

Colby's High Plains Art Club talks about Chinese artist

When High Plains Art Club met at South Wind Plaza on Tuesday, March 9, Marj Brown presented a program on the life of present day artist, Cao Young, who was born in 1962 in China.

According to his biographical sketch, Young was a victim of China's Cultural Revolution because of his family's distinguished background.

When other five-year-old children in China were going to kindergarten, Young was working in the gravel pits where he was victim of a cave-in that nearly crushed the tiny boy in the rubble, but luckily, he survived.

Young soon found that art was the only thing that consoled him. At age eleven he began studying with a noted artist from Beijing.

He often pawned his clothing and went without food to buy art supplies.

At age sixteen, he took the highly competitive National Entrance Exam of Art Universities and scored

Clubs

the highest marks in all of the five provinces; however, due to the discrimination that followed him all of his life, he was rejected. A year later, he took the exam again and was finally admitted to Henan University.

At the university he excelled despite the fact that he continued to be treated as an outcast, and in 1983 he received his BFA.

He became the youngest art professor at Tibet University, and during his years there he immersed himself in the beauty and culture of the isolated highlands.

Later, he became so impressed with the prehistoric cave paintings around Tibet that he lived alone in the deserted mountain caves for nearly a year, accompanied by only a dog, a horse, and gun for hunting. This experience resulted in a remarkable series of paintings that were exhibited in Beijing in early 1989.

The show was an instant success and was covered by international news agencies from all over the world. All of this attention alarmed the Chinese authorities and the police confiscated his paintings and burned seven of them.

Now Young was a fugitive on the run. He and his fiancée Aya Goda, a Japanese art student, set off on an eight-month journey to escape to Japan with the help of the Japanese authorities. Aya Goda tells of this journey in her published book, *Escape* in 1996.

Young began his life in Japan by working as a grave digger and taking small painting commissions. But it wasn't long until the word of his talent spread and he received much larger commissions in the form of large murals.

Soon he was recognized as the nation's most honored muralist. During this time he continued to work on his Tibet paintings—creating a body of his finest work. His Tibet paintings are exhibited in

Tokyo's prominent museums and art galleries, and he has been described by the Japanese press as, "an artistic genius of our time."

Young immigrated to the United States in 1994 in search of tougher challenges and a bigger stage. Collectors welcomed Young's new art, and in 1999 he established an art publishing company known as, Cao Young Editions, Inc.

In just two years he has become one of the most collected living artists in America. Nearly two hundred galleries nationwide have joined Cao Young's dealership, and his distribution network is now expanding into Japan, Canada, and Europe.

One of his most impressive recent works was inspired by the "September 11 Tragedy". This magnificent work of art features the New York firemen raising the U.S. flag at the 911 Site with the glorious Statue of Liberty looming over them in the background. Lady Liberty is also surrounded by other

scenes depicting great moments in American history.

Young wrote, "New York was the first place I lived when immigrating to America. Although I lived there for only three years, I never realized how much the city meant to me until the morning of September 11, 2001: from my home in far away California, as I watched the Twin Towers collapse on my television screen, my heart shattered into a million pieces along with them.

It was at that moment that I realized how deeply I was attached to this remarkable city. Day after day, I mourned for New York.

As 2001 drew to a close, the pain in my heart had not eased. I drove 3000 miles to visit the city—in the heart of which I had once lived, and which I now knew lived in mine."

When Young arrived at the site of the tragedy, he wrote, "Plumes of smoke still issue from the vast wreckage, but what torments my soul is what issues from the mourners around me: grief, confusion, fear.

I am facing a massive wound, a wound that is still bleeding; through the open wound I can see the injured heart of an entire nation."

Young continued, "During an agonizingly cold winter on the Tibetan plateau, when I was so near

freezing that I could feel my body heat draining away, and when I was surrounded by nothing but the wild screams of the wind, I heard one other voice: The Voice of America. Though faint and distant on my tiny short-wave radio, this voice assured me that on our earth, humanity could live in freedom, democracy, and peace; this voice was like a torch blazing in the dark, and it guided my spirit to a diverse and tolerant world, in which all human beings could rejoice."

After the program, Marlene Carpenter, club president, called the business meeting to order. After the routine business, a collection was taken for Blain Sekavec, the grandson of club member, Jo Bricker. The donation will go to the charity designated at his funeral.

