

Artist at work: Frank Lohan produces art work in his home. He was honored as Farmington Artist in Residence in 1989. The author/illustrator/painter now lives in Florida.



Illustrator shares his love of sketching by authoring how to books

BY MARY RODRIQUE
STAFF WRITER

Frank Lohan could not attend the recent 20th anniversary celebration of the Farmington Artist in Residence program, but the 1989 award winner sent a copy of his latest book "The Drawing Handbook."

"I was absolutely thrilled to win artist in residence," said Lohan, who retired seven years ago to Boynton Beach, Fla. with his wife, Norma. He was interviewed by phone.

"I didn't think I was in the same class with the other winners."

Lohan was honored for his work as an illustrator, and continues his prolific body of work in his new home community, south of West Palm Beach.

He describes his technique as self-developed.

"I've been drawing since I was in my teens," he said. "That's close to 45 years."

Lohan worked as an engineer at Williams International in Walled Lake.

"We produced all the cruise missile engines," he said.

Art has always been his avocation. He traveled extensively for his job, throughout the United States, Europe and Japan - and always carried a sketchbook.

"I'd draw from my notes, sketches and photos," he said.

Lohan produces both pen and ink drawings and paintings in acrylics, but "to sell my work is not my aim. The work I do is primarily for my own pleasure."

He has made a lucrative hobby of selling his how to draw books, known in the industry as trade paperbacks. He began publishing them in 1978. His nine books to date can be found in all major bookstore chains.

"All totaled, I've sold close to 100,000 copies," he said.

During his 29 years in Farmington, Lohan taught many drawing classes at the Farmington Community Center. He also served for many years as president of the Farmington Artists Club.

The Lohans two grown children live in Texas and New York, thus they have been back to Farmington only once in the past seven years.

"We are very active in our community," he said.

The Lohans volunteer twice a month operating a visitors center in the National Wildlife Refuge that is part of Florida's federally protected Everglades.

"It's a 230 square mile refuge."

I'm always drawing snakes and amphibians, and nesting birds."

Much of his nature work has appeared on brochures for the refuge, which is also home to owls, herons and woodpeckers.

Lohan recently took first place in the Loxahatchee Natural History Association competition for an acrylic painting of a cypress swamp.

He has been on the board of directors of the Boynton Beach Art League for six years and has taught art classes through the local parks and recreation department.

"Our art league is supported by the city. The first weekend of every month, October through April, a local park is given over to local artists to paint or sell their work. I do most of my painting there."

The Lohans are also chairmen of their clubhouse. And Frank is an announcer for his father-in-law's 13 piece dance band on weekends. His father-in-law Arthur Chargois is a trumpet player.

"He and my mother-in-law, Helen, are the reason we're down here."

"We're definitely busy people," he added. "We don't golf or bow. But our activities keep us going constantly."

Handbell ensemble rings in at church

Classical Bells, a premier handbell ensemble, will perform at First Presbyterian Church of Farmington, 26165 Farmington Road, on Sunday, May 19, at 7 p.m.

Tickets are \$5 at the door. There is no charge for school age children. Refreshments will be served.

Classical Bells rings six octaves of English hand-

bells plus four octaves of choirmen's, the only handbell set this large in the Midwest. The repertoire includes well known classics, both sacred and secular; jazz and blues arrangements; popular movie themes and show tunes; patriotic melodies; spirituals and novelty handbell pieces.

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Hills Church of God celebrates 25 years

The Farmington Hills Church of God, 25717 Power Road, will celebrate its 25th anniversary as a congregation on May 18-19.

The congregation was established when the North Western Church of God, pastored by Rev. Wilbur Kirby, and the Greek Church of God, pastored by Rev. John Pappas merged. Both congregations were located in

Detroit but their members had relocated to the suburbs. They purchased eight acres and constructed a modern church building on a hill at Power Road near 11 Mile.

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