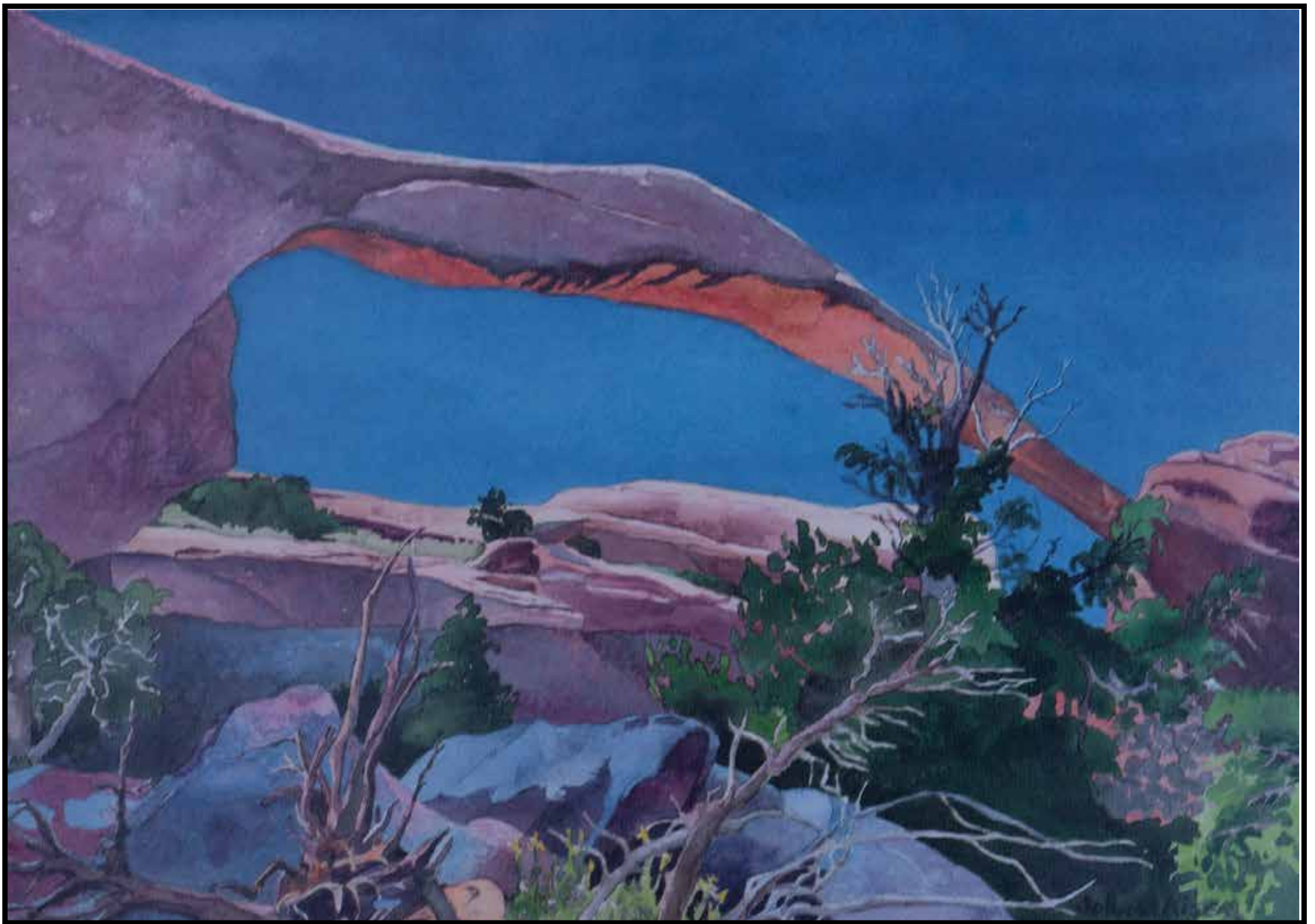
*Featured Artist* **JO ANNE KISER**



“Ivy Creek Morning”  
Watercolor - 11”x14”



“Tundra Revelation”  
Watercolor - 15”x22”



**“Evolving Grace”**  
Watercolor - 10”x14”



**“Still Awe Inspiring”**  
Watercolor - 15”x22”

# WHEN LIFE IS PLAY, OUR JOURNEY CAN BE JOYFUL

By Loi Eberle, M.A., CPC

*Continued from Page 7*

with preconceived ideas, I remind myself the depth and scope of creation is a lot bigger and more amazing than I could possibly imagine.

