

## **Zonta PEEK House Article - FINAL**

**Submitted by Claire Mallon**

### **Zonta's "PEEK at the Unique" to feature Eckert home and art collection**

The first house selected for Zonta's annual major fundraiser, "A PEEK at the Unique," is a magnificent old-Florida style home designed and built in 1984 by Jane and Henry Eckert, founders of Eckert Fine Art in Naples. Sponsors for this PEEK home are Bob Wigley and The Sanibel-Captiva Trust Company. Scheduled for Saturday, March 1, the tour offers PEEKers an opportunity to view four of the islands most unusual homes and at the same time to help improve the lives of women. Monies raised by the PEEK are granted to local and international organizations to advance the status of women and girls.

At the Eckerts' home, PEEK attendees will view many selections of sculpture and paintings which represent various genres, and blend art and ideas with humanitarian endeavors from several continents. In 1973, Jane and Henry founded their first gallery in Indiana, specializing in 19th and early 20th Century Regional Artists. Then, in 1996, the husband and wife team moved to Florida and opened a gallery in Old Naples featuring the finest of Impressionist, modern and contemporary art with an emphasis on work from the 1950s to the present. Both Henry and Jane lecture on art, publish books and curate shows at museums. Their gallery has mounted important shows for and worked with such successful artists as Robert Rauschenberg, Darryl Pottorf and Don Gummer (actress Meryl Streep's husband). In a recent interview, Mr. Eckert stated, "It is the fun of learning rather than the fun of collecting, that we love."

Rhonda Cook, the Eckert's gallery director, will be the featured speaker during the PEEK tour. She will highlight the Eckert's artwork and the artists, as well as the emphasis that Jane and Henry place on research and publications, and their promotion of new and upcoming artists.

In addition, PEEK attendees will learn a bit of Sanibel-Captiva history. In the late 1940s, most of the population on the islands was located on Captiva with only a few homes on Sanibel's west end. The Eckert home is located on the site where three of the oldest houses on Sanibel once stood. These pre-war houses near Blind Pass on San-Cap Road are featured in the novel, "The Other Side of the Bridge", by Ted Levering. Much of the novel took place near or on the Eckert property. These houses were eventually razed.

The Zonta Club of Sanibel-Captiva is a service organization of professional women working together to provide hands-on assistance, advocacy and funds to strengthen women's lives on the islands, in Lee County and around the world through Zonta International. Additional information about Zonta is available at [www.zontasancap.com](http://www.zontasancap.com). Tickets for "A PEEK at the Unique" will be available starting February 1, by calling (239) 395-4637.

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The home of Jane and Henry Eckert features a wide variety of art and sculpture.



The Eckert home is sponsored on the PEEK tour by Bob Wigley and the Sanibel Captiva Trust Company.



PEEKers will be treated to spectacular views from the Eckert home.



A view of the Eckerts' living room from the balcony shows artwork on every wall.