

LOCAL ARTIST SPOTLIGHT SARAH CAPPS



I was born and raised a Southern Illinoisan & called to be an artist when I was three. My sister, who is seven years older than me, and I were sitting at the kitchen table drawing on some rolls of leftover wall paper our mother had given us. I remember Jan giving me instructions on how to draw her. She was sitting in profile to me pointing to various parts of her face. As I drew magic happened. I somehow knew that this was something I was going to do for the rest of my life.

I got into metals after putting off math/foreign language requirement until

it was the only requirement I had left for graduation. I took my two favorite studio classes, painting and jewelry and metal-smithing. I realized that although I was a pretty good painter my subject matter was boring to me. I had become more fascinated by the materials and techniques of metals. At that time I met Brent Kington who had more impact than nearly anyone on my art and on my life.

In his work and in his teaching, he expected and got as close to perfection as he/we could achieve. He brought out the best in his students and we achieved levels that we didn't even know we were capable of. That was the genius of the man.

When I graduated, I taught at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and from there to Eastern Kentucky University where I designed the metals studio and program. When I returned to Southern Illinois I was hired at Rend Lake College.

My vision of art had changed. The craftsmanship I learned from Brent had transferred itself into painting. I also now had something to say. The place where I grew up, family history, the creek where I played, all of Southern Illinois had become my subject. The creek had always been a magical place and had now become my spiritual place. The metal work is also themed in nature. The work has evolved through time as all artists' work must if he/she is going to grow as an artist.



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IT'S ALL GOOD VALENTINE'S DAY INDULGENCES THAT ARE GOOD FOR YOU

Some things that you might consider to be guilty pleasures are actually good for your physical and mental health, at least in moderation. If you're planning to indulge this Valentine's Day, here are the best things to enjoy.

CHOCOLATE. Research shows that even small amounts of dark chocolate rich in cocoa flavonoids can help lower blood pressure, improve blood flow and even lower LDL (bad) cholesterol. Choose varieties made with at least 70% cocoa.

STRAWBERRIES. Whether you dip them in chocolate or eat them with champagne, you can't go wrong with this superfood. They're packed full of nutrients and antioxidants, help fight cancer, contain anti-aging properties and can ease arthritis pain.

KISSING. When you lean in for a kiss and feel your heart race, that's because it *is*—it's beating faster. This releases adrenaline and other neurotransmitters in the blood, increasing your metabolism (and burning extra calories). Kissing can also provide a boost to your immune system.

RED WINE. Yes, wine contains alcohol and a fair amount of calories, but it also carries a list of accolades. It's considered heart-healthy because it contains resveratrol, which is found in grapes and purported to be an anti-aging elixir that may help reduce blood clots, bad cholesterol and formation of malignant tumors.

FALLING IN LOVE. If you can't remember your last oil change, but you can easily name your sweetie's best friend in kindergarten, you're not alone. Scientists at the University of Pavia in Italy found that falling in love raises levels of a hormone that improves memory. This hormone boosts your brainpower and helps you become more focused and detail-oriented.

HOW TO FALL IN LOVE WITH YOUR JOB

How happy you are at work may have less to do with your workplace than you think. For most people, happiness on the job depends largely on one simple factor—attitude. These suggestions can help find joy on the job, even during trying times.

• **LEARN TO LET GO.** When something throws you off, let it go quickly—this will make a big difference in how much you enjoy your job. The ability to move on allows you to handle work challenges with composure and strength. Instead stewing about how bad a situation is, focus on how to fix it.

• **WRITE A TO-DO LIST.** If you have requests and demands coming at you from all directions, it can feel like you have no control over your workday. A to-do list can help you refocus and get back on track. Also, limiting distractions by scheduling times to check email or social networking sites will help keep you on task.

• **QUIET MENTAL CHATTER.** A constant stream of negative thoughts sends many workers into a downward spiral. Quiet the chaos by redirecting your thoughts. Think of what you love about your job, the company, your coworkers—focus on the positive. The more you train yourself to see the bright side, the better your attitude will be.