In Paradigm Shifting - Guiding Evolution from the Inside, Jeff Carreira writes "Thinking we know things definitively has become dangerous because reality is simply too mysterious, too complex, too vast, and too multi-dimensional to ever be fully understood... when it comes to existential questions about what is real and what gives life meaning, we are often much better served by the open stance of not knowing."

We can choose to believe that life is loving and abundant, that it's not a jungle and a harsh place. We can see this in how many people and animals care for each other. When hateful, destructive activity does occur, I find it hard to connect with loving feelings, yet that's exactly what can be most helpful. Aligning myself with loving trust resonating with my inner being, helps me avoid being swept up into negative and potentially hateful interactions.

Frank Bryan, a retired University of Vermont professor wrote a book about town meetings. He recognized they are effective due to "Forced civility." He coined this term to describe the way people deal with disagreements in person because they are compelled to recognize each other's common humanity in a way that larger-scale political interactions do not allow.

"Fulfillment is an orientation, a mindset, a perspective on life....a 'Spiritual Abundance.' At its core, it's simply the recognition that life is full, good and bountiful, even when things are not going our way. This moment is simply what it is, immediate, fresh, alive, vibrant, and perfect in the sense that it is the inevitable outcome of all that came before." [Jeff Carreira.com] Each of us can decide to invite "the Source, The Light, The I AM" to manifest completely within us, and allow ourselves to experience the Oneness of all that is life.

Ongoing scientific research demonstrates that "branches" of the neurotransmitters in our bodies disintegrate with age. Yet we also have learned that new ones grow with stimulation. Transplants in humans have become possible due to the discovery that brain cells can be stimulated to grow. We can direct our actions to regenerate ourselves. With conscious choice we can even focus our actions to find ways to use our abilities to create "heaven on earth."

Lawrence Edwards, PhD. Founder and director of Anam Cara Meditation, describes Jeff Carreira's book, Transdimensional Spirituality, as: "a conceptual framework for understanding the transformative process that unfolds through meditation, yoga and mystical pursuits, as well as grounded, integrative practices for deepening one's awareness of transcendent realms of consciousness. Carreira's work rests on the foundation of the ancient tradition of Advaita Vedanta and expands to include wisdom from many spiritual traditions, augmented by his own insights and direct experiences of transcendent states."

Charles Sanders Pierce, one of the originators of the American philosophy of pragmatism, lived according to the motto, "Never block the road to inquiry." Jeff Carreira in Paradigm Shifting, writes: "thinking that you already know is one of the surest ways to block the road of inquiry. At the heart of Pierce's philosophy was what he called the doctrine of fallibilism, which simply states that any of our current beliefs, no matter how certain we may feel about them, might be wrong and almost certainly will be found to be wrong eventually. How could it be otherwise? Here we are living on a single planet revolving around a single star in a galaxy that contains trillions of stars. We are smaller than a speck in our galaxy, and our galaxy is itself only one of trillions of galaxies in the universe...we don't have any way of knowing how minuscule a portion of the universe we actually have access to through our senses, but it seems likely that we are aware of only a tiny portion of all possible knowledge in the universe." In a study published February 6, 2024 in the "Astrophysical Journal Letters," astrophysicist Adam G. Riess [<https://iopscience.org/article/10.3847/2041-8213/ad1ddd>] reports: "Double-checking the Hubble Space Telescope's results with the James Webb Space Telescope's observations have ruled out a major source of error in calculating the expansion rate of the universe...We've now spanned the whole range of what Hubble observed, and we can rule out a measurement error as the cause of the Hubble Tension with very high confidence... Combining Webb and Hubble gives us the best of both worlds. We find that the Hubble measurements remain reliable as we climb farther along the cosmic distance ladder. In other words: the tension at the heart of cosmology is here to stay."

Jeff Carreira reminds us "We can't begin to fathom all that is in the universe that is unknowable to us in our current form." He encourages those "willing to venture beyond the edge of the known," to become "artists of possibility and articulators of new paradigms." I suspect this has happened throughout the decades, with each new discovery, and its resulting new paradigm. Carreira observes, "The magic is not in the new idea. It is in the friction between competing explanations of reality."

