

‘One Person Can Make a Difference’



Eight-year-old Amelia Abney’s art has a mission

By Donna Farmer

She plays the piano, dances and paints. She is an eight-year-old force of nature. Her big brown eyes can quickly beguile anyone. Well, maybe not her mom ... all the time. Amelia Abney intends to make more than just a mark on her world, and her world is much larger than Henderson County.



Crista Couch
Photography

Having displayed artistic talent since she was three, Amelia has amazed parents Dusty and Beverly Abney most of her life. The Abneys wonder what life will hold for a girl who wishes for a lizard, chinchilla or ferret for Christmas. Knowing the extremely remote possibility of receiving any of those, Amelia introduces each of her three cats as one of those longed-for exotic pets.

At the tender age of six, Amelia announced to her mom that she just had to “help those people in the Middle East.” Specifically, she wanted everyone in the Middle East who wanted a Bible to have one. If they could not afford or get one, she wanted to help supply it. A mother/daughter discussion ensued about different ways to accumulate funds to work toward Amelia’s goal.

Beverly suggested to her daughter that she save her chore monies and any other funds she received as gifts throughout the year. That, however, seemed much too slow to Amelia. So they turned to a known

way of making money. Amelia’s grandmother, local artist Toni Stanford, had previously sold greeting cards featuring her work. Why not do the same thing with her own art, Amelia reasoned.

So Beverly began to photograph her daughter’s paintings and drawings and then print them out on greeting card stock. The cards are available for purchase at the “Art For Missions” Facebook page and at Gallery 211 in Athens.

Amelia’s cards have raised over \$1,000 so far, all of which is given to the charity e3 Partners “to help provide Bibles in the native languages of the people they minister to, along with other necessities,” explained Amelia.

When her ambitious dream became reality, Amelia decided some of her artist friends should get involved. Consequently, the card choices now include artwork from friends Jasie, Adreanne, Bri and



Noah. Amelia and her friends share or have shared art teachers. She “loves” Charlie Bullock and his group art class, as well as Christi Barrett. Of course, she includes “My Toni” (Amelia’s name for her grandmother) among her favorite art teachers.

Teachers and her own imagination have prompted Amelia to produce a wide variety of paintings: a stunning Christmas cardinal, a happy frog atop a lily pad, a fuzzy caterpillar, a shimmering bee and

flower, a musk ox, a proud stag against a backdrop of forest, friendly dogs and prim felines. All of nature appeals to Amelia.

Challenged by most things new, Amelia recently took to making her own paints. Under My Toni’s tutelage, Amelia found appropriate colored sandstone, pounded it into powder with a hammer and experimented with just how much water she needed to make paint. The resulting sunset fills a canvas and is more than a little intriguing.

Amelia and friends have added plenty of delightful Christmas-themed cards to the current collection. Ornamented tree limbs, snowmen, Santa’s mid-section (have to see this one to truly appreciate it!), reindeer and more are available on Facebook and at Gallery 211 on North Prairieville Street in Athens.

When asked what Christmas gift she would give to other children if she could give them anything, Amelia quickly replied, “It would be a Bible.” It’s her favorite book.

Amelia said she wants all people to understand “one person can make a difference if they try.” Age is simply a number. Ask Amelia.

To see the cards or get more information, visit [facebook.com/art4missions](https://www.facebook.com/art4missions) or email artformissions@hotmail.com.

