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plan
of Northeast Ohio

making our mark.

A PLAN OF NORTHEAST OHIO
CREATIVE ARTS PUBLICATION



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making our mark.



Becky Rinaldi
Community Activities Administrator

As we share the second issue of ***making our mark.***, we're reminded that creativity is an ongoing journey of growth and self-expression. Since our first issue, PLAN members have continued to create, explore new ideas, and encourage one another. Every artwork, poem, photograph, and story adds another chapter to the vibrant story of our community.

One of the goals of *making our mark.* is to showcase PLAN members' strengths, interests, and talents. Every page reflects the courage to try something new, the patience to develop a skill, and the confidence to share something personal. Whether someone has been creating for years or is discovering a new passion, every contribution deserves to be celebrated.

This issue features the creative journeys of Brindel and Chris, two PLAN members who have discovered that coloring is much more than a hobby. For both, it provides a chance to slow down, stay present, and express themselves. Choosing colors and bringing a page to life has become a mindful practice that reduces stress, improves focus, and supports their mental well-being. Their stories remind us that creativity doesn't always begin with a blank canvas—sometimes it starts with a box of markers and the willingness to create.

We hope this issue inspires you as much as it has inspired us. Thank you for supporting the artists, writers, and members who make PLAN such a vibrant community. Enjoy their work and watch as they continue to make their mark, one creation at a time.

PLAN (Planned Lifetime Assistance Network) of Northeast Ohio, a division of Jewish Family Service Association of Cleveland, promotes friendships, connections to community and improved quality of life for members through its Holistic Recovery Program, and creates peace of mind for families with its Lifetime Planning Services.

COVER ARTWORK "Luminous Blue Foliage" | *Fabric, natural dyes* | *Jeff L.*

For membership details, call Becky at 216.509.8685.

stories from the heart.

A Letter from Your Future Hobby

Hi! Merle, I want to be your future hobby. I see you everywhere in the community exerting yourself physically as you go through your daily routines… Old man! You are a diamond in the rough. It may take a while until you find your true self, but I have some advice for you… start preparing your equipment. BUILD THAT BARBELL THAT YOU WANTED! I want to see you obtain your fitness goals with weight training

Merle R.

A new museum displays memories from my future instead of my past. What exhibit catches my attention first? What does it show?

I think the first exhibit to catch my attention would show me as an established professional artist. There would be examples of my work surrounding a wax figurine of me. Some of the work would be paintings, but there would also be sculptures and fiber art pieces. I would be described as a "Grandma Moses" type of artist, although my work would be nothing like hers. I might even make sculptures by stuffing knitted or crocheted pieces that don't look like anything in the real world. I would use bold colors with high contrast in all my work. I kind of think a museum like that would have some way of making me forget what I saw as soon as I walked back out. That way, everything I create would be a surprise for me

Joyce B.

Friendship

Friendship means to me a close relationship where you feel safe and can be your true self. Right now, I have some friends, but they are not super close. Real friendship is rare and hard to find. I have more acquaintances than friends. As a kid, I had two best friends. As I got older, we grew apart. I wish I had more friends. When I'm out with my friend, we go grocery shopping, to the movies, out to dinner, or to their apartment.

Elizabeth E.

Seeing Yourself

My face is a perfect light-dark brown with a birth mark on the right side of my chin. My eyes look like dark brown chocolate pools. I have a bit of Japanese from my mom's side which you can see in my face. My granddad is black mixed with Native American Indian and Jamaican. My hair is dark brown along with my eyebrows. My grandmother used to say I had the most beautiful smile. The first thing people notice about me is my name, Yumi. My mother named me after her friend who she met early in school. My middle name is Lynn, after my aunt Kerrillyn.

Yumi S.

One small thing

Wow, you know it doesn't look like much… just an old pipe cleaner. But it belonged to my dad. Small inconspicuous, it represents father and his eternal memories.

Merle R.

artist

spotlight.

Brindel K.
Gel pens on paper



(left to right) PLAN artists Chris B. and Brindel K.

Coloring Outside the Lines: How Chris and Brindel Find Wellness Through Creativity

Coloring is often thought of as a childhood activity, but for PLAN members Chris and Brindel, it has become an important part of supporting their mental health. What begins as a blank page and a collection of markers and crayons becomes an opportunity to slow down, practice mindfulness, and express creativity, all while spending time with a friend.