Western mysticism refers to the term "Divine" as a principle, or energetic Being that manifests the world and is the "Source" or wellspring of life. It advocates conformance with "ahimsa," meaning "do no harm" and "virtuous action" motivated by peace and love. Esoteric and mystical schools of thought in many faiths view each human as an expression of an aspect of the Divine. Spiritual practices can cause a shift in one's perspective, and sometimes, even in one's entire perception of reality.

For some people, as is the case with Jeff Carreira, this "shift" has occurred as the result of decades of the spiritual pursuits of meditation. Other people have found that guided experiences with plant medicines and psychedelics can cause a perceptual shift. The quality of the actual experience is primarily a result of the intention behind its use, the guidance received, and the context in which it experienced. Carreira describes his spiritual experiences as life altering because they did more than just illuminate the world as it is—they revealed new worlds of possibility. When Jeff Carreira uses the term "philosophy," he's referring to the art of questioning our most fundamental assumptions about our reality. By courageously following those questions until a new world of possibility opens up before our very eyes, these questions can take us into an instantaneous shift in consciousness and perspective. This is what he calls "the art of wormhole inquiry" which is similar to the art of the Zen koan. There are many variations of this process, which some call the "scientific method."

Dan Rather, long time journalist and television reporter now produces "Team Steady," his current podcast.

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Recently he stated, "Rigorous and robust fact-checking is the best defense against misinformation, intentional lies, and deflection. Verify sources, cross-reference assertions, and provide context." Rather reminds his readers: "the key to survival and thriving is to never lose hope."

There is the ever-present possibility of seemingly destructive tendencies of Divinity: floods, fires, earthquakes, volcanoes and disease. Seeing these as transformative processes can strengthen our confidence in our ability to adapt to what occurs. Regardless of circumstances, life can still be playful and living well can be possible, when study and intention are guided by the three A's: Acceptance, Adaptation, and Appreciation. Accepting what has occurred, adapting to change, and appreciating the gift of life, can inspire us to trust the earth to regenerate itself and invite Divinity to express Itself within us for the benefit of all concerned. This is a good decision we can choose to make daily.

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# Mind • Body • Spirit

## Bringing Yoga Home

BY KARA DOUGLAS

Yoga studios abound. Online video streaming brings class to you, wherever you may be. Presently, so many opportunities exist to be guided through a yoga practice that the days of learning on one's own with an antiquated guide from a second-hand bookstore seems a relic of the past. Yet for thousands of years, a foundation of yoga practice has been the development of sadhana, repeated practice that strengthens our abilities to observe and reflect. Developing a personal yoga practice helps practitioners to do exactly that.

Margo Rosingana, a Portland yoga teacher remarked, "I think the most important component of a personal practice is that it's yours. You can decide how you wish to move on your mat, for how long, and what you need or want to focus on in your body."

Personal practice puts your study of yoga even more squarely in the context of your own unique circumstances. Relying on memory – both mental and muscular – and a sense of exploration, a personal practice requires a sense of honesty, a call to stand in the truth of who we are moment by moment without retreating into harsh self-criticism. It strengthens our abilities to both see clearly and abide calmly in whatever arises.

Rosingana's practice doesn't begin and end the same way each day.

"I think that many people get caught up in the idea that they don't know what to do or that it has to be a certain length of time. Oftentimes, my personal practice is five minutes a day and other times it turns into 90 minutes. It's more important to get to your mat daily for shorter amounts of time than practicing once a week for a longer time."

Likewise, Gabrielle Copeley, who teaches yoga and practices massage in the Lewiston-Auburn and Brunswick areas noted, "I practice on my own daily to clear my own internal environment so that I can be present and loving with my family, friends, clients, and students. Developing a practice that keeps me balanced energetically, emotionally, mentally and physically allows me to continue to give and support (others) while at the same time keeping my own cup overflowing."

Our bodies and minds accumulate tensions day

to day as we move through the structure of our lives. We employ restraint when working under a deadline, fight the urge to panic when stuck in traffic on the way to an important appointment,



over-ride the impulse to snap at loved ones at the end of a long day. These tensions can create layers of residue that, over time, begin to limit range of motion in the body and track our thoughts along habitual pathways. Energy is locked up in the preservation of these tensions. By moving, breathing and observing in ways that help to dislodge tension and enliven the body, that energy can be refreshed, free to circulate throughout the body and mind.

