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## NNB News : 2013 : 11 : 15 : A New Type of Fun

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November 15, 2013 [Midtown](#) [No comments](#)

## A NEW TYPE OF FUN

BY ALEXA NEWSOME

*NNB Student Reporter*

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. — Painting with a Twist offers a different approach from the traditional painting class. It provides enjoyable, recreational activities for Midtown residents who want to learn how to paint or just want to have fun.

Leslie and Marvin Gay started the company at 2527 Central Ave. in 2009, after moving from New Orleans, La. to St. Petersburg, Fla. Leslie Gay was an accountant and Marvin Gay was a CPA.

"They had something like this in New Orleans called Corks N Canvas," Leslie Gay said. "I just really enjoyed it and always had fun. Nothing like this was offered down here."

Leslie and Marvin Gay originally planned to retire after moving. However, Leslie Gay kept in constant contact with the founders of Corks N Canvas, Cathy Deano and Renee Maloney, after moving to St. Petersburg. The couple, with the founders of Corks N Canvas, decided to franchise the business as Painting with a Twist, the first of its kind in Florida.

Painting with a Twist offers two and three hour painting classes where an artist provides step-by-step instructions. The two hour classes are \$35.00 and the three hour classes are \$45.00. The paint, brushes, and canvas are all provided. Private parties are offered for groups with 10 or more. Guests can pick a class they want to attend and register online. There are a variety of classes offered based on subjects, like animals, landscapes, or abstracts. The schedule of themes is posted one month in advance, along with the times of the classes.

What is the twist? Costumers are encouraged to bring their favorite bottle of wine or beverage. Leslie and Marvin Gay want their guests to enjoy themselves and have a fun experience.

People of all ages attend painting classes for different reasons like birthday parties, date nights, and family events. Customers must be at least 21 years old to drink.

Lindsey Albright, 21, and Jenn Wisse, 22, like having their girl's night out here.

"I just think it's more fun and classy than going out to a bar or club for some drinks," Albright said.

The girls enjoy being able to drink and meet new people, while learning how to paint. Both think it's a nice change of scenery.

"I like that it's an art project that I'm able to finish during each class," Wisse said. "I tend to start things, like crocheting, and I never finish because I forget about it or don't have time."



Alexa Newsome | NNB  
Painting with a Twist's logo is able to be seen immediately as guests enter the building. They offer plenty of space for those who want to have fun while painting.

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Leslie and Marvin Gay always give back to the community through their business. Once a month, they host an event called Painting with a Purpose, where they team up with local charities and non-profits. This event is structured like a regular painting class, but half of the proceeds from that class go directly to the charity. Through these events, thousands of dollars have been donated to many local non-profit organizations.

Painting with a Twist also has multiple fundraisers throughout each month.

The September Painting with a Purpose was hosted on Sunday, Sept. 15. They donated to Faith Hope and Determination, which is a non-profit that promotes awareness for people with blood cancers in the minority community. With an occupancy limit of 50 people, 43 people attended this event. They also had a fundraiser for the Suncoast Basset Rescue on Sept. 7, which was sold out with 50 people attending the event.

The October Painting with a Purpose will be held on Oct. 12, and they will be donating to the Leukemia-Lymphoma Society. There will be three other fundraisers in October. Two are for the American Heart Association, which will be held on Oct. 25 and Oct. 27. The third fundraiser is for the Florida Poodle Rescue, which will be held on Oct. 5.

Leslie and Marvin Gay always try to promote awareness for events through Facebook and by emailing to customers. They will continue to give back to the Midtown community and provide fun painting classes to its residents.

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