



# Learning on the Great Lakes Seaway Trail

*One of America's Byways*

## **Lesson #2**

**Subject: Culture – Local Artists**

**Grade Level: 4-6**

**Irene F Sullivan**

### **Anticipatory Set:**

Ask the students if they have visited any local art museum or seen any local artwork.

### **NYS Standards:**

**The Arts:** Standard #3 – Responding to and Analyzing Works of Art

Standard #4 – Understanding the Cultural Contributions of the Arts

**Science: The Living Environment:** -Standard 7 – Human decisions and activities have had a profound impact on the physical and living environment.

**Social Studies:** Standard 1.1, 1.2 - History of the United States and New York

### **Objective:**

Students will be exposed to different local artists and create their own artwork using recycle material.

### **Purpose:**

To have students connect their surroundings to local artwork.

### **Summary:**

Along the Seaway Trail you will find a large number of artists who have captured the beauty of the land that surrounds us everyday. Their work can include anything from paintings to sculptors. This lesson plan is geared to have students become more aware of their surroundings and it's beauty through local artists and their contribution to our Art Culture. In this section I researched and found the local artists in my area, Jefferson County. The artists I listed below are just a sample of the hundreds of artists that you would find in this area. You can research your area for local artists and introduce them to your students.

### **Thomas Bintz (a.k.a. Captain Honk)**

Thomas Bintz is a Watertown native who attended Edison Jr. College in Fort Myers for two years and went on to Florida State University earning a Bachelor degree in Fine Arts. Captain Honk has always enjoyed art throughout his life. For many years Honk has lived on Pillar Point with a house on the shoreline of Black River Bay. He has come to enjoy fishing, boating and beachcombing along the shoreline.

During the time Honk has spent by the water beachcombing or boating, he started to notice the garbage along the shoreline and in the water. He started picking up the garbage and was inspired by his findings. He would pick up foam pieces or floats from fishing nets and noticed the shape of them reminded him of fish. He decided to take the pieces of debris and start making fish shaped bait signs out of them. He took other debris he found on the shoreline as well as things around the house and started using them to



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make the eyes, fins and tails. Some of the items he would use were bottle caps, broken light sockets, broken glass, old paintbrushes, dustpans, and broken CD's. Captain Honk has taken blown out truck tires and made eels and sea serpents out of them.

The fish sculptors Honk makes are very colorful and look so natural and free flowing. Some of the fish he has created have the characteristics of the different fish species that you would find in the Lake Ontario and other North Country lakes. Some of the fish are created with the characteristics of fish you would find more south in Florida. And there are some those, as Honk would call them "hybrids" that are his own creation of his own species of fish. Each fish has its own unique style that looks so natural as if the fish is swimming in the water as you are looking at it. The material he uses, though it is garbage to most, seems to come alive and gives the fish character with features that make it so unique.

You can find his work anywhere from one fish being displayed in Chaumont's local bank to a school of fish currently being displayed at the University of Miami from now through September. Captain Honk has had his exhibit displayed in several places in Florida for 4 to 6 months at a time. Honk has done interviews' one with Todd Moe from the North Country Public Radio. Captain Honk has worked with children in the past, showing them how to take what people think is junk and making it into a piece of art. Honk spends the winter in Florida and the summer in his New York home on Pillar Point.

When Honk goes to his home in New York he says it is like opening a treasure chest. He enjoys getting out his collection of findings and separating them into groups to get ready to assemble his fish sculptors. It disgusts him to see how people just toss things anywhere with little regard to our waterways and shoreline. He believes what is one person's garbage is another person's treasure.

### **Local Artists: Past and Present:**

1. Fredrick Remington - paintings, sculptors
2. Roland E. Stevens 111- watercolor
3. Lawrence C. Barone - pastels
4. Charlotte Foster – oils, watercolors, photography, crafts
5. Nancy Boulton - watercolors
6. David Hankins - watercolor
7. Ursula Mickle – drawings
8. Lynn S. Newman – photography, paintings, drawings
9. Dennis McIlroy – wood sculptor
10. Ron Kleiber Spencer - oil painter
11. Christine Tisa - oil, watercolor, and acrylic paintings
12. Sherman Ward - oil and watercolor paintings and sculptors
13. A.C. McIntyre – photographer
14. Phoebe Hazelwood – silhouette artist
15. Michael P. Evereth – murals
16. David E. Harmon – still-life
17. Edgar DeGroff – cartoonist



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18. Frederic Edwin Church, watercolors
19. Robert Lansing – painter
20. James E. Netto – portraits
21. Anatole P. Mickle - watercolors

### **Materials:**

Here is a list of items that the students and the teacher can collect ahead of time in order to complete this activity.