Practitioners often find that the essential components of a personal practice incorporate meditation, concentration and integration. Not all yoga practice includes a sequence of postures.

Copeley named pranayama, the practice of specific breathing techniques, as the foundation of her daily practice.

"I practice a mix of pranayama that is balancing, invigorating, and calming each morning. This

clears the physical, emotional, mental, and energetic residue that I may have carried into the moment better than any practice I know," she said. "It also balances the nervous system and the endocrine system bringing my physical body in balance so that my mind can follow."

Learning the practices of yoga, whether asana (postures), pranayama (breathing techniques), meditation, interpretation of texts and teachings, or skillful integration usually requires the guidance of an experienced teacher. Complimenting guided classes with practicing unguided on one's own takes the momentum of a teacher's instruction and allows it to reveal a unique path.

Some of the deepest learning occurs when we sit with the uncertainty, frustration, feelings of being overwhelmed, restlessness, even the joy and calm that can arise in the simplicity of our own practice. There, we can truly observe our propensity to avoid that which is uncomfortable or undesirable and all the difficult thoughts and emotions that rise when faced with such things. We can see more clearly how we grasp at, or cling to, that which reinforces our idealized identity, the stories we weave about our lives. For a short time, we can step away from our habits and identity and begin to observe without choosing for or against what we find.

In my own experience, when students return to class having practiced on their own, alive with questions and observations, the entire class benefits. The teaching becomes richer because of the depth and variety of experiences shared from practitioners' own lives.

A more esoteric interpretation of sadhana is to come to rest. A personal practice can create the foundation upon which we return to our whole selves, a still point in a fast-paced world, a point of reference amid the elements of change.

*Kara Douglas is a yoga teacher and freelance writer. She and her family own and operate Fishmoon Yoga, a studio they built in their restored century-old barn in Harpswell. She also teaches classes at Freeport Yoga Company and Pine Tree Studio. Kara is currently creating a class series, Bringing Yoga Home: Developing a Personal Yoga Practice. Her website is [www.fishmoonyoga.com](http://www.fishmoonyoga.com).*

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# LOSSES

It must be difficult for God, listening to our voices come up through his floor of cloud to tell Him what's been taken away: Lord, I've lost my dog, my period, my hair, all my money. What can He say, given we're so incomplete we can't stop being surprised by our condition, while He is completeness itself? Or is God more like us, made in His image – shaking his head because He can't be expected to keep track of which voice goes with what name and address, He being just one God. Either way, we seem to be left here to discover our losses, everything from car keys to larger items we can't search our pockets for, destined to face them on our own. Even though the dentist gives us music to listen to and the assistant looks down with her lovely smile, it's still our tooth he yanks out, leaving a soft spot we ponder with our tongue for days. Left to ourselves, we always go over and over what's missing – tooth, dog, money, self-control, and even losses as troubling as the absence the widower can't stop reaching for on the other side of his bed a year later. Then one odd afternoon, watching some ordinary event, like the way light from the window holds a vase on the table, or how the leaves on his backyard tree change colors all at once in a quick wind, he begins to feel a lightness, as if all his loss has led to finding just this. Only God knows where the feeling came from, or maybe God's not some knower off on a cloud, but there in the eye, which tears up now at the strangest moments, over the smallest things.

**-Wesley McNair, was Maine's Poet Laureate**



Rainy Days Nancy Greindl

Wesley McNair won the PEN New England Award for Poetry with his new collection, *The Lost Child: Ozark Poems*. Down East Books is publishing *Take Heart, More Poems from Maine*, a second anthology derived from his popular *Take Heart* column for Maine newspapers.

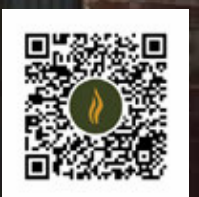
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# Remembering

By Jacob Nordby

I'll never forget reading these words one day, "Can you remember who you were, before the world told you who you should be?" At the time, I was going through a particularly rough patch and Danielle LaPorte's single question; she calls them Truth Bombs, exploded in my heart and crumbled the walls that I had been banging my head against.

