

GEORGETOWN STUDIO EXPANDS

Art school draws up new venture

BY JOAN LOWNDS

At Susan Jackson's Paint, Draw & More art school, the theme of creativity underscores everything, including the business approach. After opening a new studio for her Georgetown school, Ms. Jackson decided to start another venture to make use of the expanded space — Georgetown School of the Arts.

"I want local artists to share my beautiful new space and offer great classes," she said. "So I came up with the innovative concept of having the artists to go my Web site, choose days on the calendar and post an announcement, course description and bio. Payment and registration can also be done through the Web site."

So far, the fledgling Georgetown School of the Arts has several courses listed, including Adult Drawing and Painting, and Weaving, to be taught by Ms. Jackson; Watercolor & Printing, to be taught by Elizabeth Madden; and Woodworking, to be taught by Ms. Jackson's husband, Steve Burke.

Also available are "mini-vacation camps" ranging from "Meet the Masters" to "Winter Tropical Vacation."

All of the new offerings align with the philosophy behind the extensive list of classes at Paint, Draw & More, which is Ms. Jackson's belief that "children should be taught art in a supportive and nurturing environment. The classes are ultimately about building self-esteem. Not only are they learning drawing, but there's some-



Former Disney Imagineer Susan Jackson's Paint, Draw & More art school offers a range of classes in newly expanded space.. —Joan Lownds photo

thing more."

"Our primary goal is to teach children and adults to draw, to feel good about drawing and to feel comfortable using drawing as a tool throughout life," she said.

Ms. Jackson, who has run Paint, Draw & More out of her home since 1994, grew up in Danbury and obtained a master's degree in fine arts from the California Institute of the Arts. While in California, she worked as an exhibit and set designer and imagineer for Walt Disney.

Part of the job entailed testing the rides. "I'd be riding roller coasters at 8 in the morning when no one was there, and the park was quiet

and fresh," she said.

But Ms. Jackson said she found her true vocation when she started teaching art to children at the Monart School for the Arts in Santa Monica, Calif., and at the Paul Revere Middle School in Pacific Palisades.

"I knew in my heart that's what I wanted to do," said Ms. Jackson, who is a painter in the expressionist genre. "I love working with children."

She returned to Connecticut and began teaching children's art classes in Danbury and at Redding Parks and Recreation. Her business expanded by "word of mouth," she said, and currently offers about 120 to 150

classes a week at various area locations. Classes are now for adults as well as children and include a diverse program of arts and crafts.

In the Wilton Continuing Education Session for the winter session, she will be offering Cartooning at Cider Mill; Advanced Cartooning at Miller Driscoll; and Drawing Mixed Media at Comstock Community Center.

"Wilton students are also welcome to attend any classes or workshops at my Georgetown studio, of course," said Ms. Jackson.

The bright, expansive space

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Art studio

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is filled with a variety of mediums, including markers, chalk and oil pastels, watercolors, and charcoals — along with examples of the students' work. These range from cartoon panels to Balinese masks, which Ms. Jackson studied while on a trip to Bali, Indonesia. "I'm always looking for new ideas," she said.

Her basic approach to teaching drawing is to ask a student to "disassemble an object with their eyes and then put it back together." For example, she said, placing a cup on the table, start the drawing with the curved lines of the cup's top and bottom. "We demystify the drawing process."

Other specialized classes, such as Winter Tropical Vacation camp, which will

be offered in February and taught by Paula Anderson, will use "a variety of drawing and sculpting mediums to create two- and three-dimensional projects, all with a tropical vacation theme," she said.

Art parties, including puppet making, jewelry making, face painting and mobiles are also available; along with art events such as Ladies Night Out and Design, Art Wine Social and Senior Art and Fun Night.

Information: paintdrawmore.com.



Anastasia Rogoziski, 7, of Wilton, works on a papier-mâché project at Paint, Draw and More's studio.