

North Star Yacht Club: The Company We Keep
Reflections on the Artist Deena Gu Laties



As our condominium community begins to grow and thrive, we are delighted to get to know the unique, diverse and interesting people who reside at North Star Yacht Club in North Fort Myers, Florida. One of our homeowners, Deena Gu Laties, is an accomplished artist who cherishes her Chinese heritage and has a passion for nature's beauty. She sparkles with warmth and intelligence, and it is a pleasure to know her. We would like to introduce Deena to you:

Birth of an artist

Under the name Gu Ting, Deena studied with the famous painter Cheng Shifa, president emeritus of the Shanghai Chinese Painting Academy. Apprentice to famous Chinese painter Tse

Chen-Na, Deena spent four years copying great Chinese paintings from the Song Dynasty (960-1279). Then, she was ready to see the world.

Life in the U.S.

Completing the four-year curriculum at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in only three years, Deena has spent the last two decades becoming a well-known artist covering all subjects from landscape to portraits and flowers to birds. Her art has been displayed in a number of shows throughout the U.S., and Deena is currently preparing for a 30-35 piece exhibit at Washington and Lee University from September 1 through November 30, 2010.

North Star Yacht Club.... the artist's inspiration

For Deena, her condominium at North Star Yacht Club is the ideal artist's studio. The combination of panoramic water views, spacious rooms and perfect lighting has resulted in some of her finest work. Deena explains that she is so focused when she is at North Star Yacht Club - it is her quiet alone time. She revels in the beautiful reflections on the water, and for her, local Southwest Florida nature is a rich and varied subject for her paintings. "Every day I wake up and feel so lucky to be here," says Deena.

Giving back to the community

Wherever Deena spends her time, she is an avid contributor to the art scene – from teaching master classes at various artists' guilds to teaching children. She devotes two Sundays each month to teaching painting to Chinese girls adopted by American families. Calling them “my girls,” Deena loves helping them carry on their own cultural traditions and has even taken four girls back to China to visit their ancestral roots. Deena's artistry carries over into the music world as well – her interests in the Curtis Institute and the Philadelphia Orchestra have led to in-home concerts where she shares her appreciation of the arts with others. She also plans to bring these efforts to the Southwest Florida community in the near future.

Blending the old and the new

Although she has been in the U.S for many years, Deena says that her soul is still purely Chinese. Her words of advice: “Always remember who you are. And where you are from.”

To learn more about Deena Gu Laties, visit www.deenagu.com