At PLAN's weekly Coloring Group, members gather to create, chat, and unwind. The atmosphere is relaxed and welcoming, offering a space where creativity takes center stage and mental wellness is quietly nurtured. With markers in hand, participants transform simple coloring pages into vibrant works of art while enjoying conversation and companionship.

For roommates Chris and Brindel, however, coloring doesn't end when the group does. Both spend a great deal of time coloring at home, making it a regular part of their routines and an ongoing source of relaxation and self-care. They have been friends for many years. Both have found a welcoming community through PLAN, with Chris joining in 2016 and Brindel becoming a member in 2018.

For Chris, coloring is more than a creative activity, it is a valuable coping tool. "I like coloring because it helps me relax," she says. "It's something that's creative, and I like being creative." Beyond relaxation, coloring gives her something positive to focus on when life feels overwhelming. "It gives me something



Brindel K.
Gel pens on paper



Chris B.
Crayons on paper



Chris B.
Markers on paper

to focus on, especially when I'm upset about something. It's a diversion."

That diversion has been more than just a pleasant pastime. During a particularly difficult living situation, Chris credits coloring with helping her cope and maintain her mental health. "Coloring kept me out of the hospital," she shares. Today, she has reached another significant milestone, living independently for the past two years.

For Brindel, coloring has been a lifelong source of joy and relaxation. She has enjoyed coloring since she was a child and continues to find comfort in the creative process. "It relaxes me and it's fun," Brindel shares. "I like seeing the finished product." Whether she is coloring at PLAN or at home, the activity gives her a chance to slow down, focus on the present moment, and experience the satisfaction of creating something beautiful.

When asked about her favorite PLAN memories, Chris fondly recalls the group's day trips, especially a visit to a bird sanctuary where Brindel had the unforgettable opportunity to pet one of the birds. Those shared experiences, along with the friendships she has built through PLAN, have become just as meaningful as the artwork itself.

Together, Chris and Brindel have discovered that creativity can be a powerful tool for recovery and wellness. Their shared love of coloring provides opportunities for relaxation, self-expression, and connection while strengthening the friendship they have built over the years.



Brindel K.
Gel pens on paper



Brindel K.
Markers on paper

out in the community

Encouraging meaningful social connections.

Exploring the Greater Cleveland community is an important part of the PLAN experience. These outings give members the chance to step beyond the program space, try something new, and engage with the world around them. Each month, PLAN members explore new places, connect with others, and find inspiration through art, culture, and shared experiences.



Ohio Bird Sanctuary (Mansfield): Members enjoyed feeding the birds, exploring the sanctuary, and checking out the treehouse classroom. From left, **Robert M., Brindel K., Kristen W., Scott M., Christine B., Suzanne F., Judy I., and Becky Rinaldi, Community Activities Administrator** get a close-up look at some feathered friends.



In Step With Horses (Chesterland): Brindel K. (front) takes the lead while **Judy I.** looks on during a visit to this unique place which provides equine-assisted experiences that help participants build emotional well-being, confidence, and connection in a supportive, nature-based setting.



Lake County Captains Ballpark (Eastlake): Community Activities Assistant **Brent Eligado** shares a fun moment with Skipper, the Lake County Captains mascot, during a day at the ballpark.

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Wallace Lake Metropark (Berea): PLAN members had a fun and unique experience at Wallace Lake Metropark: canoeing in the 18 seat Voyaguer Canoe, learning basic paddling techniques and how to work together to paddle as a group.



Beth N. gets a life preserver from Metropark staff.



Pictured are (front to back) **Marieo V., Brindel K., Yumi S., Chris B., Becky R., Farah W., Stacey B.,** and **Jeff L.**



Cleveland Metroparks Zoo (Cleveland): Journeys members always enjoy a day at the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo, and their May visit offered plenty to see and explore. **Eden S.** (left) and **Carol Rose W.** (right) pause for a photo while enjoying an up-close view of one of the zoo's elephants exploring its habitat.



Cleveland Museum of Art (Cleveland): Journeys members enjoy a beautiful day walking around Wade Lagoon, which adjoins the Fine Arts Garden in front of the Cleveland Museum of Art. Pictured (back row, from left) are **Kelsey P., Evan B., Eden S.** and **Ben P.**; (front row, from left) **Shira J.** and **Carol Rose W**.



