Bob has always been interested in art and science. After a long career in the Navy and Aerospace engineering, he retired in 1984. His passion for the arts was reignited after taking up painting classes at Northeast Texas Community College and he has painted as a leisure activity ever since. Bob says he enjoys oil painting because it’s relaxing and challenging.

**ABOUT THIS PIECE** | I love the Texas Hill Country and wanted to see if I could paint a bluebonnet picture.
Distinguished Arts
SECOND PLACE • “Nature Lover”

From her earliest childhood memories, Ethel recalls hearing her kindergarten teacher telling her mother, "You have a little artist." From that early age, over the course of her fine arts education at The Art Students League and The National Academy of Design in New York City, and to the present, art has been her life's pleasure and focus.

ABOUT THIS PIECE | I am a nature lover. When I came across a photo that expressed my feelings so well, I created this painting.
Distinguished Arts
THIRD PLACE • “Butterfly”

Mary Lib Thornhill, 95
Westminster • Austin

Mary began painting at a young age -- inspired by her aunt who was an artist. She has continued painting all her life, even teaching art in Houston, Brazos Port, and New Mexico – working with oils, watercolors and pastels.

ABOUT THIS PIECE | Love of nature.
Merry has always wanted to be an artist – and although she describes herself as a “late bloomer,” she simply loves to draw.
Judith, an educator who was both an elementary teacher and a principal, was dedicated to art during her career in England and the United States. She bridged the space between her schools and those around the world while traveling with her husband, Roger, through his work in global education. In her retirement, she began to develop her own artistic gifts in Nashville, Tennessee under the guidance of Charles Brindley, a well-known professional artist, who provided her with encouragement and inspiration. After Judith and her husband moved to Westminster, she has continued in her artistic development and expression.

ABOUT THIS PIECE | My husband and I discovered this ancient church while walking in the Russian countryside. Intense afternoon sun revealed the results of ravages of time on the structure which is seen here at the front entrance to the sanctuary. I was inspired to make a drawing that enhanced the original beauty.
When she met Karen Margulis, an International Pastel artist in Atlanta, Robbie discovered a long-hidden talent for art. Her formal education began with local workshops and the Southeast Painting Society. The art group of Blue Skies welcomed her and she has participated regularly since moving there.

**ABOUT THIS PIECE** | A few years ago, before Covid, my husband and I had traveled to Scotland for a grand holiday. I loved the trip and finally grew accustomed to the "grey days and liquid sunshine." I loved the plush surrounds with beautiful green grass. When we returned, painting scenes from Scotland was difficult for me without the sunshine, but this had photo had light. I am a Southern gal from Arkansas and have spent many spring days enjoying the weather. So I embellished this picture a bit but you can see mountains and clouds that could turn grey at a moments notice. I loved adding light to Scotland and would love to go back.
Herb Plehn, 92
EdenHill Communities • New Braunfels

Herb grew up in Rochester, New York and upon graduating high school, volunteered for pilot training with the United States Air Force. Thirteen months later, he graduated as a Second Lieutenant and proudly wore his gold bars and silver wings. After having flown many missions into North Korea, he retired in the rank of Lieutenant Colonel and became a civilian once again. The military had hobby shops at most bases where he had been stationed, and there he developed an interest in woodworking. Experimenting with successes and failures, his skills developed, and he became obsessed with creating bowls and platters.
Doris Lucas, 80
MRC The Crossings • League City

Doris was born and raised in the Bronx in New York City and, after graduating from college – Houston became her home. After thirty-seven years in the medical field, she retired. Yet, still feeling the need to give back, she accepted a job teaching Hematology as an Ad Hoc Professor in the Medical Center in Houston. Her five years teaching passed quickly, and she soon found herself in classes for the beautiful art of Mosaics. She says that mosaics give her great satisfaction and peace.

ABOUT THIS PIECE | The need to create something beautiful, is what inspired me. “Serenity” is my favorite piece and most difficult. Doing Mosaics gives me great satisfaction and peace.
Inge has been exposed to art over the last 75 years. She even recalls a distinct memory of painting newspapers on the walls of her home in Germany during the war. She recalls getting in trouble for this, too. This artistic passion of hers was inspired by her uncle who painted – and as she grew older, this passion led to a career in fashion design.

