

SARATOGA NEWS

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WEISS WILL MOVE ON AFTER 12 'SUPER' YEARS IN SARATOGA DISTRICT

Superintendent has taken a similar job in the Central Valley

By KHALIDA SARWARI

After 12 years as superintendent for the Saratoga Union School District, Lane Weiss has resigned his post.

Arati Nagaraj, president of the district's board of trustees, said Weiss, 59, made the announcement at a board meeting on April 28. In a statement she issued to the community the following day, Nagaraj said that Weiss has accepted a job as superintendent of Aspire Public Schools in the Central Valley area. His last day with the Saratoga school district is June 30.

"We're all deeply saddened at his departure, but we wish him well," Nagaraj said.

The board will begin the process of finding Weiss' successor right away, she added, first identifying a search firm to conduct the recruitment. In the meantime, an interim superintendent will be appointed "so that our students have a seamless experience at school and the work of the district continues smoothly," Nagaraj stated in the letter.

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PHOTOGRAPH BY GEORGE SAKKESTAD

A MediaNews Group NEWSPAPER

Get a close-up look at art during
Silicon Valley Open Studios weekend

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Silicon Valley Open Studios artist Holly Van Hart will be opening her Saratoga studio to the public the weekend of May 16-17.

Artists' Doors Open

The 29th annual Silicon Valley Open Studios offers the public a behind-the-scenes look at works of art

By SHANNON BURKEY

Photographs by GEORGE SAKKESTAD AND JACQUELINE RAMSEYER

Art lovers will have the chance to get up close and personal with some of the area's talented artists at the 29th annual Silicon Valley Open Studios.

More than 380 artists will open up their homes and studios to the public throughout May. Attendees will have the opportunity to

view a variety of different types of one-of-a-kind art, including paintings, fiber arts, printmaking, mixed media, jewelry, photography, sculpture and ceramics.

"This event grows more popular every year because visitors enjoy talking with the artists, seeing a lot of their work at one time and, in some cases, seeing the

artists at work, all in the comfort of the artists' studios," said Mel Thomsen, executive director of SVOS. "The event also provides a great opportunity to cost-effectively begin an art collection."

Los Gatos artist Eric Bodtger will be participating in the event for the first time this year, but as an art lover and collector he

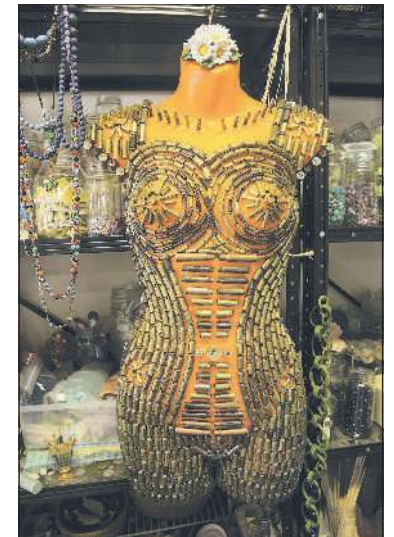
has attended many times. And this year he says is no different and he plans to show his art one weekend and visit other artists the next weekend.

"I'm really looking forward to going out and visiting the other artists and seeing what I can bring home myself," he said.

Bodtger, an oil painter, began

his art career in 2004 on a whim. He says he has always loved art but his fulltime career is in the technology field. One day while on a shopping trip to Costco, he saw an easel set that included paints and canvases for sale, and his wife encouraged him to

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PHOTOGRAPH BY JACQUELINE RAMSEYER

One of glass/mosaic artist Lisa Houser's pieces seen at her home in Sunnyvale. Houser, who owns Piece N Quiet Mosaics, will be part of Open Studios the weekend of May 9-10.

Saratoga artist Holly Van Hart works on a large painting at her home studio.

PHOTOGRAPH BY GEORGE SAKKESTAD

Open Studios

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buy it and give painting a try.

"I had always been into art and photography, but I had never painted before. We were taking a lot of trips to Carmel then, and I started seeing all these oil paintings and thought they were just so beautiful," he said. "When I saw the easel set, my wife said I should try it, and if I didn't like it we could give the set away. So I tried it and I got hooked."

Bodtker's first painting was of his dog, but he has since moved onto painting landscapes.

"I really have a passion for landscapes," the self-taught artist said. "I have been fortunate enough to do a lot of traveling so I go to museums and study paintings. That's how I've learned a lot."

Cupertino artist Denise Howard will be participating in the event for the fourth time. The colored-pencil artist says she enjoys being able to discuss the lesser-known medium with the people who visit her studio.

"It's a great opportunity for more exposure to the public than you can get on your own," she said. "People love to come and see where the magic happens, and I think it's great talking to people about my favorite medium."



PHOTOGRAPH BY GEORGE SAKKSTAD

Silicon Valley Open Studios artist Dave Head stands in his Los Gatos workshop, where he creates his hanging metal and coated optics sculptures.

