

PROGRAMS: Independence Network

DATE RUN: June 26, 2021

SOURCE URL: https://www.mainlinemedianews.com/mainlinesuburbanlife/canine-beauty-artist-publishes-the-dogs-of-narberth/article_ce236ba2-d37b-11eb-bbf1-dfc0591747e4.html

Main Line Times

Canine beauty: Artist publishes 'The Dogs of Narberth'



Dillon Shea, outside the Narberth Book Shop where his book has been available. Photo by Linette Kielinski

By Richard Ilgenfritz
Jun 26, 2021

NARBERTH – Dillon Shea of Narberth has such an incredible love for dogs that he walks them on a volunteer basis.

But what happens after you've walked dogs all over town? If you're an artist, you draw them.

Now Shea has a book called "The Dogs of Narberth," a collection of drawings of dogs he's walked over the years.

Shea is on the Autism Spectrum and is a member of the JEVS Independence Network in Narberth. The Independence Network is a supported independent living program that empowers young adults with disabilities to live independent and full lives.

"It's fun. It feels good," he said in a recent interview about why he draws.

After completing the first volume of "The Dogs of Narberth," Shea has a second volume and is now looking towards a third book.

"It took me two years to make it, and I'm trying to make books ... that people will love. What more do people love more than dogs," he said.

His love for dogs led him to become a volunteer dog walker at Saved Me, an adoption service located inside Doggy Style Pets in Merion.

After having walked the dogs that were up for adoption, Shea decided to draw them to help advertise they were looking for new homes. With each drawing, he would do a little write-up about each dog. After amassing a small collection, he and his parents decided to look for a publisher to compile them into a book.

As his reputation for caring for dogs grew and the drawings began getting popular, others around Narberth asked if he could draw their pets.

Shea earned a BFA in illustration and graphic design from the University of the Arts. After college, he moved to Idaho, but then came back to the Philadelphia area a few years ago and is a member of the JEVS Independence Network.

JEVS is a supportive independent community with members living in their own apartments in Narberth. The organization works with its members on issues such as daily living skills – cooking, cleaning and budgeting. A second area is having a dedicated employment specialist work with members on resume building, job searching, and interviewing.

A third component of JEVS is socialization for its members, with an events calendar.

When he first came back to Philadelphia, he was renting an apartment, but since then, his parents helped move him into a condo that he now owns.

"Independence Network groups are great, and there are so many sessions," he said. "I get to share my book. Lots of in-person events, including exercise. I get to do more now with my life."

Looking towards his next thing to draw, he's considering doing a book of characters of the recognizable people in Narberth.

For more information on JEVS, visit their website at www.jevshumanservices.org/philadelphia-independence-network.