**ABOUT THIS PIECE** | I created this piece because I'm a fashion designer. I knew how to create the shapes because of my fashion training.
Majestic Arts
FIRST PLACE • “Study in Grey”

Gusteen Trimble, 86
Juliette Fowler Communities • Dallas

Gusteen was born and raised in Somervell County in Texas, graduating as Valedictorian of her class from Glen Rose High School. She then embarked on a career in the big city of Dallas where she worked as an executive secretary and later as a property manager for a multifamily developer. Gusteen has three daughters who gave her the treasures of her life: her eight grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren. In her early 90s she was diagnosed with colon cancer and had the opportunity to paint her journey through the healing process.

ABOUT THIS PIECE | Gusteen has an artist in her who was waiting on a chance to come out.
Karen enjoyed coloring as a child and continued her education in art through her school years. She says being in a retirement community gives her the time and opportunity for all types of activities. Her favorite activity is expressing herself creatively.

**ABOUT THIS PIECE** | Our little art group challenged ourselves to do something with dots. I decided to try a masterwork with pointillism. I mulled through many, settled on Bertha, thinking she would not be so difficult. It took HOURS to create a semblance of Bertha. She sat patiently under her umbrella while I toiled with one dot after another, one color after another, one day after another.
Sue has been drawing and painting since childhood, working in watercolor and pastels. She majored in Fine Arts at the University of Kansas where she started painting with oils and found it to be rewarding. Growing up near a historical native American site gave her deep appreciation and interest in the culture. Later, she came upon a book about “Howard Terpning,” a wonderful western artist whose paintings depict the daily lives of native Americans with warmth and respect. With high price tags on his paintings, she set out to copy one as well as she could – giving us her painting: “Color of the Sun.”

ABOUT THIS PIECE | Always been interested in Native American Culture.
Bob has always been interested in art and science. After a long career in the Navy and Aerospace engineering, he retired in 1984. His passion for the arts was reignited after taking up painting classes at Northeast Texas Community College and he has painted as a leisure activity ever since.

**ABOUT THIS PIECE** | The combination of the threatening skies, flowers, and valley presented a challenge for me.
Nan spent twenty-six years teaching as an elementary school teacher in Colorado, Nebraska, and Texas. During this time, Nan and her husband enjoyed spending their summers in church and Vacation Bible schools. Nan’s appreciation for native American culture inspires her artwork. She notes that she only began doing reproductive pieces after moving to Blue Skies of Texas in 2014.

ABOUT THIS PIECE | The inspiration for my art is based on my love for all things native American and their wonderful creativity. I only began doing reproduction art pieces after moving to Blue Skies. I began decorating gourds from scratch in 2021, using natural materials and ink stains.
From her earliest childhood memories, Ethel recalls hearing her kindergarten teacher telling her mother, "You have a little artist." From that early age, over the course of her fine arts education at The Art Students League and The National Academy of Design in New York City, and to the present, art has been her life's pleasure and focus. Ethel has always worked in the arts including stage set design, graphic design, fashion illustration, and textile design.

**ABOUT THIS PIECE** | Years ago, I saw this happen in a school yard. Recently, I found a photo of it. I enjoyed doing the painting--it's crazy!
Mixed Media
THIRD PLACE • “Vermont Maple Sugar House”

Elaine Leander, 92
Querencia at Barton Creek • Austin

Elaine has had an interest in drawing and painting from childhood, and although not a formally trained artist, she has taken many workshops with nationally renowned artists. After college, raising a family, and following a career in teaching in Westchester County, New York, Elaine and her husband retired to South Carolina where they divided their time between there and their summer home in Vermont.

ABOUT THIS PIECE | While living in Westchester County, New York, my husband and I spent many weekends and vacations at our cabin in Vermont. Years ago I took a picture of an old abandoned maple sugar house. I have painted it before but this time I thought I would try doing it in pen and ink and watercolor. It reminded me of our many happy times in Vermont and that special taste of maple sugar!
Nedra has always been an artist – with a lifetime of experimenting with a wide variety of visual art forms, mediums, and techniques. Her parents encouraged her to pursue her passion and soon enough she was taking art classes and learning a lot about oil and acrylic painting, gourd art, pyrography, and carving. After getting married, she traveled frequently and started teaching wood burning classes and selling art supplies online. In 2019 she retired, and one year later when COVID hit, her and her husband moved to Blue Skies and she set up her home art studio. Recently, she has had surgery on her hand but is excited to get back to doing what she loves – art!

