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NNB News : 2013 : 11 : 15 : A New Type of Fun

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A NEW TYPE OF FUN

BY ALEXA NEWSOME

NNB Student Reporter

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. — Painting with a Twist offers a different approach from the traditional painting class. It provides enjoyable, recreational activities for Midtown residents who want to learn how to paint or just want to have fun.

Leslie and Marvin Gay started the company at 2527 Central Ave. in 2009, after moving from New Orleans, La. to St. Petersburg. Fla. Leslie Gay was an accountant and Marvin Gay was a CPA.

“They had something like this in New Orleans called Corks N Canvas,” Leslie Gay said. “I just really enjoyed it and always had fun. Nothing like this was offered down here.”

Leslie and Marvin Gay originally planned to retire after moving. However, Leslie Gay kept in constant contact with the founders of Corks N Canvas, Cathy Deano and Renee Maloney, after moving to St. Petersburg. The couple, with the founders of Corks N Canvas, decided to franchise the business as Painting with a Twist, the first of its kind in Florida.

Painting with a Twist offers two and three hour painting classes where an artist provides step-by-step instructions. The two hour classes are $35.00 and the three hour classes are $45.00. The paint, brushes, and canvas are all provided. Private parties are offered for groups with 10 or more. Guests can pick a class they want to attend and register online. There are a variety of classes offered based on subjects, like animals, landscapes, or abstracts. The schedule of themes is posted one month in advance, along with the times of the classes.

What is the twist? Customers are encouraged to bring their favorite bottle of wine or beverage. Leslie and Marvin Gay want their guests to enjoy themselves and have a fun experience.

People of all ages attend painting classes for different reasons like birthday parties, date nights, and family events. Customers must be at least 21 years old to drink.

Lindsey Albright, 21, and Jenn Wisse, 22, like having their girl’s night out here.

“I just think it’s more fun and classy than going out to a bar or club for some drinks,” Albright said.

The girls enjoy being able to drink and meet new people, while learning how to paint. Both think it’s a nice change of scenery.

“I like that it’s an art project that I’m able to finish during each class,” Wisse said. “I tend to start things, like crocheting, and I never finish because I forget about it or don’t have time.”

Their Midtown vintage market draws thousands of customers

To these upbeat volunteers, every animal is a priority

Her job: make white people aware of blacks’ struggles

His work graces public places and private homes around the country

At the age of 6, she knew what she wanted to be

They shared a childhood of tense times, warm memories

He rocks ‘n’ rolls in a music buff’s dream job

Photожournalist finds her bliss behind the camera

Unsavy people and heinous crimes? That’s his beat

By being honest about who he is, he makes a difference

13 Years later, she’s back as a teacher and role model

A Sunday tradition: faith and fancy hats

For Times photojournalist, life’s a day at the beach

Pop open a cold one at Midtown’s 3 Daughters Brewing

Polish distillery brings distinctive spirits to Midtown

On patrol, the routine can suddenly turn serious

At alternative weekly, food and drink are her beats

Passionate piano, colorful footwear help him coach journalists

Mining disaster helped steel him for a new career in public relations

As college building goes up, he’s a maestro in Midtown

School strives to break the cycle of generational poverty

He finds the facts, the people and the payments that elude others

He lives his son’s dream, every step of the way

Lorene’s is still thriving after two decades in The Deuces

Inside a struggling middle school, the student newspaper is thriving

Leslie and Marvin Gay always give back to the community through their business. Once a month, they host an event called Painting with a Purpose, where they team up with local charities and non-profits. This event is structured like a regular painting class, but half of the proceeds from that class go directly to the charity. Through these events, thousands of dollars have been donated to many local non-profit organizations.

Painting with a Twist also has multiple fundraisers throughout each month.

The September Painting with a Purpose was hosted on Sunday, Sept. 15. They donated to Faith Hope and Determination, which is a non-profit that promotes awareness for people with blood cancers in the minority community. With an occupancy limit of 50 people, 43 people attended this event. They also had a fundraiser for the Suncoast Basset Rescue on Sept. 7, which was sold out with 50 people attending the event.

The October Painting with a Purpose will be held on Oct. 12, and they will be donating to the Leukemia-Lymphoma Society. There will be three other fundraisers in October. Two are for the American Heart Association, which will be held on Oct. 25 and Oct. 27. The third fundraiser is for the Florida Poodle Rescue, which will be held on Oct. 5.

Leslie and Marvin Gay always try to promote awareness for events through Facebook and by emailing to customers. They will continue to give back to the Midtown community and provide fun painting classes to its residents.

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