The answer was, "No."

I didn't remember. I couldn't remember. It had been too long since I had seen the world with wide, expectant eyes. My life had become hard and anxious. I was waking up at 3 a.m. with my thoughts twisted like barbed wire, afraid to face another day of stress.

The adult me had grown jaded and heavy. Something was very wrong. It was obvious that starting another company, buying a bigger house, or scraping more money together wasn't going to cure me.

I didn't know it then, but I needed a serious creative recovery.

My children needed me back. I could see the concern in their eyes when we sat together at the dinner table.

My work was suffering, too. Somewhere along the trail I had lost my fire. Every time I pulled into the parking lot in front of the beautiful office I had built, a heavy weight descended upon my shoulders. I shut the door behind me, sat at the desk, and prayed the phone wouldn't ring.

I had forgotten who I was and why I was here. I was called to begin the journey back home to myself by that question, "Do you remember...?"

Over the next several years, I learned some things.

I learned:

Everyone is born creative. Not everyone will be writers, painters, actors, or musicians—gifted with what we commonly call "creativity." However, we all show up in this world woven with the intelligent, curious, always-yearning threads of life itself.

For most of us, the inner spark becomes hidden under veils of routine, disappointments, societal norms and expectations, and a thousand other things that make us forget who we really are. We forget the vital, sparkling enthusiasm of childhood and the sense of possibility. We forget our ability to dream, imagine, and make our ideas become real.

Many of us assume that the cool people we admire have something special about them that makes it possible to create things of beauty and passion—things that will serve and inspire the world. We assume that we don't have the proper wiring.  
That's a lie.

The truth is that our inner genius child is still alive—yours is and mine is, too. We hold the codes within to craft a deeply satisfying life. Creative recovery is a process of remembering. It is a process of discovery. It is a journey of re-dreaming.

"Can you remember who you were, before the world told you who you should be?"

Creative recovery calls us back to our truth, our innocence, and our artistry. It empowers us to move through the fears and obstacles that have kept us from being ourselves. It is soul work that guides our behavior in the real world. As we retrieve ourselves from the clutter and static, we are empowered to shed the restraints and grow into the shape of our true destiny. We begin taking practical steps forward and carving out our own life as the art it was meant to be.

I learned these things and began to live them. My life began to change, one step at a time.

And now it's time to remember again—time to live it more deeply than ever. I sit writing this from my protected little city here in Idaho, but I cannot ignore the world full of distress that I can see from here. The problems we all face seem so much larger than any of us. It is hard to imagine how we can make a difference.

When I'm quiet, I can hear a small voice calling to me

"Remember..."  
"Remember..."  
"Remember..."

Remember what?

"Remember who you are. Remember that, though the world is large and you are small, your life matters. Remember that one cell, bursting with health, begins to heal the cells around it. Remember that you can't do it all, but you can do something. Remember to live."

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# PRIDHAM STUDIO

Jeremiah and Micah produce their distinctive line of pottery full-time at Pridham Studio. Owners since 2011, they have established themselves as a creative production team with Jeremiah as the potter and Micah the painter. Jeremiah throws a variety of shapes on the wheel including mugs, bowls, vases and spoon rests, with his mugs being one of their top selling items. He also makes a wide range of hand built slab pieces from small side plates to generously large serving bowls working in both earthenware and stoneware bodies. His pieces demonstrate his sensitive attention to detail and technical precision. He is keen to experiment as well as do production; a classic working artist.

Micah is inspired by the worldwide tradition of descriptive hand-painted pottery. Her patterns spring from her BC roots and feature landscapes, animals, and local scenes executed in her personal and heartfelt style. Her "Community Pride" series is available throughout galleries in western Canada. She also does commissioned designs for individual or corporate custom orders. She hand paints each piece individually, both front and back, using quality glazes. Jeremiah and Micah also have a love for the subtlety of abstract design and power of colour which is the hallmark of their "Slow Cool" series.

