

Inspiring Moments Can Lead to Meaningful Relationships-Introducing

Artist/Professor Nick Bottis

There are many precious moments and treasured relationship opportunities within our 757 community. I'd like to introduce you to a wonderful 'cigar' buddy who is also an artist and adjunct art instructor at a local University. And our hope is that Nick will continue to share his creations and thoughts as a regular contributor on our page.

Before you 'flip' to another post let me offer this as collateral for your continued interest in this introduction. So, the guy who discovered Nick's first paintings when Nick was 16 years old had only 3 degrees of separation from the great Impressionist, Claude Monet. The chain of connection was this; Nick studied with Henry Hensche, Hensche was a student of Charles Hawthorne, Hawthorne studied under William Merritt Chase, and Chase studied with the pioneer of Impressionism, Claude Monet.

Nick was born in Worcester, Mass. His Father was a resort chef, so the family traveled extensively. He was an only child and they spent summers together in Maine. His primary interests included art, drawing, painting, reading and a bit of 'tap dancing'. One of my treats when socializing at our local cigar hangout (Emerson's Pembroke) is listening to him navigates conversations like a skilled dancer.

Nick is a 22-year Navy retiree, husband, and father. He has 3 children and 2 grandkids. He served in the Navy as a submarine auxiliary man, performing tasks related to submarine maintenance and repair of H.P. air systems, atmospheric control, and hydraulics. He retired as a Chief Machinist Mate, E-7. He was transferred to Hampton Roads about 30 years ago where he retired and has since remained. He is a graduate of Virginia Wesleyan University and earned an M.F.A from Vermont College/Norwich University. He began his post military career quest with the goal of becoming a college professor. He taught adult studies at his alma mater and later he became an adjunct professor at Saint Leo University and Regent University.

In 2005, at Regent University, he developed an art appreciation class for both on-line and in-person learning for their new undergrad program. Today you can still find him fully engaged in teaching art to students of all ages and backgrounds.

Nick got his big break in the art world based on many factors. First and foremost, is his love for 'all things' art. He is a man of strong Christian faith and background. He believes that each person has within them the abilities to fulfill God's purpose for them His ultimate plan, using the gifts with which God has blessed them. Nick 's childhood actions reflect these strong beliefs.

Provincetown, Massachusetts is at the northeastern tip of Cape Cod. It is also the first site of the Mayflower's landing in 1620, (after gathering fresh water and food, they continued

on to the more familiar Plymouth). Since the 1900's it has also been a summer art colony, and artists and critics still gather there each summer.

It was also home to a Fine Arts work center where emerging artists could work in studios with zero rent. Nick took his work to one of the instructors who taught him various studio tasks such as stretching and preparing canvas. In return for his service as a "studio assistant", the studio members would give him pointers and informal assistance to improve his art. Eventually he was able to have his work posted among some of the more established artists of that period. One day a well-known Impressionist named Henry Hensche came to the center to review the work of various artists and Nick's work stood out. At 16 he was offered an art scholarship. He did go through an animated interview; however, his work was his ticket upward!

Nick loves plein air (outdoor) landscape painting. He uses a technique that delivers the final 'art' through progressions. He has a favorite spot to draw and paint at Little Creek Amphibious base with a pier leading out to the marsh where it is quiet and tranquil. Today we share that process through his pictures. While no gallery currently represents Nick's art, his work is owned and appreciated by private collectors.

Nick is a very eclectic individual. He is engaged and involved in the 757 communities. He is an active member of the VFW Post 392. He is a former member of the Chesapeake Art Association. He has been involved in Tai Chi for the past year with various adult fitness groups. These include both the Bayside and Williams Farm Recreation Centers. And he is a welcomed regular face among the Emerson (Pembroke) Cigar Social Club.

When we enjoyed our coffee while prepping for this story, I asked Nick this final question. "What legacy are you working to leave"?

Nick Bottis:

"I get a chance to see my legacy. I see it through my students. Love

God, love the work you do, and do it to the best of your ability, because we are part of God's plan. Realize that you have a place in God's story".

Art: Nick Bottis

Pictures: Nick and Judith Bottis

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