ABOUT THIS PIECE | I did this painting using only my fingers & a chain was so happy how this turned out that I was inspired to do larger one using the same technique but different colors with an ocean background.
Kay was born in Oklahoma but had lived in five states by the time she was 9 years old. As a younger adult, her jobs included student, wife, mother, and volunteer for many non-profits, including docent at an art museum. After attaining a master’s degree, she taught mathematics at Tyler Junior College. Kay’s art studies started with adult education classes in the 1960s and have continued to the present. She has been fortunate to study under four professional artists and she is most interested at present in exploring new, exciting and unusual media, but also works in traditional media as well.

ABOUT THIS PIECE  |  I was inspired to create this abstract using these fascinating water reactive inks.
William Schleuse, 89
Westminster • Austin

William is a retired psychiatrist and psychoanalyst who practiced and taught in Houston and Austin for more than 40 years. His primary visual medium is photography, which he took up in his fifties. He has shown his photography in many juried and invitational shows and even taught photography with informal University of Texas classes. He has worked in digital painting for the last two years, first with a Zen Brush app, and more recently, recreating rule-constrained images such as today’s piece “Variants.”

ABOUT THIS PIECE | Began exploring the transformations possible with limited digital editing tools, decided to try a rule-constrained method of creating abstract digital art with plausible, i.e. obvious or explainable, titles.
Painting: Oil and/or Acrylic
FIRST PLACE • “Young Pow Wow Dancer”
Sue Divich, 86
Army Residence Community • San Antonio

Sue has been drawing and painting since childhood, working in watercolor and pastels. She majored in Fine Arts at the University of Kansas where she started painting with oils and found it to be rewarding. Growing up near a historical native American site gave her deep appreciation and interest in the culture.

ABOUT THIS PIECE | Always been interested in Native American Culture.
Painting: Oil and/or Acrylic
SECOND PLACE • “City Mosaic”

Karen McDonald, 74
Blue Skies of Texas - West • San Antonio

Karen enjoyed coloring as a child and continued her education in art through her school years. She says being in a retirement community gives her the time and opportunity for all types of activities. Her favorite activity is expressing herself creatively.

ABOUT THIS PIECE | Wanting to do a mosaic style work, I was thumbing through Pinterest and found a joyful painting which I used for my inspiration. Each color was divided in mosaic creating a bold and colorful scene. The fish in the pond, the stretchy buildings, and the inviting garden of flowers invited me to choose this whimsical piece to paint.
Painting: Oil and/or Acrylic
THIRD PLACE • “Lion Cubs”
Julie Arnold, 79
The Wesleyan Independent Living • Georgetown

Growing up in San Antonio, Julie had always loved drawing and painting but after college she put the paints away for a while. Twenty years later while living in Florida with its beautiful water birds and wildlife, she decided to start painting again. Working from photos, her subjects are usually animals and birds – and she strives for realism. Always beginning with the subject’s eyes, she seeks to capture their beauty, strength, and intensity.

ABOUT THIS PIECE | I felt these lion cubs were playing and something caught their attention.
Elaine has had an interest in drawing and painting from childhood, and although not a formally trained artist, she has taken many workshops with nationally renowned artists. After college, raising a family, and following a career in teaching in Westchester County, New York, Elaine and her husband retired to South Carolina where they divided their time between there and their summer home in Vermont.

ABOUT THIS PIECE | My husband and I spent our retirement years on the coast of South Carolina where shrimping was a popular business and pastime. I did many paintings of shrimp boats and people shrimping. While looking through some of my photographs of the area, I thought, "why not a boat full of oysters instead of shrimp?" Using some of my photographs and pictures, I came up with the idea for "Roasting Oysters".
Velma’s interest in art and painting began when she lived in Germany. There, she learned of the Old Masters and subsequently the works of a revolutionary group of predominantly French artists known as "impressionists". On return to the States and some interim assignments, Velma and her husband retired to a small farming village on Tampa Bay. There, she became associated with excellent artists and teachers – eventually finding herself right at home with other creatives at Blue Skies of Texas.

