

'Hidden gem' Port Salerno trades fishing past for artistic future



Photos by **STEVEN MARTINE** • Correspondent

Billy Selesnick is one of the resident artists at the Fish House Art Center. He has been painting for more than 40 years and has resided at the Fish House for almost one year.

BY **NICOLE RODRIGUEZ**
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PORT SALERNO —

Port Salerno isn't a paradise for only fishermen anymore.

The waterfront town is undergoing a transformation from popular fishing hub to cultural mecca. The face-lift began earlier this year with a still-expanding boardwalk and a monthly art show series on the last Sunday of each month. After more than a year of planning by event organizers and community leaders, the series started in May.

"This event is like a hidden gem in Port Salerno," said part-time Port Salerno resident and event organizer Lindsay Nickerson. "We haven't had anything like this before, with culture and diversity."

The art show series may be just a start. John Hennessee of Port Salerno, president of the Community Redevelopment Association, is working on a 5- to 10-year, multimillion-dollar plan to continue the transformation. Hennessee and other community leaders are in the initial planning stages of creating a village center marketplace with shops, road improvements, new docks and a civic center park.

Since its inception, the free monthly



Barbara Lapham finishes one of her custom client pieces in her studio and gallery at the Fish House Art Center in Port Salerno.

art series has attracted 1,000 to 2,000 attendees each Sunday, Nickerson said, and momentum is still growing. This month's show, set for Sunday from noon to 6 p.m., will feature a new element. For the first time, the event will have a "Kid's Kulture Zone" with face

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What: Cultural Arts Show Series
Where: Port Salerno between the Fish House Arts Center and Gallery and Finz
When: Noon to 6 p.m. Sunday and every last Sunday of the month, year-round
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