

Family Matters

Sisters reunite on Sanibel, art the common thread, an overdue visit

BY BRIAN WIERIMA

Over the course of the last 40 years, Sissi Janku has experienced the world by living in all corners of the globe, then painting her experiences on canvas.

And she's been everywhere, moving at 23 from her native Germany to Hawaii, later living in Los Angeles, Mexico, Shanghai, finally settling in Florida 20 years ago.

But though the artist has enjoyed extensive travel and has made a deep imprint on Southwest Florida, one adventure was long overdue—Sissi and her four sisters in November reunited on Sanibel. It was memorable and emotional, their first visit together outside Germany in 40 years.

Through most of November, the sisters—Sissi, Gitti Pierce, Emmi Gognial, Inge Bock and Roswitha Shanahan—were sharing their experiences and family stories. And, boy, did they have fun doing it, logging plenty of beach time, painting and talking, catching up on family affairs. “Inge [the eldest sister] worked

The Janku sisters, brothers and parents in Europe (left), and the sisters on a first Sanibel visit in November (below). They logged painting and plenty of beach time.

