

PERSON 2 PERSON



PROVIDED

Blue Ash resident Ricky Werden of Troop 258 built a shelter at Blue Ash Elementary School to protect students from rain and sun and to earn his rank as a Boy Scouts of America Eagle Scout. From left: State Rep. Connie Pillich (D-Montgomery) of Ohio's 28th House District, his parents, Clayton Werden and Nancy Werden, Ricky Werden and Blue Ash City Councilman Robert "Jack" Buckman Jr.

Eagle Scout builds playground shelter behind Blue Ash school

Blue Ash Elementary School students now have a shelter to escape the sun and rain, thanks to Sycamore High School senior Ricky Werden of Blue Ash.

The eight-foot by eight-foot structure is behind the school on Plainfield Road in the playground area and helped earn Werden his Eagle Scout ranking.

The young man attended the old Blue Ash Elementary School on Kenwood Road years ago, where he liked to play in the shade. There also was a fountain there dedicated to his brother Clayton Werden IV, who died in 1997.

Ricky Werden noticed the lack of shade at the new Blue Ash Elementary School on Plainfield Road, which opened in 2002, when he went there to visit his sister and brother. Clayton Werden IV's fountain was moved inside the new

school, which initially had just an umbrella showing signs of age in the playground area. That gave Ricky Werden an idea he would nurse for several years.

"I planned to build a shelter because the old Blue Ash Elementary School had an overhang while the new one only had an umbrella which was falling apart," said Werden, who has been a member of Boy Scout Troop 258 for more than six years.

"I wanted to give back to my school in the best way possible."

Werden, the son of Clayton and Nancy Werden, plans to study computer science or photography at an Ohio college yet to be chosen.

He's also a member of the Boy Scouts' Order of the Arrow and Firecrafters and has earned 52 merit badges.

Reported by Jeanne Houck



EVELYN PERKINS/CONTRIBUTOR

Nancy Illman, who drinks from a mug that reads "If the tiara fits, wear it," stands with some of the art she and her classes created. She's wearing jeans of her own design. Notice Oliver the cat, who walked away, bored with the interview.

Wyoming woman embraces all life offers

Ever since I visited Nancy Illman, I wondered how the heck I was going to describe her.

Wonder Woman just doesn't have enough dimensions. There is no way to put Nancy in a nutshell; God isn't done with her yet. Even when she publishes her memoir, "Princess in Recovery", Nancy is too accomplished in too many things to say finis. Next year will find her focused on her book. Her goal is to finish it, heal herself and heal the world.

Suddenly I remembered seeing a Hindu goddess with many arms. Sarasvati/Saraswasti represents many things: learning, all creative arts, teaching, intelligence, consciousness, cosmic knowledge, enlightenment and power. Her name refers to one who flows, and is applied to thoughts, words or the flow of a river. Nancy is the water sign, Scorpio, so it seemed appropriate. While Nancy on has only two arms, you will see that it's as if she has more.

Nancy was born on an air force base in Arkansas.



Evelyn Perkins

Community Press columnist

Isaac 7. The family moved to Wyoming five years ago.

Nancy's children and family are the center of her life. She graduated from Harvard, majoring in English, did her thesis research on Victorian literature at Oxford and graduated from law school at Fordham University. Her next educational endeavor will be to enroll in a mastery class to help her prepare her manuscript for publication.

Fancy Nancy Pants is her enterprise where she custom designs jeans. Another business card touts her formidable musical ability. Call The Jewish Fiddler and you can hire her services as a violinist. Her third

business card reads that Nancy has been the artist and owner of Magic Wand Decorative Painting since 1991. You can contact this wonderful talent at 513-259-4842.

But wait, there's more! Nancy painted her son's room with sea turtles. Another son has a forest painted from walls to ceiling by his mom. This artwork wasn't done with decals or wallpaper. Just think Michelangelo and you'll get the picture, (pun intended). I love the concept of her "happy face mirror." As you pass it, you are to look at your reflection and put on a happy face for family and world.

On Mondays, Nancy taught seven little boys basic architectural skills. Using rolled up newspapers and masking tape to make triangles, they erected a large igloo. The girls' program was an offshoot of the work on her memoir, which has nothing to do with drugs, but rather is about recovering the princess in all females.

