



SSAFE CASE STUDY REPORT ENVIRONMENTAL ART EXHIBIT

Chapter: RiverWoods Durham

Location: Durham, NH

Recorder: Judy Parks & Vicky Barrette

Date Submitted: 12/10/2025

Who to Contact for More Information:

Vicky Barrette - barrette@comcast.net

Judy Parks - jhillparks@comcast.net

Keywords: art, involvement, exhibit

Summary:

An Exhibit Gallery presentation and photo album focused on multimedia environmental art created or provided by residents.

Objective: Increase resident awareness and participation in an environmental activity, reach residents not regularly involved in sustainability projects, and promote knowledge and sensitivity to the environment during Earth Week and through the months of April and May.

Project Description: Collect and display sustainability art and photographs. Broadly defined, this could be the theme of artwork in various media, the medium itself might be sustainable, or it could reflect a commitment to “maintain, refurbish, reduce, recycle”.

Community Description:

RiverWoods Durham opened in 2019 and is located in Durham, New Hampshire. Approximately 225 residents live in 150 independent living units with an additional 72 assisted living units. Common areas include a ground floor exhibit space with several glass enclosed cabinets and lots of wall display space.

Applicability: This type of exhibit would be applicable to any retirement community with an exhibit area.



Methodology:

- Obtain approval for the exhibit – RiverWoods has a Resident Art Exhibit Committee which oversees all exhibits.
- Promote it among the residents. Start with a teaser, utilize the community newsletter and bulletin boards, distribute requests for submissions, setup and staff meal time displays of media and ideas in the dining area.
- Promotions need to be continuous and varied.
- Secure the assistance of the contracted onsite artist with ideas and classes.
- Schedule and promote classes to assist residents with their creations.
- Meet with applicable resident groups such as the knitters, sewers and wood workers.
- Review and select submissions. Plan for and install the items.
- Hold an opening event with beverages and food.

Funding Needed (Amount, Sources):

- Art classes were paid for by the residents who attended.
- The Exhibit Committee provided the opening refreshments.

Involvement or Support of Community Administration:

Administration was supportive but this required no involvement beyond that for any exhibit. Primarily a resident effort.

Key Challenges:

- The Exhibit Committee had to be convinced of the value of this display as it didn't fit the usual definition of "art."
- Timing was an issue. We put a great deal of effort into promotion in the fall; however, residents were not ready to actually become involved until January when we repeated the promotions.
- Obtaining enough submissions to cover all the available wall space required a final push to borrow display items from a resident apartment.

Outcome (Results):

- After a successful opening event there were many positive comments from residents, staff and visitors.
- Many residents not otherwise involved in our activities participated in the exhibit.
- Several people added pictures to the photo album while it was on display.
- The photo album will be put on display in subsequent Earth Weeks.



Senior Stewards Acting for the Environment

Lessons Learned:

- Utilize the Exhibit Committee's expertise and knowledge.
- Inform, but do not promote too early.

Resources:

- A Task Group of Sustainability Committee members to plan and promote the event.
- Creative residents

Photos:

Promotional pictures used to plant ideas in residents
Pictures from the exhibit displays and photo album



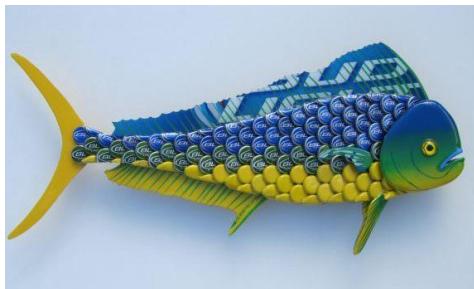
SSAFE.org | info@ssafe.org

This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/).

Environmental Art Ideas



Sea Shells for sculpture, painting or shadow box



Bottle caps repurposed

Sea Glass Sculpture

Knitted Sculpture

Photograph Ideas



Renewable energy



Beach Erosion



Forest Loss



Trash Containers Vienna Austria



Growing vegetables



Vineyard in volcanic soil

ART FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

Inspired by another SSAFE Chapter's
Insects & Caterpillars Exhibit



(Getty File Photo)



Bald eagle on the Oyster River
Courtesy, Mary Ann Esposito

Creations, paintings, and photographs have been loaned to inspire us to protect the environment so future generations can thrive and enjoy its beauty. Some works have been made from items found in nature, others involve the principals of reuse and recycle – buttons, yarn, trash, etc.

Contributors: Twenty-two Residents contributed to the displays. An innumerable number put photos in the album.

Exhibit description posted beside the glass cases.

GLASS CASE DISPLAYS



WALL AND TABLE DISPLAYS