The ladies have been instructed to take their paintings to Colby College on April 9 at 2:00 p.m. to get ready for the show that will start on April 12. The paintings will be on display until May 9 at the Cultural Art's Building at Colby College.

Refreshments were furnished by Bev Kern, treasurer, and the meeting adjourned.

The next meeting will be at 10 a.m. on April 13. Marlene Carpenter will be program chairman and Bev Kern will be hostess.

Pi Gamma learns about occupational therapy

The Jan. 16 Pi Gamma meeting was held at the Mary Smith home. Gina Jennings gave a very interesting program on Occupational Therapy. Mary served a delicious dessert pizza. The next meeting will be held on Friday, Feb. 6 at Fairview Estates.

Pi Gamma met at Fairview Estates on Feb. 6. Carol Baker was the hostess. Dr. Michael Thompson, Colby Community College, gave the program on criminal justice. Carol Baker served a very tasty dessert. The next meeting will be held at the Diana Schiffner home on Fri-

day, Feb. 20.

Pi Gamma met on Feb. 20 at Diana Schiffner's. Pat Criss was the co-hostess. Dr. Keith Coplin, CCC, gave an interesting review on his book *Crofton's Fire*. The next meeting will be held on March 5 at Fairview Estates.

Smoky Hills will air 'Our Town' Sunday

BUNKER HILL — History, businesses and local personalities are among the topics featured in the latest episode of the "Our Town" series on Smoky Hills Public Television. "A Day in Ellsworth County" will air at 6:30 p.m. Sunday as part of Smoky Hills Public Television's on-air fundraising event.

This sixth episode in the "Our Town" series depicts a day in the life of Ellsworth County through the eyes of local residents. More than 50 people are interviewed in the hour-long program and all interviews and videography were done by members of the community.

"The purpose of the series is to create the ultimate local program by having local residents involved in

all aspects of the production," said Kristy Nyp, director of communications and marketing for Smoky Hills. "When people from the county are the sources of information and the ones doing the interviewing, they are really able to tell

the story that they want the rest of our coverage area to know about the area where they live."

The Smoky Hills station serves 52 counties in central and western Kansas. For information, call (800) 337-4788 or (785) 483-6990.

Colby Country Club

St. Patrick's Day

Dance

Saturday, March 20 ~ 9-12

~ DJ - Tucker Stover ~

Featured Entress: Prime Rib, Walleye, Breaded Jumbo Shrimp

••Limited Reservations••




Satisfaction is ...

covered with Blue



Charles Krull
Group Consultant



What you want - When you need it.®

www.bcbsks.com

*Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association
®Registered mark of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association
N.A.0001.BCSP

Call your dedicated insurance representative today for:

- a *broad portfolio* of benefit plan options,
- access to the *most extensive* provider networks available,
- prompt, accurate, *award-winning service*,
- valuable tips on how to *lower your health care costs*.

Call 785.628.2863

718 Main, Suite 203 • Hays KS 67601




A GOOD SENSE OF DIRECTION JUST BECAME STANDARD

UP TO 0% APR

FOR 60 MONTHS

OR UP TO \$3500 CASH BACK

WHEN FINANCED THROUGH FORD CREDIT

WITH A MOBILE GPS SYSTEM AVAILABLE ONLY DURING SUV SEASON!

Ford has become the best selling brand of SUV's in America by equipping our vehicles with the right gear to make your driving adventure happen. And we continue that tradition by now offering a portable Garmin GPS system standard with any new Ford SUV you purchase this March during SUV Season. You drive... we'll navigate.

PLUS: GET A NO-CHARGE 3RD ROW SEAT ON EXPLORER 4-DOOR - THAT'S A \$745 VALUE!







ESCAPE

SPORT TRAC

EXPLORER

EXPEDITION

EXCURSION



SEE YOUR LOCAL FORD DEALER TODAY!



TUBBS & SONS FORD SALES

810 S. Range • Colby • 460-6746

www.fordcarsofcolby.com

www.fordvehicles.com

NOT ALL BUYERS WILL QUALIFY FOR LOWEST FORD CREDIT APR FINANCING. Cash back and financing options vary by model. 0% Ford Credit APR Financing for 60 months at \$16.67 per month per \$1,000 financed with 10% down. No-Charge third row seat available on select Explorers from 2/27/04 until 3/31/04. Garmin GPS-V available with new retail purchase/lease of any Ford SUV. Take new retail delivery from dealer stock by 3/31/04. Some restrictions may apply, see dealer for complete details.