


Young Rembrandts get creative at Three Rivers Minooka branch

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MINOOKA – The aroma of Sharpie ink swirled through the air Wednesday of the Minooka library meeting room as area home-schoolers gathered to brush up on their art skills.

(Mike Mallory - Caption 
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On the first Wednesday of each month, the Three Rivers Public Library District offers a program called “Young Rembrandts,” designed to help grow the art skills of 6- to 13-year-olds. Youth services librarian Lisa Berger said the monthly hourlong class gets home-schooled children together to create and interact.

“There’s not a lot for home-schooled students to do in the community,” Berger said.

The assignment Wednesday coincided with the start of the new year, as resolution-makers try to devote themselves to a healthy diet. Students followed a step-by-step process to draw and color in an apple, banana and grapes.

Each class has a different theme that often corresponds with the time of year. In December, students did a reindeer piece. In October, they did a bag of candy.

“It’s not always seasonal, but we do play around with the curriculum,” Berger said.

Despite the variation in age, Berger said it’s easy for all students to follow along because it is a step-by-step class.

“You can tell the age difference of students by looking at the artwork afterward, but by and large, they all do really well,” Berger said. “It’s a good confidence-booster for them.”

Alexander Parsley said he does artwork at home in his free time when he’s not in his home-school classes. Parsley, 9, said he thinks he’s gotten better since he first participated in the program a few months ago.

Students began by tracing the outline of the fruits with a pencil. They made the outlines bolder with Sharpies before coloring in the shapes.

Each student drew an apple with a disappointed face in the center of the paper.

“He’s upset because he’s going to get eaten,” Parsley said of his apple.

To the right of the apple, each student drew four grapes with facial expressions ranging from sad to angry, as they too knew their fate. To the left of the apple was an alarmed banana. Parsley colored his banana orange.

“I didn’t want it to be a normal banana,” he said.

Students learned proper technique and attention to detail from Berger, who teaches at five schools in addition to the library.

“We fill in [objects] from side-to-side to get a nice, even color in there,” Berger said to the class.

 **Comments**