



By Shopping Locally, You Help Strengthen Your Community!

Maumee Uptown Business Spotlight



The hand-painted pottery at Sunshine Studios is among the unique pieces available for purchase every day.

MIRROR PHOTOS BY NANCY GAGNET



Tatianna Crandall carefully makes a small bowl, one of many items she creates from clay. Local potters can also use the studio's tools, such as wheels, a slab roller and kiln services.

Sunshine Studios Offers Artwork, Pottery, Community Art Classes And More

BY NANCY GAGNET
MIRROR REPORTER

Sunshine Studios is a community studio, open to artists of all ages, experiences and abilities.

"That was the biggest goal when we opened. It was to make it part of the community," said studio manager Joni Campbell.

The space, which is located in the former Artcrest Building on the corner of West Wayne and Conant streets in uptown Maumee, is filled with colorful pottery, unique textiles, jewelry and photography. What makes the studio especially important is that individuals with disabilities create many of the beautifully crafted pieces that are available for purchase.

"Their imaginations and personalities come through in the art," said Larry Knight, art coordinator and supervisor. "The individuals are unique and special and their work is unique and special."

Each day, 19 individuals work at the studio; however,

21 can be accommodated and space is currently available.

The studio is also open to the community and many adults and children take part in art classes, which are offered there monthly. Some upcoming classes include Paint Your Own Pottery and Paper Art. A Surface Decoration class is offered for adults interested in exploring new surface decorating techniques, and in September, an Art and Appetizers class will be offered for adults to work on their art while enjoying delicious snacks. This fall, ceramic pumpkin decorating will also be offered.

The work of several local artists is also featured at the studio and many teach the art classes. Local potters looking for available space to work with wheels, an extruder, a slab roller and other tools also use the studio as well as potters in need of kiln space, for which fees are based on the size of the piece.

"The artist community has shown its support by par-

ticipating in open studio time for both the potters and the general community," said Larry. "Several local artists have also volunteered their time to work with the individuals at Sunshine to improve their artistic skills."

The studio can also be rented for special occasions such as baby showers, wedding showers and birthday parties. Food and refreshments can either be brought in or specially ordered from Georgette's Grounds and Gifts, and the staff will work to customize any event to fit the special occasion.

Groups including homeschool families, Girl Scout and Boy Scout troops or just friends enjoying an evening out also use the studio space.

"The community members use the facility and even the uptown merchants use it as a central meeting place from time to time," Larry said.

In August, the studio will mark its second anniversary. Since opening its doors in 2014, Sunshine Studios has truly transformed into a vibrant



Erica Martin paints a plate at Sunshine Studios. She is one of many individuals creating beautiful pottery at the studio.

gathering space celebrating both the arts and diversity.

"The community of Maumee has really embraced the art studio through class participation, summer camps, attending the open houses we have had and the purchase of merchandise we have produced," Larry said.

Sunshine Studios is owned and operated by Sunshine Communities, a Maumee-based nonprofit organization that has supported people with developmental disabilities since 1950.

The organization began when Maumee couple Roy and Georgette Engler refused to institutionalize their five children with developmental disabilities, instead opening what was then known as a children's home at 7223 Maumee Western Rd.

Today, the 25-acre campus is the headquarters for Sunshine Communities, which supports more than 400 men, women and children throughout Lucas and Fulton counties.

Sunshine Studios opened with funding in part from a \$200,000 federal Community Development Block Grant.

Sunshine Studios is open on weekdays from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. and on Saturdays

from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

For more information about Sunshine Studios, call the studio at (419) 891-8877 or e-mail Joni Campbell, studio manager, at jcampbell@sunshine.org.



Sunshine Studios offers community art classes, space for local artists to work and teach and unique items made daily by individuals with disabilities.

Uptown Update

THE LATEST NEWS IN UPTOWN MAUMEE

MUBA Hosts Monthly Membership Meetings

Maumee Uptown Business Association (MUBA) membership meetings are open to all MUBA members. The meetings take place on the first Tuesday of each month from 8:00 to 9:00 a.m.

In August, the meeting will take place at DECA, 415 Conant St., Maumee.

Maumee Summer Fair & Taste Of Maumee Planned

The annual Maumee Summer Fair and Taste of Maumee will be held on Friday, August 12, beginning at 5:00 p.m. and ending on Saturday, August 13 at 11:30 p.m.

Arts and crafts vendors, kids' zones, a classic car show and family entertainment will be offered in the historic uptown district of Maumee on Saturday.

On Friday and Saturday, beginning at 5:00 p.m., regional bands will be featured in the Beer Garden adjacent to the Taste of Maumee vendors for the 21-and-older crowd in the West Mews parking area. A \$5.00 cover fee will be charged to benefit charity and IDs are required.