

## Trailblazing Art

The ringing in of a new year often brings thoughts of new beginnings: resolutions both large and small, new adventures, or simply perfecting one's life balance. Change is not always easy, but it can certainly be inspiring. One beautiful morning my family decided to go biking along the Seminole Wekiva Trail. What started out as "short" ride (don't ever believe my husband when it comes to such things) turned out to be about 20 miles. Just when I was thinking my legs might turn into Jell-O, we spotted what we initially thought was the most wonderful mural along the fence line. It turned out to be much more.

Part of the fence lining the trail was covered in paintings of celebrities such as Al Capone, Frank Sinatra and even Batman. Sinatra's portrait included a quote: "I feel sorry for people who don't drink. When they wake up in the morning, that's as good as they're going to feel all day." What was this? We got off our bikes (thank you!) and enjoyed the al fresco art gallery. After returning home, I made a few calls and soon discovered the talent behind the faces.

Cabinetmaker Jeff Sonksen began painting during the recession, when custom cabinetry was not in great demand. He paints the fence pieces in his home and then displays them along his parents' back yard. However, now the art covers a few neighbors' fences as well, with the number of celebrity portraits on display nearing 90.

When life took an unexpected turn, Sonksen shared his talents with the community. We are so lucky he did. If you want to make a request or learn more about the project, visit his Facebook page, "Paint the Trail." If your New Year's pledge includes exercising more, put on your sneakers or hop on a bike and head to the colorful stretch of trail, which is located three miles south of Lake Mary Boulevard between Dixon and E.E. Williamson roads. It's worth the effort.

We have included many inspiring artists in this issue, from local favorite Grady Kimsey to world-famous Henri Matisse, whose rarely seen prints offer a new perspective on his work. Their art makes us think and feel. As we enter the year 2014, ask yourself who you can inspire. What talents can you share with the community? It can be as simple as a painting on a backyard fence.

Cindy Bowman LaFronz  
Editor  
*Orlando Arts Magazine*



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