

Mountain Democrat

PLACERVILLE, CALIFORNIA

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Artist appreciates Grand Canyon National Park

By [Gold Country Artists Gallery From page B2](#) | August 19, 2016



Gold Country Artists Gallery is celebrating the 100th birthday of the National Park Service this year by featuring stories of local artists who, drawing inspiration from the country's national parks, have created artwork that reflects their love for the natural world.

Local artist Beverly Austin who uses oils and acrylics as her principal media shares her personal reflections about Grand Canyon National Park.

“As a little girl, my family piled into our old Buick and hit the road for our annual family camping trip. It was a different time back in 1954. Dad casually smoked his Camel cigarettes with unwavering determination on the way to our destination. Mom sat in the front seat dipping into the food bag, preparing the kids’ bologna sandwiches while hosting a variety of surprise car games. All the while my brother, sister and I played on the crib mattress our parents laid across the back seat for our comfort. Everything was so simple and slow, so different than modern-day family road trips.

“One of our destinations that I continually reflect on is Grand Canyon National Park. Making our way there over the course of two days was grueling. When we arrived I really didn’t understand

why we had made the long journey. I perceived it as a bunch of dirt and some canyons surrounding a giant hole in the ground. It is hard to grasp why I was underwhelmed by a truly spectacular place but I was. Perhaps it was so large and I was so small that it was impossible to comprehend its magnificence.

“As a mature artist today, my ability to experience the Grand Canyon has dramatically shifted. A few years back I ventured out on a road trip with my dear friend Judy to attend a painting workshop in Ghost Ranch, N.M. On our way we decided to take the scenic route and visit the Grand Canyon. This time, I made the journey as a grown woman who was safely buckled into the passenger seat. We snacked on toast and fruit and drank conversation-evoking coffee. We talked endlessly and shared stories of scenic landscapes, relationships and family.

“As we drove into the Grand Canyon, I was completely overwhelmed and captivated by its beauty. I could feel its power enter into every fiber of my being. The word ‘muse’ took on a whole new meaning, now on a spiritual level. The previous pile of dirt was now a foreground that reflected tiny bits of light cast by the sun. The canyons were singing to me and each other as the wind howled through them. The giant hole in the ground became a place where the universe tied itself together and showcased its brilliance. I was forever in love with the grandness of the Grand Canyon and finally understood who I was as an artist.

“Ever since this trip, my art has attempted to capture the emotion I ethereally and physically experienced there. I am continuously painting glimpses of my experience and other mystical places that reflect the emotion of that special journey. Over the course of my life I have changed, yet the Grand Canyon remains the same.”

Beverly Austin’s painting “Grand Canyon: Navajo Point” is now on display for the first time at Gold Country Artists Gallery, 379 Main St. in Placerville.

Her paintings are an ideal match for people who find a sense of spiritual depth in nature. Gold Country Artists Gallery is open every day from 10 a.m.-6 p.m. and features the work of 50 local artists working in fields as diverse as fused glass, ceramics, acrylic/watercolor/oil painting, photography, wood turning, jewelry, pastels, woodblock prints and more.