



THE LIFE OF A STARVING ARTIST

And Our Desire to be Nude.

Three years ago, Lee and I had a huge life changing experience. We left our jobs of graphic design and association management to pursue Lee's passion to paint. We were both age of 50. While Lee has long had a gift for painting classic nudes in oil, his newest passion was tapped when we went on a Caribbean cruise to celebrate that big birthday, and he was enchanted by the color of the ocean water (which he had never seen in person). That awakening started his line of acrylic tropical abstracts, which we now show at art festivals in many states, often Florida.

Driving back and forth from our home in Nashville to Florida for weekend art festivals is tiring. Being nudists, starving artists, and the age at which we are, we prefer to find either free lodging to save our bank account or clothing optional lodging to save our sanity for the weekdays between festivals. It is these weekdays when we search for opportunities to decompress and work in a relaxing environment, rather than drive up and down our I-75 corridor. We recently found such opportunities.

In November, we participated in the Osceola Fall Art Festival in Kissimmee, FL and were housed by our nudist snowbird friends, Fred and Lana, at Cypress Cove, just a 15-minute commute to our festival site and offering us the comfort of a friendly home for our exhausted bodies at night. The following weekend, we had a show in Sarasota. We needed to move on and make room for Fred and Lana's next guests, and we were alerted that the Clothing-Optional Home Network (C-OHN) had its first Florida member property, which happened to be in the Sarasota area. Yeah!

Originally from Toronto, our "Casa Alegria" hosts retired in September 2012 and settled into their dream home in the Sarasota area. Once purchased, they custom-designed the pool and hot tub in their very private back yard.

A few months after they relocated, they saw an article in the AANR Bulletin regarding the Clothing-Optional Home Network, which reminded them of the pampering, good food and romantic setting they themselves had experienced when they stayed at a clothing optional bed and breakfast years before. Hmmm, why couldn't they replicate that feeling, share their peaceful and private sanctuary with others and provide that same level of expert care in their new home? Well, I am here to tell you that they most certainly can, and they have!

Casa Alegria opened as a clothing-optional B&B in May 2013 after being screened

and trained by C-OHN. C-OHN screens the guests as well as the hosts, alleviating any anxiety that hosts (or guests) may have about strangers coming into their home. Fortunately for us, Casa Alegria had no guests scheduled for that weekday and we already had a relationship with the C-OHN owners, so we were pre-screened! Yeah again!

Those three nights between festivals were so relaxing; the heated saltwater pool and hot tub, the poolside gourmet breakfasts (which some of you who follow us on Facebook (@aunaturaleimages) were witness to), and the outdoor bar area with our own mini-fridge where we could work on our laptops with the sun on our bare backs. Can't beat those amenities! We plan to visit our wonderful hosts again, and we just hope we can fit in to their vacancy schedule when we are accepted into the next art festival in the Sarasota area!

Cat Fenner is the business side of her and Lee Wilson's endeavor, au Naturele Organic Images LLC. Lee's art can be seen on their website, www.aunaturaleimages.com.



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