

BUSINESS

Local artist opens new gallery

BY SPENSER BICKETT
Staff Writer

After not having a place to work in for quite some time, a fortunate series of events led one local artist to open his own gallery.

Mason Wilson said he was driving by the offices at 312 Eighth Ave. one day, and decided to stop in and see if they had any open space. They did, and when he went back out to his car, his mother's favorite Cher song was playing on the radio.

"It was kind of one of those moments where it felt right," Wilson said.

His mother passed away five years ago, Wilson said, and it was the experience of helping her garden when he was younger that led to his love of using bright, vibrant colors in his art.

"I don't like to use flat colors, really, I try to stay away from grays and blacks, I like things to pop," Wilson said.

The gallery's public opening is 5-10 p.m. Sept. 1, and regular hours will be 5-10 p.m. Monday-Friday. Wilson said he's still got a lot of work to do to get ready, and he wants his small space to be filled wall-to-wall with art.

In an area where outdoor activities like fishing and hunting dominate, Wilson said he'd like to use his space to educate people about art, and show them

More information

Find Mason Wilson, "The Canvas Butcher," on Facebook at www.facebook.com/thecanvasbutcher.



Mason Wilson said his favorite piece hanging in his gallery is "The buck."

something they may not see every day.

"I think people should learn a lot more about art history," Wilson said. "I think they should use their eyes more to see color. I think people take color for granted a lot."

The bright, vibrant pieces Wilson has hanging in



STAFF PHOTOS BY SPENSER BICKETT

Local artist Mason Wilson admires some of the pieces hanging in his gallery at 316 Eighth Ave.

his space now aren't easily lumped into a category, he said. People have told him his style resembles expressionism, though he said he's also influenced by street and abstract artists.

"I don't want to be in one category, I want to be able to explore," Wilson said.

Exploration is what first drew Wilson to art as a youngster, he said, in that he was able to explore different ideas and emotions via canvas and ink. As a quiet high schooler, he was able to use art as an outlet.

"Being able to paint was

kind of an escape for me," Wilson said. "It was a way to shout at the top of my lungs."

Art has also worked as therapy for him, Wilson said, as he's able to work out some of his thoughts and emotions as he's painting.

"I start painting, and I have all these thoughts on my mind, and by the end, it's just a breath of fresh air, everything's off my mind, I'm relaxed," Wilson said.

Deb Ciminski, Wilson's art teacher in high school, was a big influence on him

as a young artist, and recognized his interest. She told him he could make a living as an artist, but he would have to work at it.

"I think she was the first person to really push me," Wilson said. "As far as expressing myself, she told me there's no rule in art, it's all about expressing yourself. So I think I really took to that."

Ryan Skogstad has also provided him with feedback, helpful criticism and guidance over the years, Wilson said.

"He always tells me the

truth," Wilson said. "He's definitely one of the artists that pushed me to go further."

If all goes well with his gallery here, Wilson said he'd like to eventually open up a space in Duluth, where he could collaborate with like-minded artists. He's tried living in the Twin Cities, he said, but it was too fast-paced for him. Eventually, he'd like to share what he knows with other aspiring artists.

"I'd love to teach art classes," Wilson said. "I love working with kids."

RLMC, nurses reach contract agreement

JOURNAL STAFF REPORT

After nearly a year of negotiations, nurses at Rainy Lake Medical Center have reached a three-year contract agreement with management.

Kelly Millerbernd, RLMC marketing and foundation coordinator, said the two sides had been negotiating on and off for 11 months, and RLMC was notified by the Minnesota Nurses Association the

contract had been ratified.

"We reached a fair settlement that ensures nurses continue to provide quality care to our patients," bargaining unit co-chair Sarah Arch said in a news release. "As we said to the community and management during negotiations, our contract keeps patients safe. When nurses can exercise their professional judgment and advocate for patients, everyone wins."

Millerbernd said the agree-

ment is fair to both parties.

"It took a long time to arrive an acceptable contract but the negotiators remained professional on both sides which allowed for very clear understanding at the content of new language which will allow for a smooth transition into the future," Millerbernd said. "We are looking forward to continue working with our registered nurses to provide the best quality

of care to our patients and our community."

"The community's support was key for reaching a fair contract and was greatly appreciated," bargaining unit co-chair Wendy Sutch said in the news release. "The signs posted in businesses, homes and car windows throughout the community show the public understands the important role that nurses play in patient care and safety."



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Julian and JoAnn Brzoznowski

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