

# Arts league honoring fallen

By Amanda Crissup  
DeKalb Neighbor Staff Writer

A picture is worth a thousand words, but to Lisa Gleim-Jonas, Marietta portrait artist and co-founder of the Atlanta Fine Arts League, a portrait speaks volumes.

"You can look in the eyes of that painting and you can see a sense of that person," Mrs. Gleim-Jonas said.

The arts society has launched "Art From the Heart," a campaign to paint portraits of Georgia soldiers who have died while serving in Iraq or Afghanistan as a personal memorial for their families.

She said the idea for the head and shoulder portraits is based on Portrait Project 9/11 that memorialized those killed in the World Trade Center and Pentagon attacks.

"When we went off to war, I said yes. We have to do this for our Georgia soldiers," Mrs. Gleim-Jonas said.

Patricia Roberts, of Lithonia, recently received Mrs. Gleim-Jonas' portrait of her son, 22-year-old Army Spc. Jamaal Addison. Addison, who died March 23, 2003, in Nasiriyah, Iraq, was the first Georgia resident killed during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Ms. Roberts has photographs of her son, but it's just not the same, she said.

"All the pictures I've had prior have been with him in his uniform with that firm, serious look. But my son was a really warm person," Ms. Roberts said.

Mrs. Gleim-Jonas painted Addison's portrait based on some of those photographs and conversations with Ms. Roberts. His portrait now sits in Ms. Roberts' living room where she raises her 5-year-old grandson, Jamaal R. Addison II.

"Constantly, wherever I go, he's watching me and smiling. I love the picture; it's beautiful," Ms. Roberts said.

It took Mrs. Gleim-Jonas about three weeks to finish Addison's portrait and she's already working on her second portrait of Seaman Hospitalist Zach Alday, 23.

For the 35 professional artists, the project takes away time they could spend on commissioned pieces or for-profit works, but that's not the point.

"It's got to be so hard to lose someone in that way. I just really feel for the families and wanted to do something," Kennesaw artist K. Ashley Pittman said.

Kathleen Ryan, another artist who works from her home studio in Marietta, said the way the community has banded together is "just astounding."

"When you do something nice everyone does something nice, too. It

## Information

If you or someone you know has lost a loved one in Iraq or Afghanistan and would like to receive a portrait of your soldier, e-mail the Atlanta Fine Arts League at [AtlantaFineArtsLeague@yahoo.com](mailto:AtlantaFineArtsLeague@yahoo.com), type "family" in the subject line.

snowballs a little bit," Mrs. Ryan said.

A group of doctors who wished to remain anonymous donated all the canvasses and the frames for the 20-inch by 24-inch oil portraits.

So far, the arts society has 32 portraits to complete, but Mrs. Gleim-Jonas knows there are more families out there and wants to reach them all.

"There are about 80 families, so that's 50 we haven't reached," Mrs. Gleim-Jonas said. "This is not about the art society, or the artists. It's about the family."