

The Redding Pilot

"My father gave me the greatest gift anyone could give another person, he believed in me." —Jim Valvano

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Participants socialize first, then paint at Masters & Mixers

by Susan Wolf

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Susan Jackson, Georgetown School of the Arts owner, had already set up individual easels at tables in her studio on Thursday, June 6, and was preparing palettes of paints as her class began to arrive.

There was no immediate rush to the canvases, but instead introductions before finding a wine glass for social time. At Ms. Jackson's Masters and Mixers, a paint and wine party, the atmosphere is laid back. Participants, who last Thursday included four Redding women — Linda Koch, Karen Lade, Christine Polio and Andrea Cotton — bring their own wine and snacks and enjoy conversation and camaraderie before the painting begins.

In this class, the four Redding women were the novices while three others in the group had previous art training. There were giggles and comments about how each



Susan Wolf

From left, Karen Lade, Linda Koch and Christine Polio concentrate on their artwork during a Masters & Mixers class at Georgetown School of the Arts as owner Susan Jackson instructs them.

could not paint, but all sat down determinedly as Ms. Jackson instructed the class on how to paint a peony.

On Tuesday morning, Ms. Jackson said people don't know if they have talent until they try to paint. "Many think they have to be a Rembrandt, but when they prejudge, they

eliminate their enjoyment of the process of learning to draw or paint," she said. "After receiving some instruction, even the most doubtful beginners become encouraged painters."

Ms. Jackson said people "don't know if they have talent until they try to paint.

With practice, most people can create some very convincing artwork."

She also pointed out that painting is very cathartic, and provides a good opportunity to de-stress.

During Thursday's class, Ms. Jackson patiently showed

how to begin with an under-painting of the flower and then blend the paints with a thicker layer. Her students learned shading and received individual attention and recommendations on how to improve their art.

At one point during the two and a half hour class, filled with music for inspiration, the room was practically devoid of conversation as the painters concentrated on their work. There were no judgments as each painter drew on her canvas, most all acknowledging it was a relaxing activity.

At the end of the session, the interpretation each artist gave to her work produced a variety of peonies in a variety of colors. And while some participants were happier with their artwork than others, most agreed a return visit to a Masters and Mixers class was definitely a given.

Ms. Jackson said each class builds on the skills learned in a previous class.

Pictures of each artist and her artwork were taken for

the studio's scrapbook as the group of ladies cleaned paint from their hands, returned their aprons, and checked on the date of the next class before heading home.

Georgetown School of the Arts is at 25 Old Mill Road. The cost of a Masters and Mixers class is \$35 and all levels of artists are welcome. Classes in the studio are the first Thursday and Saturday of every month, except for holidays. They are from 6:45 to 9:30. Ms. Jackson is opening a new Stamford-based Masters & Mixers studio at 225 Atlantic Avenue in August.

For information and to find out the party schedule, join the studio's Meetup page: www.meetup.com/Georgetown-School-of-the-Arts-Masters-and-Mixers or facebook page, www.facebook.com/MastersAndMixers?ref=tn_tnmn or visit www.georgetownarts.com. You may also register or call for more information at Georgetown School of the Arts 203-544-8551.