

local and national news



FBI | The Associated Press
A work of art stolen from the Staten Island, N.Y., home of artist Gregory Perillo in 1983. The FBI is seeking the public's help in rounding up more than \$500,000 worth of artworks by Perillo, an artist known for his scenes of the American West.

FBI Seeks Help to Find Stolen Art Depicting Old West

By KAREN MATTHEWS
The Associated Press

NEW YORK

The FBI is seeking the public's help in rounding up more than a half-million dollars' worth of artworks that were stolen in 1983 from the New York City home of an artist known for his scenes of the American West.

The missing art may be linked to a former police detective whose 1985 killing was never solved.

The 91-year-old artist, Gregory Perillo, said Friday that the break-in at his Staten Island home was "heartbreaking" and that he'd be happy to see the works recovered.

The 35 stolen paintings and sculptures depicted Old West themes like stagecoaches and Native Americans in traditional dress.

Although he was born in New York City to Italian immigrant parents, Perillo was interested in Native American history and culture from childhood and used to draw pictures of natives on brown paper bags, he said. He has also painted sports figures and a portrait of Ronald and Nancy Reagan with their horse.

Perillo's paintings sell for up to \$40,000 or \$50,000, his son Stephen, who manages his father's website, said.

Perillo said he and his wife, Mary, came home from a weekend away in the summer of 1983 to find the house ransacked and dozens of artworks gone.

Two pieces turned up at a Manhattan gallery in 1985, the FBI said.

Agent Christopher McKeogh of the bureau's art crime team said Friday that another of the stolen pieces, a bronze sculpture of a native on a horse, was recovered in 2011 from a garbage bin at a construction site about a mile from Perillo's home.

The FBI is seeking the public's help in recovering the other pieces because whoever owns the artworks may not realize the works were stolen, McKeogh said.

"They could be hiding in plain sight," McKeogh said. "They could be hanging on someone's wall in their living room."

About a week before the theft, McKeogh said, Perillo got an unsolicited visit from a man who said he was an NYPD detective interested in buying some of Perillo's art.

Then in 1985, the body of a retired NYPD detective was found in a car. The man, whose killing was never solved, was in possession of images of some of the stolen works, McKeogh said.

An NYPD spokesman did not immediately respond to a request for information about the former detective.

Perillo, who moved to Clearwater last year and still paints every day, said that if the stolen artworks are recovered he'll donate them to a good cause.

"My papa always told me, Gregory, when you have a career and you're doing well, always give back," he said.



Jon Secada performs Friday night at the Sharon L. Morse Performing Arts Center. Max Gersh | Daily Sun

Jon Secada Delivers Pristine Performance At The Sharon

The bilingual singer opened The Sharon's 2018-19 season Friday night with a powerful show.

By KRISTEN FIORE
Daily Sun Senior Staff Writer

In typical fashion, the luxurious red curtains rose to reveal the act of the night—a five-piece band and bilingual singer Jon Secada, who strolled onto the stage and opened with a breathtaking performance of "Do You Believe in Us?"

Secada opened the Sharon L. Morse Performing Arts Center's 2018-19 season Friday night.

Secada and his band delivered a powerhouse beginning to the concert, but the tone turned sincere in the middle of the show as Secada revealed that he had a personal connection present.

"I had a very special request by a dear friend for this show, and I can't say no to it," Secada said. "He was somebody who saw me grow as a studio artist in Miami."

Secada then invited Villager Hector Garrido to the stage.

Garrido, a friend of Secada's, has a long music history in and out of The Villages. He opened and closed Church on the Square.

As requested, Garrido played the piano and Secada sang a song in Spanish.

Throughout the show, it was evident that Secada and his band were passionate about the music they played.

Secada danced across the stage as he sang, while in the background, the musicians closed their eyes and nodded along to the beat.

"It's great to be here at The Sharon," Secada said. "What a beautiful community."

Secada filled the show with a wide range of impressive vocals as well as background about his career and the songs he performed.

He reminisced about the beginning of his career and one of his first big accomplishments — when Frank Sinatra requested to do a duet with him.

