



Caldwell Arts Council's 39th Annual Sculpture Celebration

Saturday, September 6, 2025 • 9am-4pm
Broyhill Walking Park • Lenoir, NC

Sculptor registration is open through September 1st.
Visit www.caldwellarts.com for complete details and the prospectus.



Rain or shine • Free admission and shuttle service
Over 100 indoor and outdoor works,
many available for purchase



Food trucks
& live music
by The
Shelby Rae
Moore
Trio
& Rastacoustic



(left) "Here Where
the Soil Was Bare"
2024 Best of Show
by Julie Slattery
of Asheville, NC

The Sculpture Celebration is a program of the Caldwell Arts Council and is funded in part by generous sponsors and the North Carolina Arts Council, a division of the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources.

Caldwell Arts Council • Lenoir, NC • 828-754-2486 • www.caldwellarts.com



NC Arts Council Offers Portraits in Resilience - Cindy Biggerstaff

Editor's Note: This article was written by Andie Freeman, from the June 2025 NC Art Matters. In an effort to participate in the North Carolina Arts Council's strategic planning goal #3: Promote the Arts through Partnerships and Marketing, we are including this article.

Portraits in resilience: Cindy Biggerstaff

The North Carolina Arts Council has been working with artists and arts organizations to find ways to recover and build their creative enterprises back stronger after the devastation caused by Hurricane Helene in the fall of 2024. Our series Portraits in Resilience has been highlighting artists from the region to discover how they are responding. This month, we showcase Cindy Biggerstaff, of McDowell County. She's a veteran and a visual artist who has been bringing joy to her community through teaching.

When Hurricane Helene disrupted life in western North Carolina, Cindy Biggerstaff knew how she could help. She was an art educator in the public school system for five years and has been teaching art to children and families at the McDowell Arts Council Association for 16 years. "When Helene struck unexpectedly, I watched, fearful, but unaware of the catastrophic destruction happening all around me," Biggerstaff stated. "When I emerged, I knew I had to start my children's classes back, as soon as I could. I hoped that creative activities would help to restore a sense of routine and normality and underscore that art class is also a venue for building community and togetherness while creating and having fun." She witnessed the community coming together through her classes, as children and adults expressed their creativity and rediscovered their resilience.

During the early days of recovery, homes and lives were upended, so finding an activ-



Cindy Biggerstaff. photo courtesy of Cindy Biggerstaff.

ity that children could do, away from the destruction, was vital. Biggerstaff told us, "When I first contacted the parents of my regular students, they were so grateful and excited. They told me that the kids were very eager to come back to create and see each other again."

Biggerstaff's willingness to resume her classes when there were other demands on her time is not a surprise. She has been providing opportunities for hope and togetherness for years through the Healing Arts program for veterans and their families. The classes she had planned to provide, funded by a Healing Arts grant, had to be postponed last fall. When classes resumed this spring, she saw the impact that community building and stress relief had on families.

Biggerstaff's classes are a source of healing for her, as well, giving her a way to direct her energy and connect with her neighbors. "People have often thanked me 'for what I do for the kids,' but I am thankful for what they do for me," she said.

Biggerstaff has found comfort and healing in art throughout her life. Before the hurricane, she had a love for drawing portraits in graphite, charcoal, and colored pencils. She explained, "The face is a living canvas that shows instances of happiness, sadness, rage, and hope. I think to capture such an instance is to preserve a piece of a

continued on Page 24

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