

# Alma College makes a splash of color

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Mary Ottoman ('13) and Susan Wright ('12), among many other Alma students and community members, will have their artwork featured at the grand opening of Artventures, funded by the Mid-Michigan Creative Arts Guild, the Pine River Arts Council, the public schools, and many local businesses.

There will be a grand opening celebration in downtown Alma for a new venture under way — Artventures, that is.

Together with the Mid-Michigan Creative Arts Guild, the Pine River Arts Council, the public schools, and the support of many local businesses, Alma College is helping to sponsor the creation of this center.

Artventures is located at 107 W Superior, formerly Tom Billig's Flowers. It was donated to create a spot for the arts in Alma by its owner, Kurt Wassenaar, who is the son of Dottie Wassenaar, a charter member of the Mid-Michigan Creative Arts Guild. The grand opening will be this Friday at 7 p.m.

The center itself will be divided into two sections, having a studio for education on one side and a gallery for exhibition as well as a place for sales on the other. In the studio, there will be lessons, workshops, and mentoring opportunities provided for people of all ages and levels of experience.

"We've even considered hosting 'Arty-parties' for special occasions such as a child's birthday," says Diane Clise, a member of the Mid-Michigan Creative Arts Guild who is helping in the creation of the center.

The gallery will be named the Wassenaar Gallery after the Wassenaar family who donated much to the creation of Artventures. After the display of artwork at the grand opening celebration, a gallery committee will select artwork done by local

artists to display in this gallery. Sandy Lopez-Isnardi, an associate professor of art and design who is also involved in the creation of this project, explains that the purpose of Artventures is to meet the need in Gratiot County for community arts education at a low cost.

"We want to reach out to all economic levels in the community," she says. She also says that they are applying for grants to cover the tuition of those who would like to learn but are unable to afford lessons,

workshops, or mentoring. She also mentions that most of the supplies have been provided through the donations of local businesses, ranging from Alma Hardware to Pizza Sam's.

Mary Ottoman ('13) will be displaying her works in the gallery at the grand opening. Her photos—"Portrait of a Player #1" and "Portrait of a Player #2"—depict a small child at play and the hand of a person playing the piano. Ottoman, like many others, is excited about this

new art center opening. "I'll definitely use the resources that Artventures has to offer—I don't get to paint much on campus anymore," said Ottoman. "In time, I might be interested in volunteering, as well."

Sue Wright ('12), who will be displaying some of her artwork as well at Artventures' Grand Opening Celebration, designed the logo for Artventures. She says that new media studies students at Alma College were asked to create potential logos and, when the committee looked

over their work, they decided that hers was the best fit.

"It's a wonderful honor, and I'm proud that it will represent the collaboration of the college and the community," Wright says.

With a solid black background, boldly contrasting white letters and a striking red paintbrush centered in the middle of the logo, Wright hopes the design will not only catch but hold the attention of students and community members alike and consequently increase interest in Artventures.