

SEPTEMBER 2011 MID MONTH ARTICLE by NEDRA FISHER

An exhibition of whimsical, wonderful paintings by Dana Gardner-Clark will grace the Art Reach on Broadway Gallery from September 26 - October 15. The subjects and topics of her paintings vary, and you're in for a delightful treat when you visit this show. Dana states, "In a world of clutter, repletion, the banal, and the provocative, there is a genuine authenticity and humility in the wild kingdom." Her bright, mixed media anthropomorphic paintings include pigs, cows and a friendly great white shark on a 6 ft. x 8 ft. canvas. Animals have always been an important part of her family's life, as she, husband Brad, son Evan, and daughter Cameron co-existed with cats, dogs, guinea pigs, bunnies and birds over the years. Both children are also artistic. Evan is graduating this spring from the University of Michigan with a degree in Arts & Humanities and his BFA. Cameron, a Sophomore at MSU, is studying archeology. Dana has been an important part of Art Reach for many years. She taught children's art classes, participated in our "Day with the Artist program", and was the School Coordinator of the Art Reach Picture Program at Fancher Elementary when her children were young.

Dana received her formal education at Kendall School of Design, Grand Rapids, and Michigan State University. She has participated in numerous juried shows and invitational exhibitions throughout Michigan. Her work can be found in the permanent collections of the Detroit City Airport, the Flint public library, and Central Michigan University. Dana is represented by the Rivers Edge Gallery, Wyandotte, and the Val-Art Corp., Toledo, the Left Bank Gallery of Flint, the Katalyst, Haze, and Absolute galleries in Lansing (Old Town), and Art Reach. Please join us at a reception for this fine artist in the Gallery on Thursday, September 29 from 5-7 p.m.

The 4th *Annual Art in Our Parks* will take place in Deerfield Park at the Fussman Pavilion, on Saturday, September 24 from noon – 4 p.m. This is a true family event. The program includes park inspired art, live music, a trail walk, dance performers, poetry, a creation station, a cozy bonfire, and more. At 12:30 Eric and Jessica Vinciguerra will perform on bassoon and French horn, and at 1:00 the Off Broadway Performing Arts Studio will offer a dance program. It's back to music with the Old Foresters at 1:30, with the CMU Poets reading their own creative works at 2:00. At 2:30 the CMU Music Theatre Majors will present musical theatre selections, and at 3:00 you can join an interpretive trail nature hike. There you'll find artists, poets, and dancers performing along the way. The Natural Star group and Deirdra Cowen will lead an adventure hike to explore nature. Kids can create a costume out of natural materials and be photographed in their costumes.

At the Creation Station your family can paint a canvas, discover the art of quilting with Lori Hoffman, find and paint a rock, and much more. Perhaps most important, is that you can paint a bat made of ash. Stan Lilley from the Chippewa Watershed Conservancy needs your help to save our native ash trees from the Ash Borer beetle. He will be there to help you learn to recognize the beetle and its work and how to report the damage so that these beautiful trees can be treated and saved.

Chili from the Commission on Aging and coffee from Biggby will help you keep warm. I can not think of a more delightful way to spend a beautiful Saturday afternoon in the fall. For more information call 989-772-0911, ext. 340, or check their e mail at *parks@isabellacounty.org* or go to their web site at www.isabellacounty.org/parks.