

Woodstock Community Unit School District 200

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Woodstock North students displaying artwork at Harvard's Starline Gallery

Woodstock North High School artists have been taking advantage of an opportunity to showcase their work among professionals each month at the Starline Factory Gallery in Harvard.

Junior Savannah Bissell has participated in a few Starline 4th Friday events and shown several of her art pieces.

"The fact that you could put stuff out there and show what you've done — you get to put your work out there, and people get to see it. That's really cool," Bissell said.

Art teacher Nancy Menge said Starline staff and other area art teachers introduced her to the opportunity to put her students' works in a juried art show. She began bringing groups of students in April 2023. School staff members donated frames and funds toward the mission.

"Since then, the high school artists have learned how to prepare their art for digital submission and some artists including my student assistant, Courtney Deinhart have learned how to assemble the frames for display. Being able to show the process of showing their work in this setting has been a great joy of mine," Menge said.

Sophomore Emma Chambers said she's excited about showing her multimedia piece on Friday, Oct. 27 at Starline Factory, 300 W Front St.

"It's called 'Mutated Frog Pond.' It's about chemical mutation in local ponds. I've seen it locally and globally," she said.

Chambers also had two pieces displayed at the September 4th Friday event and won some awards. "It was really cool to have all of my family there and to display all of my hard work. The people are really nice there, too,"

Menge said students have shown 2D, 3D art, photography and many other pieces that have won several awards. Last May, one of her seniors even sold a piece at Starline,

“The best part is seeing the students and their families walk into the 4th Friday gallery event for the first time. There's a moment when they look around and absorb the welcoming environment, and they recognize that their art is being recognized at a whole new level,” she said.

Patrick Lambrecht specializes in digital images he creates on a phone app. He won a First Place at Starline for one of them. “It’s nice some of the art pieces I’ve made out there so people can see it,” he said.

Menge said she’d encourage more area art teachers to take advantage of 4th Fridays based on the benefits her students have gotten from the experience.

“My hope is that new students try to enter the show with me and continue to feel supported along the way,” she said.