

Redlin's famous work is featured in his Watertown, S.D., museum.



## Visit The Redlin Art Center In America's Heartland – For Free

By Dee Goerge, Contributing Editor

The Redlin Art Center has 167 original oil paintings in a 52,000-sq. ft. building in a beautiful 30-acre park—and it's free.

"The building is unexpected on the South Dakota prairie with beautiful granite and crystal chandeliers. It's very well done, and the Redlins spared no expense," says Julie Ranum, executive director of the center built by the Terry Redlin family in 1997.

It was Redlin's way of paying back the state and giving folks a reason to visit his hometown of Watertown. The paycheck was for the \$1,500 scholarship South Dakota gave Redlin after he lost a leg in a motorcycle accident when he was 15. He used the money to attend art school, leading to work as a commercial artist before venturing on his own to paint wildlife in 1977 when he was 40.

Some FARM SHOW readers may have seen his work on the covers of "The Farmer" magazine. Redlin exchanged cover art for free ads. That and an ongoing partnership with Ducks Unlimited brought attention to his work and led him to expand into other areas.

"Visitors at the center will see the American rural landscape as it existed throughout Terry Redlin's life. Nothing needs explanation. He's known as the 'Master of Memories.' He captured his memories and our memories, too," Ranum says.

Two popular prints sold online and at the center's gift shop are "Evening With Friends" and "Best Friends."

His work also includes serious topics that

touch and affect visitors. "An American Portrait" has seven paintings that follow the life of a boy and his journey through high school, college, and military service. It ends with someone delivering a notice of a soldier's death. It was Redlin's way of dealing with and honoring the death of his brother-in-law, who was killed at the Battle of Khe Sanh in Vietnam.

Wildlife, working horses, farmsteads, and most rural scenes imaginable can be found in the artwork throughout the center, thanks to Redlin's son, Charles, who convinced his father to stop selling his original paintings starting in 1985.

"We hear from people who collect Terry's art that to see the originals is amazing because of their sheer size. They have such depth that they seem almost three-dimensional," Ranum says.

She suggests planning a few hours at the center. A video in a 108-seat theatre tells Redlin's story from his youth to his struggles with dementia. Take a self-guided tour through the center's three stories of art.

The Redlin Art Center is open year-round, seven days a week from Memorial through Labor Day, and closed on Sundays and major holidays (July 4, Christmas, etc.) during the off-season.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Redlin Art Center, 1200 33rd Street SE, Watertown, S.D. 57201 (ph 877-873-3546; www.redlinart.com).

## Missouri Dewberries Being Researched

Jeffrey Goss is on a mission to find the best dewberry stock growing in Missouri, and he hopes FARM SHOW readers can help him. Native to Missouri, the dark purple to black dewberry resembles a blackberry, though they're smaller and grow on prickly brambles on trailing vines.

"Dewberries grow in places that are marginal for blackberries and raspberries, like hilly country such as the Ozarks," Goss says.

He received Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) funding to evaluate the productivity and winter hardiness of the three most widely available dewberries and develop crossbreeds with native varieties.

Goss has experience breeding persimmons and pawpaws to develop varieties for specialty crop markets.

"Dewberries can be eaten fresh. The seeds are smaller than blackberries, and the fruit can be made into jam, vinegar, and sometimes wine. In the 1800s, young shoots were eaten in the spring, like asparagus," Goss says.

He's looking for winter hardy varieties in northern Missouri and adjoining states that are nearly thornless and produce a lot of fruit. He invites people to contact him about native plants growing in their area



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His project objectives include developing cultivars suitable for production in marginal areas in economically depressed Missouri. He notes that dewberries also benefit pollinators and wildlife, and their root systems help stabilize the soil.

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## Rhodiola Rosea Boasts Healing Properties

Once obscure, *Rhodiola rosea* is gaining global attention for its purported health benefits. A member of the Stonecrop family, *Rhodiola* is related to sedum and other succulents. This golden flowering plant might seem more at home in Siberia than in Vermont, but it's native to both regions. Nicknamed "Arctic root," "roseroot," and "golden root," it thrives throughout cold, mountainous areas, as it's resistant to extreme drought and cold spells.