House Three Thirty (Akron): PLAN members journeyed south to Akron to visit House Three Thirty, a multi-use community hub presented by the LeBron James Family Foundation. It supports the Akron community through retail, dining and the LeBron James Home Court Museum, while employing I PROMISE students, parents, and community members to foster local economic stability. Pictured are (left to right) **Mike K., Greg V., Elizabeth E., Suzanne F., Scott M., Dexter L., and Robert M.**



Maltz Museum (Beachwood): From left, **Breanna A., Suzanne F., Robert M., Kristen W.,** and **Jeff L.** unleash their inner superheroes during a visit to a special exhibition "Icons in Ink: The Jewish Comics Experience."

curated moments.



PLAN members enjoy an Art Exploration session at JFSA's Kindness Center, where creativity, self-expression and connection come together. With markers in hand and plenty of inspiration, members experiment with colors, shapes and designs while working on their individual creations. Art Exploration sessions give participants an opportunity to try new techniques, express their unique perspectives and enjoy the creative process alongside friends.



PLAN artist **Shira J.** explores the relationship between light, shadow and color during an Art Exploration session. After using cut flowers to cast shadows and create organic shapes, Shira fills the forms with vibrant watercolors. The activity is part of this year's **"Colors of Life"** theme, which has given PLAN artists opportunities to experiment with color, learn about color theory and discover new ways to express themselves through art.



PLAN member **Monica K.** adds color and creativity to her artwork during an Art Exploration session at JFSA's Kindness Center. Inspired by this year's **"Colors of Life"** theme, Monica experiments with bright colors and organic shapes as she creates her own interpretation of the shadows cast by flowers.



PLAN artist **Carol C.** brings her creativity to life while preparing artwork for the 2026 Mental Health Awareness Month event. Using colorful tissue paper and glue on a clear acrylic sheet, Carol creates her own vibrant interpretation of a stained-glass window.

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gallery.



▲ "At the Playground"
Tape, tissue, glue on clear acrylic
Emilie B.



"untitled" ▲
Fabric, natural dyes
Irene B..



"The Fun Nebula"
Mixed media
◀ *Joyce B.*



▲ "Bloom"
Mixed media
Elizabeth E.

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▲ "Bird Building a Nest"
Acrylic on canvas
Beth N.



▲ "Flowers for You"
Watercolor
Carol C.



▲ "untitled"
Watercolor
Scott M.



▲ "My Flowers"
Watercolor
Shira J.



"Flower of Distinction"
Watercolor
◀ *Dexter L.*



▲ "Hope"
Tape, tissue, glue on clear acrylic
Elizabeth E.

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◀ "untitled"
Fabric, natural dyes
Eric M.



▲ "Fashion Starlight"
Mixed media
Emilie B.



▲ "Starry Night"
Mixed media
Shira J.



▲ "The Wide Community"
Acrylic
Irene B.



▲ "untitled"
Fabric, natural dyes
Emilie B.

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Scan the QR code to view this publication and a monthly calendar of events for PLAN members.

PLAN (Planned Lifetime Assistance Network) of Northeast Ohio, a division of Jewish Family Service Association of Cleveland, promotes friendships, connections to community and improved quality of life. Participants pay a membership fee. Additional support for PLAN of Northeast Ohio creative arts programs provided by the Fran & Jules Belkin Family Creative Arts Program, Cuyahoga Arts & Culture, Peter Hoke Memorial Fund, Ohio Arts Council, and individual donors.

HAPPY 250TH BIRTHDAY, USA!



JFSA's Kindness Center is celebrating America's 250th birthday with a colorful exhibition showcasing artwork created by clients from PLAN, Adult Day Support and Horvitz YouthAbility.

The exhibition centers on two themes: **joy and unity**. Participants are creating artwork inspired by six American artists known for bringing a sense of cheerfulness and optimism to their work. The theme of unity comes to life in a particularly colorful way: when the red and blue of the American flag are mixed together, they create **purple**.

That idea inspired a special **"Purple Party"** room featuring a giant birthday cake with purple decorations, festive displays and photos of more than 40 YouthAbility Ambassadors decked out in purple. Visitors will also be invited to add their own birthday wishes by signing giant birthday cards celebrating America's milestone year.

The exhibition will remain on display through **October 12** at the Beachwood Art Gallery, in the Community Center located at 25325 Fairmount Blvd, Beachwood, Ohio. Come celebrate 250 years of America through creativity, joy, unity—and plenty of purple!