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News-Review

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Preserving the family farm



Submitted photo

Webster artist Rollie Brandt works on a scene of barnyard chickens in her studio.

WEBSTER — Local artist Rollie Brandt sees more than just pretty scenery wherever she drives. Cresting a hill or rounding a bend in the road can offer inspiration for her to go home and create an original painting of what she sees — a family farm with the sunlight on it; dairy cattle peacefully grazing in a field; an old barn that is showing its age; a silo covered in vines.

Recently however, Brandt has focused on

the family farm, which she feels is slowly disappearing from the rural landscape.

"I want to preserve some of these beautiful pieces of rural Americana if I can," she says, and she has attracted the attention of one of the country's top calendar card and gift companies, Lang, who will produce a 2009 and 2010 calendar of Brandt's work in a calendar titled "On the Farm."

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Artist: Brandt paints area farms

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Several of the images will be farms, barns and animals found on local farms in the area.

"I have met some of the nicest people by simply stopping by to get permission to walk around and take reference photos," Brandt said. "Many of the farm families I've met have some wonderful stories to share and have been so hospitable. I sat with one nice woman my age at her kitchen table and learned of her husband who died recently of cancer. I met another woman who's husband was born and died at 87 in that same farm house. It's not only been fun to paint these farm scenes, but I have made some wonderful acquaintances."

Brandt is currently painting a flock of chickens and the rooster, "Alfred" who live at the Wagner Dairy Farm.

"I live just a mile or so from this nice family farm and on

my way home from work I stop and buy their delicious fresh eggs, pet the dogs and visit with LouAnn," she said. "They are such nice friendly people ... even the dogs."

Brandt said her next painting will be of the unique white round barn located on Highway 2.

The 2009 Lang "On the Farm" Wall Calendar should be available next summer and fall from Wild Wings and countless other gift shops and stores throughout the country, as well as directly from the Web site at www.lang.com.

"I think it will especially be enjoyed by people here in my area because they will be able to recognize most of the scenes that I have painted," Brandt said.

Brandt has been a painter for most of her life and in 1993 Wild Wings, headquartered in Lake City, and now owned by Cabela's, published her first limited edition print of a Webster boy ice fishing. Known for her realistic paintings of "kids being kids" she has had 22 prints published over the past 13 years with Wild Wings, who publishes and markets both original