Micah's parents Nancy and David first established Pridham Studio in 1988. The pottery aspect of the studio gradually grew, and by 2011 had become a successful business employing them both full-time supplying pottery for their home gallery, and galleries throughout BC and Alberta. Being home-based, Micah grew up immersed in the business, eager to learn, and by the time she was a teen worked regularly with her parents. After graduating from high school in 2001 Micah and Jeremiah moved together to Victoria to continue their education. Jeremiah became a certified weldor, working in precision metal fabrication, approaching his work always from an creative, refined point of view. Micah received a Bachelor Degree in Fine Arts. She majored in Costume Design and worked in Theatre, where she honed her design, painting, and business skills.

Their careers provided both with a springboard to success in taking over Pridham Studio. In 2011 Nancy and David were ready to retire, and their great joy was that Micah and Jeremiah were ready to purchase the home and business. The young couple was eager to be self-employed with an artistic, Kootenay based lifestyle and start a family. Pridham Studio went third generation in 2013 with the birth of their daughter Adeline.

What is it about Pridham Studio pottery that continues to make it so appealing after 20 years? The harmony of art and function, the appealing look and feel of something made by hand, the freshness of new ideas, the quality.... Yes, and it's also the story that each piece tells. The pieces are reminders of favorite locations, rich holidays, special occasions and pastimes. A nice mug can make your whole day better. Multiple clay bodies are used. Firing is done in electric kilns. All glazes used are non-toxic and food-safe. All mugs and thrown bowls are dishwasher safe, while the slab bowls and plates are best hand washed. All pieces are made for everyday use.



# Baseball and Life

BY JIM BAUMER

Baseball makes up a substantial swath of my own personal history. I love most sports, but baseball is the one that has garnered the lion's share of my attention over the course of my lifetime. Baseball was the first sport that I played. It was the sport that my father bequeathed to me and in turn, I passed it on to my own son.

As a talented high school player, I earned a scholarship to play in college. An injury derailed what I thought would be my career path—and I stepped away from the game I grew up with for the better part of my early 20s. It wasn't until I returned to Maine after a strange sojourn away that I rediscovered the game that has informed each and every spring (and summer) since then.

As a writer, baseball became the subject matter of my first book, *When Towns Had Teams*. As a late-blooming writer, I was searching for a narrative that was big enough to fill nearly 300 pages. Baseball beckoned me to make it my own story.

Like many of my personal passions, history is central in my own understanding of the game. The pastime's past for me begins with family.

My father's brother, Uncle Bob, was a talented left-handed pitcher for the Roberts 88'ers. The 88'ers, like many local town teams, were mainstays each summer in communities all across the Pine Tree State. Prior to our digital age, people still went out after dinner and watched local baseball played by men who might also double as their oil delivery man (like my uncle), or become their first American Legion coach and high school athletic director, like the late Stan Doughty was for me.

Ten years ago, when Major League teams trekked southward for spring training, my thoughts traveled back in time to when I was a pre-teen, idolizing the men who patrolled the diamond in my home town of Lisbon Falls. That became my theme in my initial research for a book.

One of my first extended conversations (which later led to a formal interview) that ended up being part of that first book was with my uncle. I recognized that the two of us shared a similar deep connection with baseball. I later found other men like him who never had a chance to tell their own story of baseball.

My earliest memories of baseball were of a game on an old black and white television, my father napping on a lazy Saturday afternoon (probably worn out from his swing shift at the mill and a likely moon-lighting gig), and me curled up next to him, watching the players move back and forth across the screen. I recall asking questions and my father answering them. That's how I learned about balls, strikes, and home runs.

As time marched on, my father became my Little League coach. And in the story of fathers and sons, I also served as my own son's Little League coach, 20 years later. Conversations with my father, as well as my son still touch on how the Red Sox are doing, or about that summer's rookie sensation.

As you read this, baseball has transitioned out from its early-season flavor, to the warm summer night variety of what once was our National Pastime. This is my favorite time of any season, based on nearly 50 years of following the sport.

What could be better for those of us of a certain vintage, us hearty Northern New Englanders, than to have a baseball game on the radio



The author at age 10 in catcher's gear in front row, 3rd from right. His father, Coach Herman Baumer, middle, top row. Young Jim's Little League Team was sponsored by The Trading Post in Lisbon Falls.