ABOUT THIS PIECE | Having nothing else in mind I decided to do some negative painting. So, I thought about leaving the flower shapes white of the paper-painting around these shapes. The other shapes(vase and cup) are painted directly, all from imagination with no real set up.
After retiring from her teaching career, Ann traveled full-time in an RV. Some of the campgrounds offered art classes to travelers, so she took up a class in oils. Coming from a family full of artists, this fulfilled a lifelong dream of learning to paint - and it came naturally to her. This new passion led her to settle in the arts community in Rockport, Texas where she spent 10 years learning extensive watercolor techniques at various workshops. She moved to Mirador Retirement Community about nine years ago and has continued painting and leading art classes at her new home.

ABOUT THIS PIECE | While I was at the museum to enjoy the artwork and Sunday dinner, this cactus caught my eye. The blooms were so brilliant that I had to take a picture, and I painted it the next week.
Photography
FIRST PLACE • “Peace in the Amazon Rain Forest”
Sheldon Lloyd, 88
Westminster • Austin

Sheldon was born and raised in Iowa where he attended Iowa State University, from which he earned a degree in Mechanical Engineering. During his career he was granted seven patents, served as Vice President of Technology for a Fortune 500 company, started two small engineering corporations and obtained a private pilot’s license. He and his wife, Ruby, raised two sons. The couple has traveled widely, and he has enjoyed photographing scenes from around the world.

ABOUT THIS PIECE | The quiet peace during a lull in a rainstorm.
**Photography**
SECOND PLACE • “Home on the Range”

Jill Locy, 80
Westminster • Austin

Jill grew up in Michigan; graduating from Central Michigan University and later from St. Edward's University with a degree in Administration. She was certified to teach in five states throughout her early career, and, always had her camera with her. Upon moving to Austin in 1979, Jill taught at Hyde Park School. She then developed two Early Childhood Centers where she later became Director of Administration. Jill has a daughter who lives in Dallas and two grandchildren and has made a life of traveling extensively – always returning to Austin with enough pictures to fill many scrapbooks!

**ABOUT THIS PIECE** | Inspired by the brilliance of nature.
Linda remembers the time her father gave her her first camera, a Brownie Hawkeye, when she was about six years old – and she has been taking photographs ever since. She especially loves taking photos of natural flora and fauna.

ABOUT THIS PIECE | This photo was spontaneous gift from nature. I was on my patio enjoying my morning coffee, when a sudden movement caught my attention. At first, I thought there might be a snake in my flower bed. Closer inspection (but not too close) revealed this beautiful creature in among the petunias. He stayed just long enough for me to get my camera and capture his beauty, forever.
Barbara shares that she began doing cross-stitch quite by accident. She was well-versed in needlepoint, and loved it. ...Even a vacation to Europe in 2014 was centered around finding new needlepoint designs. It turns out the designs weren't as easy to find as she imagined, so when she finally found one, she was ecstatic – ...though it wasn't until she returned home that she realized the kit she bought was for cross-stitch. Pushing aside her doubts, she fell into this new challenging art form and loved it, too.

ABOUT THIS PIECE | My daughter bought this for me as a Christmas gift. It is bright and beautiful and she doesn't know, but it will be given back to her as her birthday gift from me.
Soft Crafts: Decorative
SECOND PLACE • “Needle Point”
Joy Pendleton, 78
Fowler Christian Apartments • Dallas

Joy loves to express her creativity via needlepoint.

ABOUT THIS PIECE | Family is Everything! The names are done in blue and red, blue is male red is female everyone below the flowers are: parents, grandparents, great great grandparents and so on. The flowers are siblings: Woody is the oldest, so starting with him, and going to your left is oldest to youngest. Joy is the youngest, so starting with her going to your right is youngest to oldest. Then the tree is our family: at this time the ones in green are living.
Needlework on plastic canvas has been Sandy’s craft of choice for over 50 years. You could say she “inherited” it from her mother and grandmother who were also crafters.