"I couldn't believe it," Secada said. "He was a legend, one of the greatest of all time. For

him to want to do that with me blew me away."

Toni and Joe Aiello, of the Village of Mallory Square, are Secada fans who have never seen him perform live.

When they saw he was coming to The Villages, they seized the opportunity.

"He has such a beautiful voice," Toni said.

Loretta Easton, of the Village Hacienda, was in the same boat.

"The music brings me way back to when I was younger," she said.

Phyllis and Bill Supitilov, of the Village of Pennecamp, were happy to experience something different.

"We grew up with hard rock, and we even listen to country a lot, but it's nice to have a different kind of style," Bill said. "And what a nice venue to come and see him, too."

Kristen Fiore is a senior staff writer with The Villages Daily Sun. She can be reached at 352-753-1119, ext. 5270, or kristen.fiore@thevillagesmedia.com.



Ten seniors with The Villages High School's Construction Management Academy will help Habitat for Humanity build a home this school year. Submitted photo

Students Help Community From the Ground Up

By RACHEL STUART
Daily Sun Staff Writer

Eighteen-year-old Knowlen Kirkland has had a hand in construction ever since he could hold a hammer.

He plans to continue his passion after he graduates from The Villages High School, and in the meantime, his school is helping him and nine other seniors get hands-on experience in construction.

The high school started offering its two-year Construction Management Academy last year to the school's juniors, and this will be the first year it will be offered to both juniors and seniors.

The juniors built and auctioned off a shed last year, and the now-senior students are working to build a home in Lady Lake with Habitat for Humanity, a housing organization that works with local communities across the nation.

"I've been doing construction all my life. My house is quite old, so there's a job to do every weekend," Kirkland said. "I decided that this academy would be the best thing for me because it's something I enjoy doing."

Since classes began Aug. 9 at The Villages Charter School, the seniors have been preparing for their project.

They started building the back wall of the house Thursday, and a groundbreaking ceremony took place at the site Friday.

They will work with the organization to build the

home from 7:20 to about 9 a.m. Monday through Thursday for the rest of the school year, with a hand in everything from roofing to carpentry to electrical work to plumbing.

"Our goal is to complete the house within the school year," said Bruce Haberle, instructor of the Construction Management Academy.

The students learned the basics of construction and passed their 10-hour Occupational Safety and Health Administration training last year, Haberle said, and now they are ready to obtain the full hands-on experience as seniors.

"It's a great opportunity for the kids. They're learning to give back," he said.

While the students learn beneficial skills along the way, this also is a learning experience for Habitat for Humanity as this is the first time the organization has partnered with the school.

"The students definitely are learning, but they're also helping us provide a house for someone," said Danielle Stroud, the director of development for Habitat for Humanity of Lake-Sumter. "They'll be there from the very start of the house to the very end, when we hand the keys to the owners."

Stroud said the seniors will meet the family once the family has been approved, which probably will be within the next month.

"This opportunity is really great for the students for two reasons," she said. "They will gain skills that are employable after graduation, and they also will gain insight as to what goes into helping our community."

Standing at the site with just the beginnings of the home coming together, Kirkland said he is ready to make a difference.

"We're all teenagers, and we all goof around. But, at the end of the day, we get the job done," he said.

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This is a countywide race. All vote for all districts.
VOTE ON AUGUST 28TH

Nancy is a teacher of students with special needs. Nancy has worked her way up as a Vocational Training Assistant, then a High School Teacher of students with Special Needs, and for the past 13 years as a District Behavior Support Specialist. Nancy works directly with parents, students, teachers, and all levels of the school system.

Nancy works with Marion Therapeutic Riding Association (MTRA), Agency for Persons with Disabilities, Transitions Life Center (TLC) and the Guardian Ad Litem Programs.

Nancy has a waste-not, want-not mentality. Nancy understands the complexity of the education budget and will continue pressing for increased local control of our school budget.

Nancy owns a small real estate investment business specializing in residential rental properties.

Go to **votemarion.com** or call the Marion County Board of Elections for more information 352-620-3290

Nancy appreciates YOUR vote. Find Nancy on Facebook.
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