

Where art meets the ordinary

By SHARON DETTMER
Tribune Correspondent

THREE OAKS -- Pablo Picasso once said, "Art washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life."

And those sharing an appreciation for art recently visited a village known for its laid-back, everyday lifestyle with a focus on the arts. First-time visitors discovered that Three Oaks is a place where art meets the ordinary.

"This really is a slice of Americana," Jim Roemer said, as he enjoyed a big ice cream cone outside of Graziano's Pizza. Roemer, and his wife, Mary Ann, parents of former U.S. Rep. Tim Roemer, were savoring both ice cream and art.

Folks ventured down quaint, newly paved streets and sidewalks to view wood-fired ceramics, textiles, paintings, pottery and other contemporary and emotive works of art at galleries.

At studio b. on North Elm Street, gallery owner Bridget Verdun, of Chicago, was placing the finishing touches on a new art installation. The chic, people-friendly gallery features hand-selected works of a wide-range of artists, some from as far away as Paris.

Jackie Allen, of South Bend, browsed through the gallery filled with an interesting collection of treasures and art, including "Dha-Shi-Zhi," a soda-fired ceramic sculpture by Nancy Pirri, of Chicago.

"This is nice," Allen said, of the fine art collection.

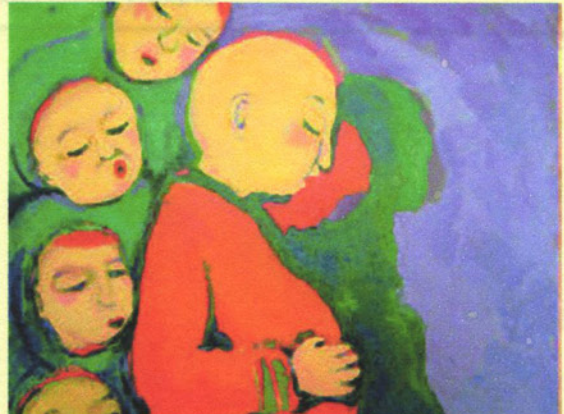
Union Pier resident, Susan Pertl, adores the excitement generated by all of the galleries during the monthly summer gallery walks. "Three Oaks has become an art destination," she said, smiling.

At Blue Gallery on Elm Street, Pertl, who is owner of Ogilvie/Pertl Gallery in Chicago, enjoyed the serene atmosphere. "I just appreciate the arts, everywhere I go," she said.

The next Third Saturday Gallery and Studio Walk will be from 5 to 10 p.m. June 17.

In addition to open galleries, restaurants and antique stores are open.

For further information, visit the village's Web site at www.threeoaks.org.



"Her Brood" was painted by Three Oaks artist and gallery owner Kim Marie Pruitt. Her artwork was on display during the Gallery and Studio Walk at Gallery 107 at Acorn Theater. She is owner of Dawning Art the Gift in Three Oaks.



Susan Pertl enjoys a peaceful interlude at Blue Gallery in Three Oaks. She is pictured at the table with some small-scale ceramics made by Walkerton Artist Tom Meuninck.

Tribune Photos/SHARON DETTMER