

Art Adventure I Sam Dalkilic-Miestowski

Behind the easel



Did you ever wonder about the expres-

sion on the face of Raphael when he painted the "Sistine Madonna?" Was Edvard Munch's mouth contorted when he painted "The Scream?" Was Rembrandt gambling before or after "The Card Player?" Was DaVinci's "Mona Lisa" painted while he was laughing?

Of course it'll never be known what expression the artists had during the execution of the art. What is available is a painting of the artist by another artist or a self-painted portrait. To me, this is intriguing. One can write about art and the artists, but seeing the art and the artists adds another dimension to the art. Included are some of the finest pieces of art in the world and an image of the person who created it.

A note to artists: Complete one self-portrait or a portrait of any artist who inspires you. It's a great addition to an exhibit.



"The Scream"
Edvard Munch



Edvard Munch



"Dwarf sitting ..."
Velazquez



"Le Discret"
Joseph Ducreaux



Joseph Ducreaux



Diego Velazquez



"The Card Player"
Rembrandt



Rembrandt
van Rijn



"Self Portrait"
Raphael

The Centafani's building at Clark and Main streets is going to be fantastic when architect **Jim Smith** brings it back to the look it had in horse-and- buggy days in CP.

Now we just need a few good men with handlebar mustaches and butchers aprons to sing barbershop on the Square during festival days.

Don't stop there, let's bring back the old City of Crown Point Marching Band. It was made up of shopkeepers, doctors, lawyers, bankers and title company executives, all dressed in strange costumes and playing some normal and some unusual instruments. I'll stand on the corner to watch that go marching by.

Kitty Conley's

Scratching Post

... Both national parties are scurrying to enact restrictions on lobbyists and congress in the wake of the mess in Washington, D.C.

At the same time Indiana is looking at deregulating telephone service and taking cable franchising out of the hands of local government and opening one big lobbying office in Indianapolis.

... Vandals shoved the Cedar Lake Chamber of Commerce office dumpster into the lake. It floated 50 feet from the ramp.

A boater **John DeVries** came in to fish last week and tied a rope to the dumpster and brought the rope back to shore.

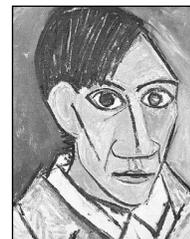
Under the supervision of Town Council President **Bob Carnahan**, R-1st, the street department hooked up to the rope and had to use the town's payload to pull it back up the ramp. Since it was full of water and garbage it was heavy.

... Crown Point architect **Tarik El-Naggar** is a blessed man. He is fortunate enough to be married to the 2006 Mrs. Porter County **Susan El-Naggar**.

Congratulations to these involved members of Living Stones Church in Crown Point.



"Whole"
Picasso



Pablo Picasso



"Rain Garden II"
Nevelson



Louise Nevelson

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The Steeple Gallery is located at 11107 Thiel St., St. John, just off U.S. 41. Log on to www.thesteeplegallery.com

Kirby leads St. Mary School Chess Club members to state

BY ALLISON BUELL
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CROWN POINT — Owen Kirby sits in a chair, his chin supported on his hand, elbow on the desktop. He's waiting the next move.

Kirby stares at the green and vanilla checkered board. He looks across the dual school desks at his opponent.

Five boys surround the chess game. They offer advice to Kirby and his opponent. "Why don't you move there?" "This game is easy. Move here." They point at the plastic board.

Kirby is not distracted. He never loses focus of the game. He smiles and offers small talk to his friends. He needs this practice, distractions included, for Jan. 28.

Kirby is a member of the St. Mary Catholic School Chess

Club. The sixty-five members in grades K-8 meet every Wednesday after school in three classrooms.

Six members have qualified for the U.S. Chess Federation scholastic state finals. The state tourney is being held Saturday in Anderson, Ind. They advanced from the Hammond Regional.

The qualifiers are fifth-grader Owen Kirby, third-grader Garret Small, first-grader Jack Walsh, second-grader Leo Zdanowicz, third-grader Teddy Sinal and first-grader Sam Gryzch.

The club is run by Owen's mother, Carrie Kirby. She took over the club last year because she noticed that students love to play chess and they don't have many other clubs or sports opportunities

after school. Her daughter, Eva, a third-grader, is also a

club member.

The classrooms are buzzing with members. Two girls in school uniform jumpers sit across from each other engrossed in a chess match. One girl rests her head on top of a stuffed toy dog. The other girl munches on chips and sips a juice pouch.

Students move in and out of the classrooms looking for new opponents. Some are serious, some enjoy spending an extra hour with their friends.

A few students gather at the chess ladder, which is posted outside a classroom. Members' names are held to the poster-board with velcro. Members can challenge each other to games and move up or down the ladder depending on the outcome. Owen Kirby's name appears glued to the top of the ladder.

Owen Kirby is a lanky 11 year old with wispy reddish brown hair that hangs to the collar of his powder blue knit polo. He wears navy blue dress pants and dirty white sneakers. This is a standard-issue Catholic school uniform.

He has long arms and bony fingers. His light skin peppered with freckles belies his fierce determination and passion for chess.

Owen began playing chess when he was 4. His father, Pat, an avid chess player and gamesman, taught his son. Pat learned the game from his father.

Owen owns three chess sets. He has a plastic set, a tournament set and a wooden set that his father gave him. The wooden set belonged to his grandfather.

"It all started with my dad," Owen said. "He taught me the basics. I used to just play with

my dad, but now I'm taking chess lessons from a teacher. I'm learning strategies. He's teaching me opening moves."

Owen qualified for his first state tournament as a second-grader. He estimates that he's played in 10 tournaments. Jan. 28 will be his second state tournament. He said he's not nervous.

"There's one room with tons of chess boards set up and you play certain people in your age group," he said of the tournament format. "It's really crowded, but the only thing you hear is pieces rattling. It's really quiet."

The chess tournament is an all-day affair. Participants learn their draw in the morning and begin playing matches, which last anywhere from 10 minutes to an hour.

"If I'm playing someone as good as me, a game takes 20 or

30 minutes," Owen said. "If I'm in the mood, sometimes I can win in 10 minutes."

Participants clear the gym or room after a round is completed and wait to see who their next opponent is. There is a lot of down time.

Owen keeps busy in between matches by listening to his iPod, playing video games, eating snacks or playing chess with his dad.

"Sometimes you really get bored but you just try to entertain yourself," he said. "Reading is not good."

Analysis is good, however. "I don't allow my mind to drift during a match," Owen said. "And I always gain something out of a game."

If all goes well for Owen Kirby and his chess mates, St. Mary's will have a few champs after this weekend's state tournament.