

# Painting brings her happiness

By Holly Reed

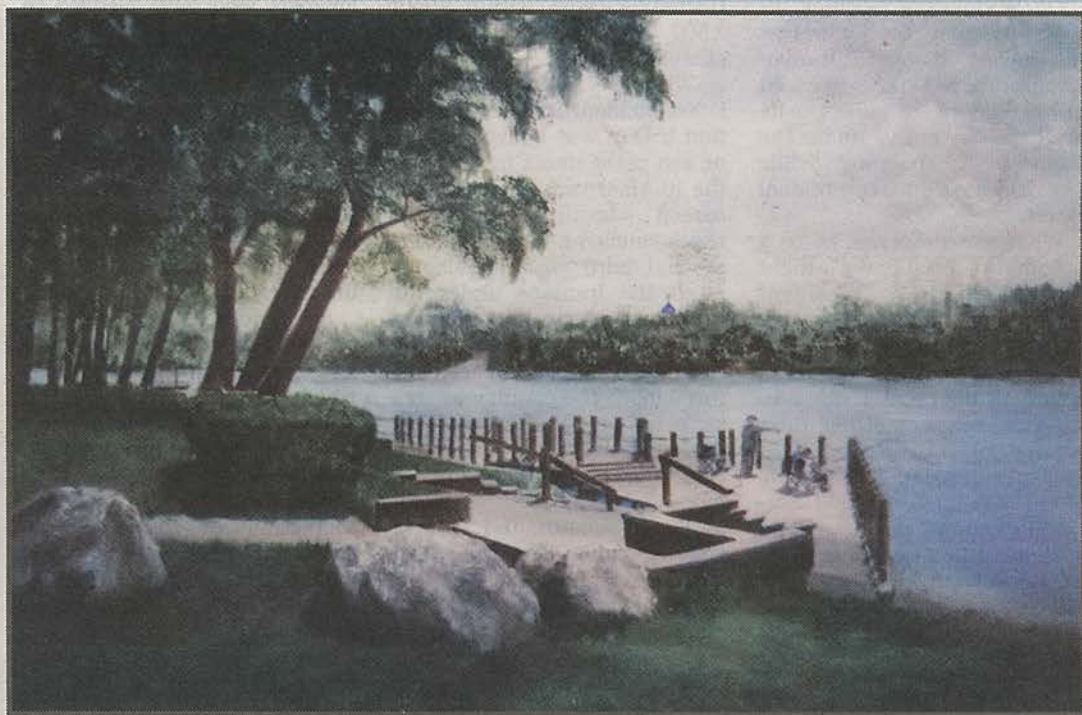
Mary S. Guasta has been a member of the East Hartford Art League since 2006 when she and her husband Matthew re-located to Goodwin Village.

A prolific painter, Mary explains her success as an artist matter-of-factly, "Painting makes me happy, and I try to paint every day!" Her artwork has won awards at the annual East Hartford Spring Art Fest, with two of her paintings winning the much coveted Purchase Award so they now hang in the East Hartford Raymond Public Library. One is titled "Footbridge Over The Hockanum River", and the other, "The Connecticut River At Great River Park in East Hartford". This painting captures the imagination so well that one can almost feel the Hockanum River racing underneath one's kayak as it meanders through the beautiful river vistas towards the Connecticut River.

Mary was born in Hartford and grew up near the neighborhood that is now being

cleared to make way for the new baseball stadium. At a very early age, Mary remembers illustrating classwork in school. "My brother and I were both very adept at drawing with pencil and illustrating the various subjects covered in school such as the Roman Empire, Greek gods and mythology," reminisced Mary as she talked about how art has always been a part of her life. "There was never a time when I was not drawing and painting everything that I saw," continues Mary. "This is still true today, many years later, and I am proud of that."

When Mary married and moved to Glastonbury, she was a "stay-at-home Mom" until her two boys reached High School age. Then she worked as a secretary while she continued to keep busy raising her family. Mary did find time to pursue adult education courses with nearby artists Mr. Noreika and the late John Ashton, to help her explore further her love of painting. She credits these artists with teaching her how to paint perspectives, how to



*"The Connecticut River At Great River Park In East Hartford", by Mary S. Guasta, 2013.*

better paint "what you see", and she discovered the bounty of the medium of acrylic paints.

"With acrylics, I was able to paint fluidly, which suited my style," says Mary. "And it was easier for me to adapt colors to what I wanted to express through my artwork, so it was a perfect fit for me!" Mary continues to study art, taking classes with Ms. Luciana Heineman, a renowned Windsor artist.

All of her art instructors helped launch her career as an artist, and through careful practice and a steady eye, Mary has emerged as one of our own "unsung heroes" here in town. She paints almost every day, with each painting telling a story about place, lighting and beauty - - all taken from this New England geography that all of us call home.

Mary looks forward to attending art presentations

through the East Hartford Art League. She would like to see the Art League develop a "painter's workshop" on a weekly basis - - a time and a place where artists from all walks of life would simply show up and paint together. Mary suggests more Field Trips to help build our East Hartford Art League's membership, as she had a scheduling conflict and missed the recent "Tour of the Wadsworth Atheneum with Tour Guide Bill Hosley". The East Hartford Art League has as its mission "to bring art in all its forms to the residents of East Hartford", so hopefully Mary's ideas fit and will come to fruition during 2016.

If you are interested in purchasing one of Mary's delightful paintings, you may contact the East Hartford Art League president at 860-528-2210. Her landscape paintings make beautiful gifts and go a long way to dressing up a room of your house, reflecting beauty that will last forever. Says Mary, "This is what I love about art, it brings joy into the hearts of so many people."

Mary plans to display many of her best paintings during the East Hartford "Spring Art Fest" held every year the day before Mother's Day. This year's Art Fest will take place Saturday, May 7 at the Alumni Green, next to the Community Center at 50 Chapman Place.