

Campers take lessons from local artist

By Alyx Sarioi

CARLSBAD — Summer camp wouldn't be complete without arts and crafts projects and Carlsbad's Boys & Girls Club is no different. There, campers gather twice a week to let their creative juices flow as they work on a number of assignments.

For the first time, though, children will be bringing home much more than the standard construction paper projects usually offered up at camp. They'll be learning fine art techniques from professional artist Cheryl Ehlers



CREATIVE AT CAMP Ehlers has taken her Stardust Arts program to Carlsbad's Boys & Girls Club, where students like Isabella can learn traditional art techniques. Photo by Alyx Sarioi

through her successful program, Stardust Arts.

"It's my way of giving back to something that was so important to me when I was a kid," Ehlers said. "I'm doing what I love and the kids are having a blast."

Through her grant-funded program, Ehlers is teaching painting and drawing techniques to a number of campers throughout the summer. She encourages them to think outside of the box instead of limiting themselves

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Tourism business district takes step forward

By Bianca Kaplanek

DEL MAR — With a 4-0 vote at the July 12 meeting, City Council adopted a resolution of intention to establish a Tourism Business Improvement District that will allow hotel owners to charge visitors a 1 percent fee that will be used to promote tourism and attract more visi-

tors to the popular beach city. Council also set two required public hearings for 6 p.m. on Aug. 2 and Sept. 13.

Councilman Don Mosier, who opposed the district during a previous meeting, was absent July 12. Mosier said he did not support the proposal because the governing board for the district was made up

of hotel owners only. He said the board should include at least one voting member; perhaps from the Del Mar Village Association, or DMVA, who was not paying into the district.

DMVA will have an executive, nonvoting seat on the board. John Lambeth of Civitas Advisors Inc., the con-

sultant hired to help develop the Del Mar program, said nearly all of the 50 tourism districts in California use this type of governing system.

Formation of the district was proposed by Del Mar hoteliers early last year. The assessment is expected to

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to what they've previously been taught.

"They're learning different concepts," she said. "I tell them that they can do anything if they just believe."

One of Ehlers' main goals with the campers is to submit several pieces to the Boys & Girls Club of America's National Fine Arts Exhibit Program. She noted that it would be the first time that anything from the Carlsbad branch has been submitted.

As a group, the campers have mapped out and started painting the Carlsbad Village to submit to the exhibition. Ehlers will also select several acrylic and watercolor pieces for consideration in the national competition.

"It's not about winning though, it's about giving them positive avenues to explore and find what they're good at," said Ron Sapiro, the director of operations at the club. Ehlers brought her

Stardust Arts program to the Boys & Girls Club after a successful run in Oceanside during the last school year. She launched the program with a grant from the Kenneth A. Picerne Foundation to provide art instruction to elementary schools.

"It was a dream come true for me because none of the schools have an art program taught by a working artist," she said. "I got to teach 1,540 students at 11 schools over the course of one year."

Although Ehlers' program has been a success, its future is uncertain. The current grant funding ends in September and she's diligently searching to find another way to keep the program available to North County's students.

"Some of the schools are trying to find ways to bring me back and I hope they can," Ehlers said. "I do it to see the smiles on these kids' faces." To learn more about the Stardust Arts program, visit www.thestardustarts.com.