1. Recycled materials: plastic bottles, newspaper, cans, etc.
2. Stones, seashells, leaves and twigs
3. Paint, markers, and colored pencils
4. Color tissue paper, construction paper, and felt
5. Buttons, plastic eyeballs, pom-poms, feathers
6. Old game pieces and broken toys

### **Teach:**

1. Show the students samples of different local artists' work. See if an artist could come to the school and present their artwork to the students.
2. Discuss with the students the different variety of artwork there is and how it may represent their area of people, animals or places of interest that they may recognize. Talk about how nature can be a great inspiration.
3. Discuss how Captain Honk's work takes garbage and creates unique pieces of art. Talk about the environmental issues on how people discard junk in our local waterways and land. Discuss the importance of Earth Day.
4. Instruct the students to take the different materials the class has collected and create their own piece of artwork. It can be an animal, fish or anything they can create with the recycle materials.
5. Have the students artwork displayed for the rest of the school to see. It is a great lesson to use for Earth Day.

### **Guided Practice:**

Assist the students in cutting any recycle materials they may need cut.

### **Closure:**

Ask the students about the different artist's work you have introduced to the students. Ask the student why it is important to protect the waterways and land from people who discard garbage improperly. Ask the students why it is important for us to recycle.

### **Extended Activities:**

1. Take the students to a local art museum or a local artists place of business.
2. Have students set up a recycle day where they collect recyclables and make arrangements to dispose of them to recycle centers.
3. Have the students create a skit on Earth Day and the importance of recycling.



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### Web Sites:

1. <http://www.northcountrypublicradio.org/news/caphonk/caphonk.php>  
This is a web site where Captain Honk did an interview with Todd Moe. It is a great web site to visit to see the kind of work Captain Honks creates.
2. <http://www.dorisbritt.com>  
This is a web site of an artist from Rochester. She lives on the coastline of Lake Ontario. She paints watercolors of flowers and shorelines as well as musical instruments.

### Resources:

1. "Beyond Earth Day: Fulfilling the Promise", Gaylord Nelson, Susan Campbell, University of Wisconsin Press, Oct 2002, ISBN 0299180409
2. "Earth Book for Kids: Activities to Help Heal the Environment", Linda Schwartz. Learning Works, June 1990, ISBN 0881601950
3. "50 Simple Things Kids Can do to Save the Earth", Earth Works Group, Sagebrush Education Resources, Oct 1990, ISBN 0833544721
4. "Save Our Planet: 750 Everyday Ways You Can Help Clean Up the Earth", Diane Maceachern, Lonni Sue Johnson, Dell Publishing Co., Dec 1991, ISBN 0440294037
5. "Greening School Grounds", Tim Grant, Gail Littlejohn, New Society Publishers, 2001, ISBN 0865714363

### Children's Books:

1. "The American Environmental Movement", Rebecca Steffoff, Facts on File, April 1995, ISBN 0816030464, young adult
2. "Earth Day Holiday Histories", Mir Tamin Ansary, Heinemann Library, April 2002, ISBN 1588105709, Ages 4-8
3. "Earth Day: Holiday on My Own Books", Linda Lowery, Carolrhoda Books, Feb 1992, ISBN 0876145608 ages 4-8
4. "Earth Day", Amy Margaret, Power Kids Press, Aug 2002, ISBN 082395787x, ages 4-8
5. "Garbage and Recycling (Young Discoveries: Environmental Facts and Experiments)", Rosie Harlow, Sally Morgan, King Fisher, April 2002, ISBN 075345503x, ages 4-8
6. "Everyday is Earth Day" Kathy Ross, Millbrook Press, 1995, ISBN 1562944908