ABOUT THIS PIECE | This “Welcome Sign” came from a kit and took her several days to complete. She proudly hangs it on her apartment door for all to see at EdenHill Communities.
Born and raised in San Antonio, Sue graduated from the University of Texas at Austin, marrying her college roommate’s brother, Earl. Soon, son Tom and daughter Susan came along, later making them the proud grandparents of four and great-grandparents of six. Sue’s hobbies are trying new recipes, quilting – and visiting their daughter who lives within a couple miles of their new home at Querencia at Barton Creek.

ABOUT THIS PIECE | I have always loved coleus plants with their vibrant colored leaves. This coleus print fabric seemed the perfect candidate to "star" in this wall hanging using the convergence method of piecing. I made a raw-edge applique border. Piecing and free-motion quilting are done by machine.
Sue Gilliam, 84
Westminster Manor • Austin

Sue has been creating art of all kinds all her life. “Wine Circles” evolved just over a week or so as she embellished the base fabric with related colored fabrics, gems, buttons, and beads.
Soft Crafts: Sewing
THIRD PLACE • “Pretty N’ Pink”
Mark Wolbrink, 81
EdenHill Communities • New Braunfels

Mark was raised in Wisconsin where he graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee with a Master’s degree in geology. He made his way to Texas in 1970 in the city of Corpus Christi. Mark says he has always “liked making things.” First, making fishing rods because - well, he liked fishing and lived close to the water. After a friend gave him a basic sewing machine, he started making small projects from fabric. He learned the basic skills and found he enjoys making “scrappy” quilts from fabric given to him from other quilters.

ABOUT THIS PIECE | “Pretty N’ Pink” took him about three months to complete – and his favorite part is the ‘good feeling he gets from the bright colors in the quilt.
Born in 1949 in Alabama, Liz discovered a love for crafting and needle work at an early age. In her early teens she would often crochet with her mom on small projects, and she continued to challenge herself on more difficult projects as the years went by. Migrating to Texas in 1985, Liz studied to become a medical assistant, while being a dedicated mother of 3. Today, Liz is a cherished "Maw Maw" to her 3 grandchildren for whom she has made many crocheted items.

ABOUT THIS PIECE | Daughter-in-laws Homemade Halloween COVID face mask contest.
Soft Crafts: Textile
SECOND PLACE • “The Dancer”
Karen McDonald, 74
Blue Skies of Texas – West • San Antonio

Karen enjoyed coloring as a child and continued her education in art through her school years. She says being in a retirement community gives her the time and opportunity for all types of activities. Her favorite activity is expressing herself creatively.

ABOUT THIS PIECE | Karen was inspired to capture the powerful dancer with the brightly colored skirt in this needle felting project. The “canvas” is wet felted wool roving with some embellishments felted in.
A lifelong interest in art and design led Norma to be a painter, printmaker, knitter, and a teacher. At just 5 years of age, a great aunt taught her basic knitting and her patience has carried over into many enjoyable projects.

ABOUT THIS PIECE | Personal interpretation of art that is wearable.
As a former newspaper reporter, feature and newsletter writer in Pittsburgh and later as a Chautauquan Daily writer, prose is Lori’s form of choice. She was introduced to the possibility of writing poetry after The Westminster Poetry Group members shared their poems and the poems of Emily Dickinson, Mary Oliver, Billy Collins, and Ted Kooser among others. Haiku was her first attempt at writing poetry. Its syllable and sentence rules demanded selecting the exact word; valuable for prose, but essential for poetry.

ABOUT THIS PIECE | “My Crepe Myrtle” uncovered her acceptance of how her life had changed when her husband died. A Crepe Myrtle may be an unexpected way to understand change and loss. But the poem did what prose couldn’t.
Allen Manson, 83
MRC The Crossings • League City

Written Arts: Poetry
SECOND PLACE • “COVID-19”

Allen grew up in Ohio and attended Otterbein College, majoring in math and physics. He spent eight years as a Navy test pilot prior to joining NASA as a research pilot. He says he didn’t appreciate his English class and it wasn’t until he retired and started reading the poetry of Robert Service, “The Cremation of Sam Magee,” that he started writing. COVID-19 was such a big disruption that Allen felt the need to write about it. He and his wife, Priscilla, have lived at MRC The Crossings in League City for six years and his busy daily activity leaves just a small amount of time for writing. Still, he says he can’t wait to enter next year’s ArtsInspire contest.