Howard says she gets most of the inspiration for her work from nature and will have more than 30 pieces on display.

"A lot of my work is close-ups of flowers, trees, butterflies or birds," she said. "I'm always looking around for something to catch my attention and on the lookout for something interesting."

Campbell artist Colleen Arakaki will be showing her work during the event for the second year in a row. The printmaker will also open up her house to three other artists—Judy Coffman, Cathy Self and Carol Stanley—so attendees will have a variety of art in different mediums to view when they visit her home.

"This is a great event to start building up your following," said Arakaki, who has been creating art since the early '70s. "In the past, I've done very little about getting my work out in the public."

I thought that I needed to get busy and start showing my work more and this is a great way to do that."

San Jose artist John Ediger will also be showing his work at the event for the second year in a row. Ediger started painting 10 years ago and calls himself a "gentleman painter" as he is retired and does it at his leisure.

"I've always really loved to look at watercolors. They have such a rhythm to them," he said. "But I never dreamed I would be painting them myself. I was doing a lot of outdoor sketching and I started using watercolors to color some in, and that kind of led right into it."

Ediger says he started out painting landscapes, but now his specialty is old rusty equipment, such as the two abandoned Model T trucks he saw in a field while on a trip to the Mojave Desert.

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PHOTOGRAPH BY JACQUELINE RAMSEYER

Artist John Ediger, who painted this watercolor titled 'Old Friends,' will be part of Open Studios over the May 9-10 weekend. A retired electrical technician, Ediger took up painting about six years ago. 'It was a real kind of metaphysical thing. I just wanted to draw people.'



PHOTOGRAPH BY GEORGE SAKKESTAD

Silicon Valley Open Studios artist Colleen Arakaki creates a work of art with ink on paper in her Campbell studio.

Open Studios artist Colleen Arakaki rolls ink for a monotype in her Campbell studio.

PHOTOGRAPH BY GEORGE SAKKESTAD

Open Studios

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"I call it 'Old Friends' because they are facing each other so it looks like they are talking to each other," he said. "They are both falling apart and have this beautiful rust."

Ediger will be showing approximately 10 paintings this year and is excited to participate again after having such a great time last year.

"It's such a festive atmosphere and you get to meet a lot of talented people," he said. "It's such an eclectic group and if you take the time to travel to these different sites, you can see a lot of beautiful art."

In addition to showcasing a number of established artists, Silicon Valley Open Studios also attracts many emerging and first-time artists.

"Many of Silicon Valley's finest gallery owners and museum curators attend the event, looking for new talent," Thomsen said.

Oil painter Holly Van Hart is showing at the event for the second time. The Saratoga artist has only been a full-time artist for two years, after leaving a 20-year career in technology, though she says she has been painting her whole adult life.

"It was always a hobby and I didn't give it much focus," she

said. "It's been really awesome to now do it full time. I love being able to really focus on my art."

After a successful showing last year, Van Hart said that she was eager to participate again.

"Last year I had a lot of people come by, and 17 paintings found new homes," she said. "It's a really nice and easy open environment. There is no pressure, and you can just go and look at beautiful art."

Along with the 30-plus paintings Van Hart will be showing, she will also have an art project area for kids and a community-created oil painting for visitors who want to try their hand at oil painting.

"Where I usually paint, I set up a canvas, paints and brushes and people are welcome to pick one up and put as many strokes on the canvas as they want to just for fun," she said.

Campbell artist Fayne Muldoon has been painting for just under three years and will be showing at the event for the first time this year. The fine art and oil painter will have around 30 paintings on display in the big brush stroke style she works in.

"The reason I paint is because I hope that there is someone out there that will find beauty and pleasure in seeing my art," she said of the California landscape paintings she does. "I hope they will see something in a painting that I have done that they can connect to and relate to."



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF ERIC BODTKER

Los Gatos resident Eric Bodtker will be participating in the 29th annual Silicon Valley Open Studios event. Bodtker's art will be on display at 36 Pleasant St. in Los Gatos the weekend of May 16-17.

With so many different artists and types of art on display, Bodtker encourages anyone with an interest in art to attend the event one of the Open Studio weekends.

"It's going to be a fun weekend," he said. "There are a lot of very talented artists out there and this is a great opportunity for them to present their work to the public."

Silicon Valley Open Studios is free and open to the public. Reservations are not required. Artists in different cities from Burlingame to Gilroy and the coastal communities will open their studios from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. For a complete list of locations, artists and contact information, visit svos.org.

May 9-10 weekend: Central

Area—Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, Mountain View, Palo Alto, Santa Clara, Stanford and Sunnyvale.

May 16-17 weekend: Southern Area and Pacific Coast—Campbell, Cupertino, Gilroy, Los Gatos, Morgan Hill, San Jose, Saratoga and (for the first time) El Granada, Half Moon Bay, Montara and Moss Beach.