Nancy is very concerned about the huge epidemic of

eating disorders, so the program is designed to prevent it by helping girls find their center and stay strong. The girls used art to drive their confidence. Eight third-grade little girls collaborated, each offering something unique from their own core, enabling them to recognize their own power on a wonderful mosaic.

Nancy participates in Hope Springs, whose mission is, "To provide sacred space for feminist education, responsible green living and transformational work in the service of healthy relationships with the planet earth, global peace, social justice and equality and personal development."

Their retreats emphasize tapping into powerful female energy.

You know, on second thought, I believe Nancy can give Sarasvati a run for her money.

Evelyn Perkins writes a regular column about people and events in the Tri-County Press area. Send items for her column to 10127 Chester Road, Woodlawn, 45215, or call her directly at 772-7379.

THINGS TO DO

Holiday lights

Hamilton County Park District is hosting Holiday in Lights from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 24, at Sharon Woods, 11450 Lebanon Road, Sharonville. It is a one-mile drive-through outdoor lights and themed figures display. The cost is \$12 per car, \$45 for buses and 15-passenger vans, \$2 coupon available online. Call 769-0393 or visit www.holidayinlights.com.



a.m. to 4 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 24, at Gazebo Tea Garden, 10461 Kenwood Road, Blue Ash. It includes each child decorating and taking home a gingerbread house. The cost is \$19.50, \$10.50 per child. Reservations are required. Call 985-0027.

Teen night

Blue Ash YMCA is hosting "Teen Night" from 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 26, at Blue Ash YMCA, 5000 YMCA Drive, Blue Ash. Hang out with friends and meet new ones, participate in basketball, soccer, swimming, cornhole, rock climbing, movies, YMCA Dance Club, Guitar Hero and Sing Star. Pizza and drinks are available for purchase. Bring school ID. The cost is \$6, \$4 member. Registration is required. Call 791-5000.

Memorial tree

Gate of Heaven Cemetery is hosting the memorial Christmas tree display from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 26, at Gate of Heaven Cemetery, 11000 Montgomery Road. Families are invited to place ornament on tree in memory of loved ones. The event is free. Call 489-0300 or visit www.gateofheaven.org.

Community dinner

Trinity Community Church is hosting a Community Dinner at 6 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 29, in the Fellowship Hall at Trinity Community Church, 3850 E. Galbraith Road, Deer Park. It is free. Call 791-7631.

Make a house

Gazebo Tea Garden is hosting "Children's Gingerbread House Tea" from 11

Applications now available for Summerfair 2010

Summerfair Cincinnati, the non-profit arts organization located in Anderson Township, is now accepting artist applications for Summerfair 2010, being held June 4, 5 and 6 at historic Coney Island.

Established more than 40 years ago, Summerfair is a combination of more than 325 fine artists and craftspeople from across the country exhibiting and selling works ranging from ceramics and sculptures to painting and photography; 4 stages of local and regional entertainers; a Youth arts entertainment area and a variety of gourmet arts.

The annual fine arts fair is Summerfair Cincinnati's primary fundraiser and consistently ranks among the top 50 art shows nationally.

Applications for Summerfair 2010 are available only online through ZAPApplication at www.zapplication.com. Registration on ZAPApplication is free to artists. The deadline to apply is Feb. 5, 2010. Acceptance notifications will be emailed to artists on March 8, 2010.

All applicants' work will

be reviewed by a panel of judges, comprised of artists and art educators with backgrounds in the categories offered at Summerfair. In order to be considered, works submitted must be original art produced by the applicant.

Works in the following categories will be featured: ceramics, drawing/printmaking, glass, jewelry, leather/fiber, metal/sculpture, painting, photography, wood and new this year, 2D/3D Mixed Media.

Summerfair 2010, which will be held 13 miles from downtown Cincinnati at historic Coney Island (just off Interstate 275 at Kellogg Avenue), draws more than 20,000 people each year. Hours for the fair are 2 to 8 p.m. Friday; 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Saturday; and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday. Parking is free, courtesy of Summerfair Cincinnati. Summerfair 2010 will be held rain or shine.

For more information, call the Summerfair Cincinnati office at 531-0050 or visit Summerfair Cincinnati online at www.summerfair.org.



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