

# CREATING A MASTERPIECE

## Class celebrates the arts and friendship

By **KELLY GILBERT**  
Freeman Staff

**BROOKFIELD** – Some of Sherry Power's second-graders were focused on coloring between the lines, especially when the children at Hillside Elementary School re-created the Sistine Chapel.

"The art unit is a unit that combines literature," Power said. "They have books that are at a second- and third-grade level that are on five artists: Monet, Van Gogh, Da Vinci, Michelangelo and Georgia O'Keefe."

The students read the books, re-created a masterpiece from each artist and then created reports on each artist, with the exception Van Gogh.

"Instead of doing a report on Vincent Van Gogh, they wrote him a letter of encouragement because he only sold one painting and that was to his brother," Power said. "He eventually committed suicide, and that was my way of explaining to them that that was a permanent solution to a temporary problem and was not the right way to handle things."

To show off their artwork, the class held an "art gallery" event. They invited parents and senior citizens from St. John's on the Lake in Milwaukee who are part of the class's intergenerational program, "Forever Friends."

"It's just a wonderful thing for the kids, because it teaches them a past," Power said. "If you don't have the foundation, you can't build a future."

The seniors go on field trips with children, visit the school monthly, sing at the spring and holiday program and are invited to everything the students do.

"These kids work so hard," senior Betty O'Neill said. "It's really amazing what they are learning in second grade."



Ann Marie Keller/Freeman Staff

Above, Hillside Elementary School second-grader Maddie Vavrik and Therese Kalter read a book about art together during an art gallery event the second-graders in Sherry Power's class held Wednesday in their classroom. Parents and seniors from St. John's on the Lake looked at work by the students, enjoyed snacks and honored art teacher Patti Heiber, who is retiring this year. Below, second-grader Dajena Hughes sips on cherry 7-Up during the event.

O'Neill had three "friends" in the classroom, and they all agreed that creating the "Mona Lisa" was the most difficult project.

"We had to be careful with her eyes," 8-year-old Dajena Hughes said.

The students also stepped into Michelangelo's shoes and designed the Sistine Chapel by taping paper to the bottom of their desks. Then they laid on their backs and began creating the angels which were later moved to the classroom ceiling.

"They would erase and it would get in their eyes," O'Neill said. "None of them will forget Michelangelo."

While they may or may not remember the names of the artists, they did leave an impression on 8 year-old Hannah Uezen.

"It was really hard to do it," she said. "And they worked really hard."

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