

Plymouth's Old Village now a mecca for arts

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Walking the streets of Plymouth's Old Village you might not realize that Liberty, Starkweather and York Streets inspire music, painting, ceramics, glass art, and sculpture, but in the last five years, more and more artists, craftsmen and musicians have moved into the area. Now, it's not as popular as Greenwich Village, Soho, Hamtramck or even Pontiac yet, but it's growing gradually almost under the cover of night.

Are you looking for a one-of-a-kind gift? How about voice or glass blowing lessons? The Village Potters Guild, York Street Glassworks, Village Music, Frozen Images, the Village Artists Studio, and the Charlotte Moore-Viculin Studio of Music and Art welcomes visitors with open arms. So why are arts-related businesses choosing to ply their wares in Old Village? The lower rents appeal to struggling artists and music teachers but the answer isn't as simple as that.

Village Music
When Norma Atwood combed local communities for a place to teach her Kindermusic classes last March, the environment of the strip malls seemed stark and cold. For seven years, Atwood had taught at Arnold Williams Music in Canton Township. When the business owners decided to close in March, Atwood with help from Canton Township officials, including Jeff Myers, opened the Southeast Michigan Arts Conservatory.

From September to early

Stroll among the artists

- Village Music - 130 East Liberty St. on the corner of Mill Street, (734) 981-5969. Call to register.
- York Street Glassworks - 875 York St., west of Liberty, (734) 459-6419, hot glass studio and gallery, lampworking lessons with Don Schneider. Hours are noon to 5 p.m. Sunday to Thursday.
- Village Potters Guild - 340 North Main, south of Mill St. (Lilley), behind the Plymouth Landing Restaurant, (734) 207-8807. Call for hours.
- Village Artists Studio - 775 Davis, Suite 12, (734) 455-7221, lessons for adults in transparent watercolor with Kay Rowe.
- Frozen Images, 775 Davis, Suite 4 - (734) 451-7670, ice sculptures by Canton carver Ted Wakar.
- Charles Simone - 775 Davis, Suite 5, painting studio.
- Piano Crafters - 775 Davis, Suites 2 and 3, (734) 453-4953, craftsman Patrick DeBeliso restores and rebuilds pianos.
- Charlotte Moore-Viculin Studio of Music and Art - 887 N. Mill, (734) 459-1112, lessons in piano, voice and music theory, music arranging, bookings for weddings and parties, oil portraits of people and pets, and basic drawing classes.

November, Atwood offered her special brand of music lessons to children. Later this month, Atwood decided to strike out on her own. She will open Village Music, with her husband David, on Monday, Nov. 30. They plan to offer voice, piano and music lessons. Located in a converted old greenhouse, Village Music will offer professional instruction for ages seven to adult by Atwood and Len Potoczak.

"I've always admired Plymouth's warmth," said Atwood. "It's a charming town. I'm from New England and that quaintness attracted me. Then when I

got to Mill Street and it looked like Cape Cod, it was inviting. I'm very excited about moving. We have a new beginning."

Atwood's newest program, Kindermusic Village, is tailored for newborns to 1-1/2 years. "My goal is to provide children, beginning with newborns, with a music education," said Atwood. "We use soothing music for the newborns and activities such as bouncing and rocking, and even work with forms of massage."

Hot glass

Don Schneider first moved his hot glass studio to Old Village 20 years ago. York Street Glassworks features a gallery of blown and lampworked beads, vessels, jewelry, paperweights, gazing globes, door knobs, and ornaments. An internationally exhibiting glass artist, Schneider's work is in a show featuring 24 bead makers at the Glas Museum in Ebeltoft, Denmark. Locally, Schneider is exhibiting his work in the Detroit Artists Market Holiday Show continuing through Thursday, Dec. 24, and at the Arts Center in Mt. Clemens through Saturday, Dec. 19. In February, he'll give lessons at his York Street studio in cooperation with the Plymouth Canton Adult Education program.

Clay extravaganza

The Village Potters Guild moved into Old Village shortly after its founding in 1995. Twenty members of the Guild sell their platters, tiles, bowls, ornaments, jewelry as well as hand-built and raku decorative and functional wares Thursday-Saturday, Dec. 3-5 in the space behind the Plymouth Landing Restaurant. Hours are 6-9 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 3, and 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Friday-Saturday, Dec. 4-5.

"Old Village is a nice area," said charter member Kathy Sandberg. "It's a hometown atmosphere, which a lot of local

artists don't have, that draws us toward it and hopefully draws customers toward it."

Music and art hand in hand

Charlotte Moore-Viculin moved her studio of music and art to Old Village in 1990. She gives lessons in piano, voice and music theory, performs at weddings and parties, professionally arranges music, paints oil portraits of people and pets, and teaches basic drawing.

Artists' haven

Kay Rowe likes the historic aspect of Old Village. The rent is

reasonable for her Village Artists Studio because her husband owns the building where she teaches adults the art of creating transparent watercolors. Studio artists exhibit twice a year in group show at the Farmington Public Library. They also have the opportunity to paint the four llamas on site at the Rowes' home in Canton.

Painter Charles Simone, world champion ice carver Ted Wakar, and piano craftsman Patrick DeBeliso are among the other tenants sharing space with Rowe at 775 Davis.

"Old Village is a great spot," said Rowe. "I like the atmosphere, but of course, I love old things."

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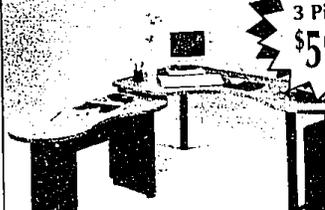
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