• **RECHARGE YOURSELF.** Set aside some time each day to restore positive energy. Get away from your computer. Take a walk at lunch. Read a good book (or listen to a book on tape) during your commute. De-stress with a workout or yoga class at the end of the day. Find what reenergizes you.

Finally, embrace your organization's mission, if you haven't already. People who believe that their work is valuable or meaningful are more likely to be happy and find joy in what they do.

FIVE WAYS TO LOVE YOUR JOB EVEN MORE

1. TACKLE A NEW PROJECT OR CHALLENGE.
2. NETWORK MORE.
3. LOOK FOR OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION.
4. KEEP A GRATITUDE JOURNAL.
5. EXPLORE THE OPTION OF TELECOMMUTING PART-TIME.

FIVE WAYS TO MAKE YOUR PHONE BATTERY LAST LONGER

If you're an avid smartphone user, your phone's battery may run low way before you're ready to be done texting, talking and browsing the internet. Help your mobile device make it through the day with these five power-saving tips.

1. Turn off your bluetooth and wi-fi. They're constantly searching for something to connect to—if you don't need them, turn them off and you'll slow down the drain on your battery.

2. Place your phone on complete silence. Both ringtones and vibrations can affect your battery life. If you're busy at work, you could also put your phone on "do not disturb" mode, which allows your messages and phone calls to come through without any sound. You'll get less distracted and your battery will love you.

3. Keep your phone away from heat sources. Basically, heat sucks the battery life right out of your phone. It can also permanently shorten your battery life if you let it get hot too often.

4. Close out your apps. When you use an app, it will continuously run in the background, even when you exit out of it. Save battery life by completely closing your apps. For iPhones, double click the home button to view your open apps. Close them by swiping upward. For Androids you can download an app killer that will automatically close the apps you choose.

5. Use the auto-brightness setting for your screen—the light will adjust depending on your setting. If you are in a well-lit area, your screen will dim and slow down battery drain.

One last tip: If you're in an area with a bad signal, turn on airplane mode. This will stop your phone from searching for a signal that it will never pick up with bad reception anyway.

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

A 2013 study found that the scent of chocolate in a bookstore made customers 40% more likely to buy cookbooks or romance novels and 22% more likely to buy books of any genre.

WORDS TO LIVE BY

"YOU CAN ONLY BECOME TRULY ACCOMPLISHED AT SOMETHING YOU LOVE. DON'T MAKE MONEY YOUR GOAL. INSTEAD PURSUE THE THINGS YOU LOVE DOING AND THEN DO THEM SO WELL THAT PEOPLE CAN'T TAKE THEIR EYES OFF OF YOU."
—MAYA ANGELOU

KISS AND TELL

HERSHEY'S HAS BEEN SELLING SWEET KISSES FOR OVER A CENTURY

Give it a smooch—this year, the Hershey's Kiss celebrates 108 years of sweet success. The popular candy debuted in 1907 and was allegedly named a Kiss because the machine that produced them would make a kissing sound when it formed the chocolate drop on the belt.

Until 1956, Hershey's Kisses were hand-wrapped in foil. Thanks to automation, today's machines can wrap up to 1,300 Kisses a minute, and more than 70 million Hershey's Kisses chocolates are produced each day. Hershey's introduces and discontinues new flavors constantly and even offers unique flavors in other countries, like green tea and hazelnut in Asia.

A study published in the journal Psychological Science used Hershey's Kisses to reveal that the last bite of chocolate you eat will probably taste the best.

The study done at the University of Michigan recruited 52 students for a supposed taste test of new Hershey's Kisses. They were given five chocolates: milk, dark, creme, caramel and almond. Before they received the fifth chocolate, some participants were told, "Here is your next chocolate." The others were told, "Here is your last chocolate." Participants in the "last" condition rated the fifth chocolate as more delicious and enjoyable. Lesson learned: Enjoy each bite as if you were kissing it goodbye.