ABOUT THIS PIECE | Both of our daughters and all of our grandchildren were infected by Covid 19. Neither my wife nor I tested positive but my wife had all the symptoms. She still has limited sense of smell and taste plus some other more serious symptoms.
Sue was born and raised in Seoul, Korea, receiving a degree in English from Seoul National University in 1955, and upon moving to the United States in 1963, earning her Master of Science degree in Mathematics. She taught High School math for many years, until she and her husband moved to Florida where he served as a research scientist for the US Air Force. During this time, Sue worked as a computer programmer at the same branch for 7 years. In 2007, they moved to Austin and into Querencia at Barton Creek.

ABOUT THIS PIECE  |  During the twilight years of my life, reminiscing about "the good old days" became one of my favorite habits. Yet another voice within me chides, "time is too precious, as you said, to be wasted on your sentimentality".
When I see pictures of the war in Ukraine, especially the faces of the children, I remember World War II and the three long years separated from my father. Although my experience was not nearly so tragic as theirs, it left an indelible impression on me and I was moved to write this piece.
Ana Ortiz de Montellano, 87 | Querencia at Barton Creek • Austin
SECOND PLACE • “My Ground Level Garden at the Third Floor”

Ana was born and raised in Puerto Rico and received a degree in Chemistry at Douglass College in New Jersey. She met her husband, Bernard, while living in San Francisco, when both were working for Shell Development Company. After changing careers to computer sciences, Ana worked for Univac, Compuware, and Fort Motor Company—the latter in frigid Michigan, where their two sons were raised. She has traveled as much of the world as her family and career would allow. Ana and Bernard took early retirement to warm Austin, Texas in 1998, where she rediscovered books, rewarding volunteer work, and new friendships.

ABOUT THIS PIECE | Her discovery of gardening has brought her closer to nature than ever—and is the inspiration for her Prose being celebrated today.
Dori
By Sandy Ludwig

One minute Dori was sitting inside her mother's car where the two of them were having a gigantic argument, the next minute she was being pushed out of the car and left standing at the curb, staring after her mother's car veered around the corner and disappeared, at her to get out.

What had just happened? Her mouth hanging open in disbelief, Dori cautiously looked around. Tall, imposing buildings loomed over her menacingly. Morning was descending. She felt more scared by the minute. She was only ten years old and mothers weren't supposed to abandon their kids like this! Tears quickly threatened.

A car had come down the same street, slowed and pulled not far from where Dori stood, but the guy didn't get out right away. She saw him watching her and wondered if she should run as fast as her legs could carry her. He might be a bad guy who wanted to hurt her.

When he did get out, she saw he was a light colored black man around twenty-one—so with a deep crease of concern etched in his forehead. Putting his hands up as if surrendering, he walked slowly toward her. But Dori still feared. She'd run if only her feet weren't frozen to the ground. She proved he was a good guy who was coming to help. He stopped several feet from her and smiled.

"Hi," he said in a quiet, comforting voice. "My name is Mike. I saw you get pushed out of the car and wondered if you were okay."

Dori stared at him in silence, not sure whether to trust him.

Realizing he towered over her, Mike knelt down to appear less threatening.

"Listen," he said, "I just want to make sure you're okay. Do you need a ride home, or a place to stay?"

After a long pause, Dori burst out, "How do I know I can trust you?"

He nodded understandingly. "Look," he answered, "I'm a college student working toward a degree in social work so I can help kids like you. I lived in a youth hostels for several years. I'm not going to hurt you. Honest."

"A youth hostel? What's that?"

Written Arts: Prose
THIRD PLACE • "Dori"
Sandy loves to write and has published two books. She worked for Child Protective Services in Texas for many years and has always been concerned about the plight of abused children.

ABOUT THIS PIECE | Writing “Dori” was her intent to show a positive response to one particular situation.