While roseroot maxes out around 16 in. tall, it forms a thick rootstock that smells like roses when you cut it. In these drab landscapes, it stands out with yellow, red-rimmed petals. It'll thrive within alkaline soil exposed to freezing temperatures and minimal rain.

According to historical records, *Rhodiola* has been used medicinally since the first century, though it became especially popular among the Vikings. In Alaska, the root remains a traditional food source.

High levels of vitamin C and phenolic compounds have contributed to its classification as an adaptogen, a natural substance that helps the body respond to stress. Today, it's used as an herbal supplement for anxiety, altitude sickness, and improved cognitive performance. Two of the compounds within the plant—rosavin and rosinarin—may improve brain function and physical endurance. Some take it to reduce fatigue related to prolonged, chronic stress.

Peer-reviewed research is limited but shows promise. For example, one study of 50 adults who took 400 milligrams of *Rhodiola* daily for 12 weeks noted improvements in



*Rhodiola rosea* thrives in cold, mountainous areas and is resistant to drought.

mental speed and capacity during cognitive performance tests. The plant is considered safe when taken as directed (around 400 mg per day), though its potential side effects of lowering blood sugar and blood pressure may be dangerous for some users. Unfortunately, growing demand for roseroot has threatened the plant. Most of the medicinal supply comes from wild harvesting, leading to scarcity, environmental degradation, and illegal harvesting in protected areas.

You can grow *Rhodiola* at home by surface sowing it into well-drained sandy loam within a greenhouse in the spring. The seeds should germinate in 3 weeks. Once they get strong enough to transplant, place them in individual pots and grow them in a greenhouse for their first winter. Plant the seedlings outside in the early summer of the following year. Sunny spots work best, and the plant makes an excellent ground cover. Once established, the plants make for a low-maintenance and drought-resistant ground cover that's sure to attract attention.

## She Makes Gourd Jewelry

Rachel Pauli is passionate about gourds and turns them into works of art, especially wearable works of art. She grows, makes, and sells "Gourdeous Jewelry," brightly colored, lightweight earrings made from gourds.

"When I painted my first gourd, I thought how light it was," recalls Pauli. "I asked myself how I could utilize it. Most earrings are so heavy that making them from gourds seemed like a natural fit. I can make even larger earrings with gourds that are light as a feather."

Working with a coping saw, sandpaper, and elbow grease, she began turning pieces of gourd into earrings and selling them on Etsy, an online marketplace. She posted her work on Facebook and Instagram, and the word spread. While still mainly sold in her region, she's starting to get customers nationwide.

Increasingly, she's asked to make earrings for an entire bridal party out of the same gourd. "I show the bride my color pallet and gourds, and she'll pick the color and shape she wants," says Pauli.

Pauli says the gourd's shape makes it conducive to handmade jewelry. The curves work with and against her, preventing her from using traditional mechanized equipment. It's hands-on from beginning to end.

"I grew up gardening and was an art teacher," says Pauli. "I always felt that art and nature went hand in hand. With gourds, my art starts with me planting a seed."

Pauli has a small garden plot alongside her house. Each summer, she grows about 100 bottleneck gourds, dries them, stores them, and then cuts them up for her artwork. In a 40-hour week, she can make 40 to 70 pairs of earrings.

Growing her own medium appeals to her, noting that no factory creates it, packages it, and sends it to her.



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"The gourd has to mold for it to dry, which creates patterns almost like marble or granite," says Pauli. "I use a lot of art ink, which has a translucent quality. It doesn't cover the natural texture. It accentuates the beauty of the natural gourd. I feel like I'm painting sunset after sunset and landscape after landscape, reflecting the natural world."

One of the things Pauli likes most about her gourd art is how accessible it is. It requires very few tools, is low cost, and her techniques are easy to share, whether with adults in the community or grade schoolers. She also emphasizes the sustainability of art made with natural materials.

"I want to get the word out about gourds," she says. "I never knew until I was in my 30s what an absolutely fascinating plant it is. It's a win if I can get people thinking of getting into the garden and using natural materials for art."

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