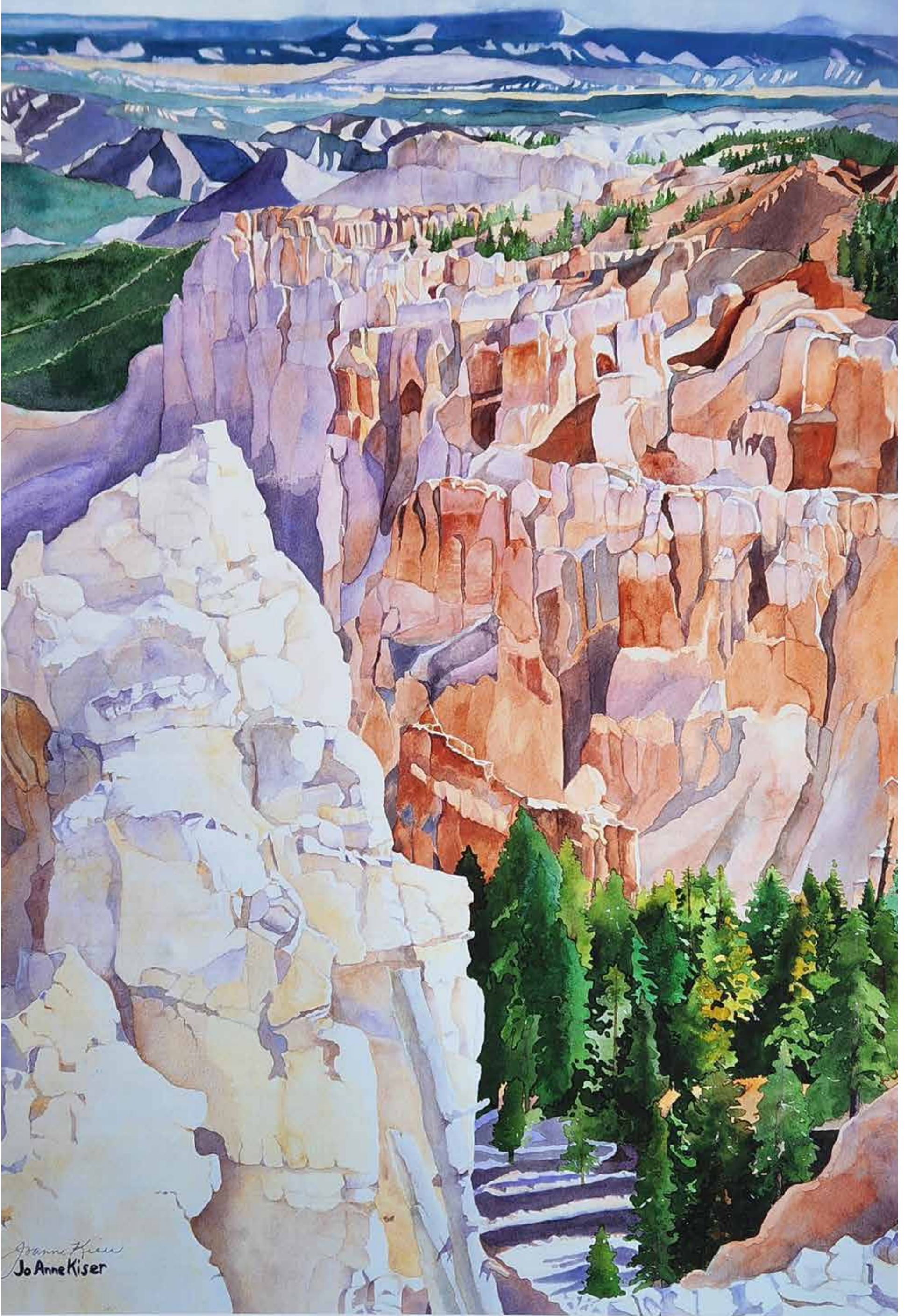
while we're sitting on our screened-in porch, doing little but taking in the ebb and flow of a baseball game?

Baseball is a pastoral game. That's probably why I still find solace in its rhythms and nuances. It's not often flashy, and it doesn't light up the digital screen like other sports do. In fact, every baseball game has long stretches where there's not a lot happening, and then, something significant comes out of left field and impacts the outcome.

That would make baseball much like life.

*Jim Baumer is a New England-based writer and small press publisher. He is the author of four books about baseball, Moxie, and life growing up in a small Maine town. For more on his books and writing, visit his website, <http://www.jimbaumer.com/>.*





Joanne Kiser  
Jo Anne Kiser