

**S** THEARTSFor more arts content, visit [NWHerald.com/sidetracks](http://NWHerald.com/sidetracks)**Glass artist, Sampler Series preserve history****A LA ART**  
**Kurt Begalka**

Works from Gilbertson's Stained Glass of Lake Geneva, Wis., will be featured at an Evanston museum expected to open within the next year.

This privately owned museum, open to the public, will include stained glass works from turn-of-the-century masters such as Louis C. Tiffany, John La Farge, Mary Tillinghast, Joseph Lober and many others. Owner Ed Gilbertson, of Lake Geneva, said the commissions included full restorations and period-accurate replicas for Cameel Halim, a Winnetka resident who owns Wilmette Real Estate & Management Co.

Halim is in the process of building the Halim Tiffany Window and Time Museum – containing more than 300 clocks, 700 pocket watches and 80 one-of-a-kind stained glass windows. The latter is where Gilbertson and his team come in, handling these valuable works of art in a 7,500-square-foot studio. Gilbertson, 50, has been designing and restoring mostly church windows for 28 years.

"There are a lot of fakes out there, a lot of them lamps," he said. "But it's hard to fake the leaded panels that would take so much work to create new."

Gilbertson said the European "art glass," the opalescent glass popularized by the like of Tiffany and others around the turn of the century, used up to eight layers of glass to create depth and intense color without paint. Little wonder one window he restored was valued at \$300,000.

"Most cannot be re-created, some up to 75 percent, because of the quality of painters that they had," he said. "And there is the engineering of these panels. You have to take it apart the way they put it together. You can't change what they did. It has to be historically restored, very

intricate and very detailed."

Gilbertson, an artist and designer, was introduced to the trade by his father. After moving here from West Virginia, they began focusing on church window restoration, as well as designing and installing leaded and etched glass in residences. However, preserving history through the restoration of priceless glass artifacts is where his real passion lies.

"It takes a guy like this [Halim] who wants to collect them, who wants to sponsor and preserve these types of windows and put the money into it," Gilbertson said.

For information, call 262-248-8022 or visit [www.stainedartglass.com](http://www.stainedartglass.com).

**SAMPLER LECTURE SERIES**

The McHenry County Historical Society's 26th annual Sampler Lecture Series, which begins March 5 at the Society's museum, 6422 Main St. in Union, focuses on local stories with regional impact.

On Sunday, Gillum Ferguson of Naperville, a retired state and federal prosecutor, will discuss his new book, "Illinois in the War of 1812," and on April 16, Al Jourdan, former Illinois State Republican Party chairman and county auditor, will share behind-the-scenes observations of his time in public service. In between, the focus will be on the Chicago Farmer Movement – a discussion of what it was and tour of farm rooted in that movement. The farm, now owned by Ron and Barb Parrish in Bull Valley, once belonged to well-known Chicago attorney Kenneth Morton Fiske. Craig Pfannkuche of Wonder Lake – a local historian, family researcher and retired teacher – will discuss people's return to the farm, fueled in the '30s and '40s by improved transportation and low land prices.

Many of us have heard about John D. Hertz and Otto Schnering, business magnates of auto rental and candy fame, respectively. At one time, each owned land that now is in Trout Valley. Hertz,

who founded Yellow Cab Co., used his estate to raise champion races horses before Schnering bought the property to breed cattle. But they were just a few the wealthy businessmen who sought to capitalize on land made cheap by the Great Depression, Pfannkuche said. They rented it out to tenant farmers, hunted on it or simply used it as a weekend escape from Chicago. The list includes Chester Gould, creator of the Dick Tracy comic strip; William Stewart of Stewart Coffee fame and Dr. Thomas Brand, who Pfannkuche said used to patch up gangsters on his farm off Allendale Road.

Could cheap land cause this cycle to repeat? Possibly, but Pfannkuche said high crop prices has made ag land valuable. Who would want to sell land that is turning such a handsome profit? All of the programs begin at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$10 each, \$30 to \$35 for the series. For information, call 815-923-2267.

**ART IN ACTION**

The arts come alive with Art in Action, 5 to 8 p.m. Friday at the Dole Mansion in Crystal Lake. The evening includes appetizers, cash bar and art sales, demos and information on classes and lessons. The evening also includes a 7 p.m. performance by Cassandra Vohs-Demann, the owner of A Place to Shine Music.

View acrylics, watercolors, graphic illustrations, and jewelry. Some of the gallery space also will be dedicated to the works of emerging artists and students from Amber Larsen's Creative Artistry School of Fine Arts. Watch live arts demonstrations and learn about group and private lessons. Some participating artists will offer discounts on classes if you register at the event.

Larsen began teaching 30 years ago and still loves creating and teaching many forms of art. Registration for spring classes starts April 16.

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Photo provided

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