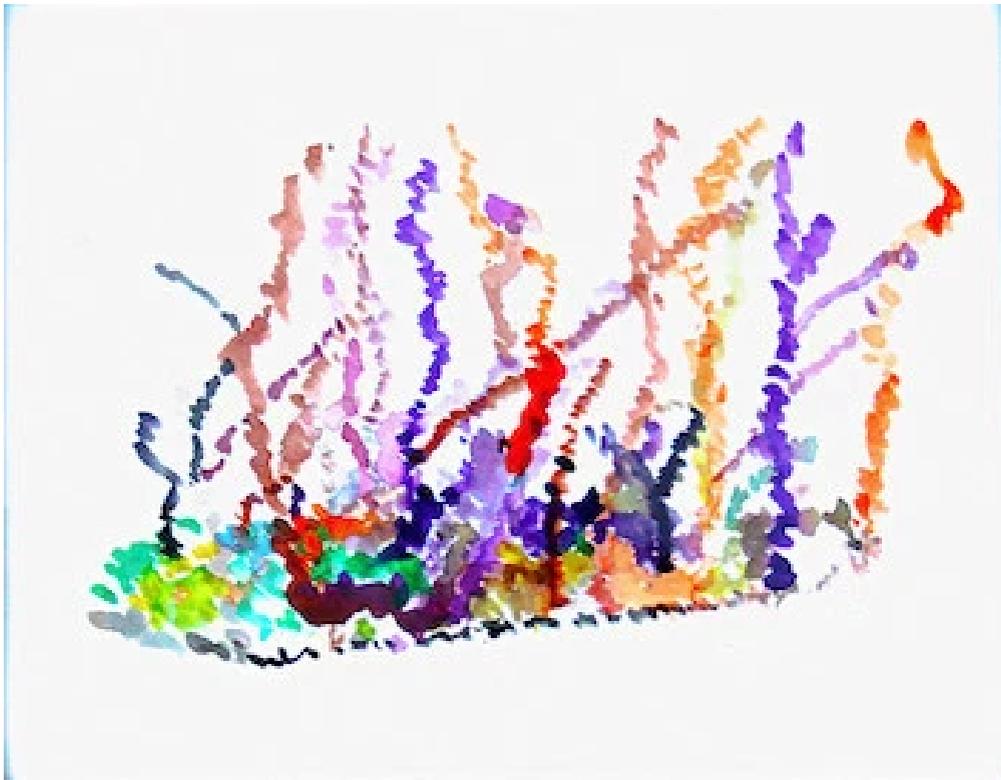


LOCAL NEWS • News

# Memories in the Making



“Untitled,” a watercolor by Laguna Woods resident Mike Farkas, is part of an online exhibit and silent auction presented by Alzheimer’s Orange County. (Courtesy of Alzheimer’s Orange County)

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Register

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The artwork of Laguna Woods resident Mike Farkas is featured in an online, virtual art exhibit and silent auction presented by Alzheimer's Orange County (AlzOC). The nonprofit's 2021 Memories in the Making Collection was created by program participants like Farkas, who has two watercolors in the show.

The online auction opened Thursday, April 1.



A watercolor by Laguna Woods resident Mike Farkas, titled "Looking Through a Kaleidoscope." It is part of an online exhibit and silent auction presented by Alzheimer's Orange County. (Courtesy of Alzheimer's Orange County)

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Greeting cards featuring art from the collection are on sale. Purchases will benefit AlzOC's support services and the signature art program. To view the artwork and learn more about the artists, visit [www.alzoc.org/mim-2021](http://www.alzoc.org/mim-2021).

Farkas is participating in Connect2Culture (C2C), a specialized social engagement program that offers a fun and comfortable way for people in early to moderate stages of the disease and their care partners to get out, get active and get connected with like individuals in their community through meaningful social activities. Due to COVID-19, the program has transitioned to online cultural and art activities via Zoom until it can safely return to in-person participation.



Farkas was born in New York City. He is a dedicated Marine Corps veteran and worked at United Airlines for 40 years. Working for an airline allowed him to travel the world, visiting 47 countries over the years. In addition to traveling, he kept busy with hobbies: beekeeping, stained glass, golf, bridge, volunteering at the Getty Museum, 5K walks, gardening and photography. He is a caring, helpful, joyful and generous man who loves to sing, dance, cook, laugh and paint.

One of his works is called “Looking Through a Kaleidoscope” and the other is simply “Untitled.” Subject matter for the exhibit’s 28 pieces done by Orange County artists ranges from nature, seascapes and desertscapes to still lifes, pets, wildlife and more.

The art program was created to provide a meaningful activity for people with dementia, while focusing on creative expression as a form of communication. When the disease affects language, art becomes a more suitable form of expression. With the stroke of a paintbrush, participants are able to express themselves, often painting memories from long ago or images that represent their hobbies and passions.

Before the challenges of COVID-19, classes were offered at adult day centers, such as South County Adult Day Services In Laguna Woods, and memory care communities. Fortunately, participation can also be a one-on-one activity through an in-home care agency or with loved ones in the comfort and safety of home.

“People with Alzheimer’s are often able to reach outside of their dementia to paint a picture that reconnects them with a past memory, demonstrating that the essence of these individuals is still there,” said AlzOC CEO and President Jim McAleer.

— Submitted by Dan Pittman

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