

Womeninc

Rebekah
SCOTT

Designer and businesswoman

Artist Rollie Brandt
captures the beauty of the family farm

SPRING
Fashion Trends

Tina & Lena
25 years of comedy

www.readthestories.com

U.S. \$3.50 April/May 2009



What's it worth?
How to determine the value of
your antiques and collectables

Win a
\$1,000
shopping spree

Rollie Brandt:

By Myrna CG Mibus

Capturing Memories of the Family Farm



Always on the lookout for new things to paint, about three years ago artist Rollie Brandt saw an old white barn with vines growing up the silo near her home in rural Webster, Minnesota and thought, "That is so pretty. I should paint it!" So paint the barn she did, paying attention to every detail of the historic white barn, capturing the light of the sky, the texture of the vines and the colors in the stone foundation.

While she worked, Rollie never guessed that painting one old white barn was going to turn into a passion for capturing the glory of the family farm with historic barns as the main character. Nor could she have guessed that painting farms would help her evolve as an artist and lead to new opportunities for marketing her work. Rollie simply wanted to capture the beauty of the iconic barn near her home. With each brush stroke she smiled as she remembered being a little girl on her grandpa's farm, of leading his plow horse to a fence and climbing on, her legs sticking almost straight out as she straddled the

mare's wide back and rode through the field.

Rollie enjoyed painting that first barn so much she searched for other barns to paint. The nostalgic, simple beauty of her farms dovetailed nicely with her paintings of children hard at play, of little boys ice fishing, of horses grazing in a field. And when her publisher, Wild Wings, asked Rollie if she was interested in gathering a dozen farm-themed paintings for a calendar, Rollie jumped at the chance. The result was the 2009 *On the Farm* calendar, published by Lang Company, which features twelve of Rollie's farm paintings. Response was so positive the calendar sold out right away and the 2010 calendar will be ready for stores to purchase this spring.

Rollie is busy working on her final images for the 2011 calendar and already on the lookout for farms to paint for the *On the Farm* calendar for the year 2012.

While she'll happily paint a farm if someone asks, she finds most of her subjects by chance when she's driving around on errands or heading to Red Wing for a weekend of fishing with her husband, ►



Phil. "Sometimes we're driving by and the light's just right!" Rollie says with an artist's creative enthusiasm as she talks about finding a barn, pastoral scene, or even just some round bales in a field. With narrow country roads and a full-sized pickup it can take some effort, not to mention a delay, in their travel plans, to find a safe spot to turn the truck around so Rollie can jump out with her digital camera to snap a couple dozen reference pictures.

When Rollie gets home she loads her pictures onto her computer and neatly organizes them by subject. She has far more potential projects stored in her computer than she'll ever have time to paint, but when the moment or inspiration is right, she prints out her reference photos and heads to her studio. Then she grabs a primed piece of untempered masonite to paint on and does a sketch of her subject on the surface. With her brushes and acrylic paints at hand she starts painting, making the pencil lines disappear as she makes her subject come to life. Many of her paintings are farm-themed but Rollie still enjoys painting pictures of "kids being kids" and scenes of the outdoors.

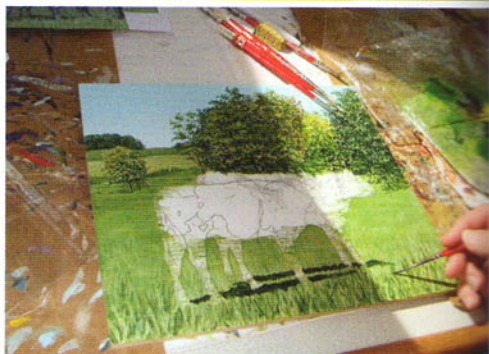
She works on two to four paintings at once and gets them all "to the point where I 'like' them and then it's fun and easy to sit down for a short time and work on one." Even with a busy life, a house to keep and three grandchildren, Rollie paints almost every day in her home studio and paints



from 8 to 14 paintings a year. Total time to create each original work of art varies by size and what else is going on in Rollie's life at the time - in the past year husband Phil fought cancer and son Ben got married - but averages "two weeks for a small painting to a couple of months for a larger, more detailed piece."

Just like every family farm, each of Rollie's paintings has a story that goes along with it. The chickens in one painting, Rollie will tell you, are from the farm near her home where she buys eggs. The owner of another farm invited Rollie into her kitchen and shared stories about the husband she lost to cancer. When Phil was diagnosed with cancer two years later, the owner shared her support and encouraged them. One barn she painted is a pristine example of Gothic arch construction that may be torn down to make room for "progress." Two barns she photographed were totally destroyed by a storm last summer, never to be rebuilt. Rollie has become a storykeeper of each of the family farms and even if their buildings fall apart and crumble, the memories live on.

Now, when Rollie and Phil are out and about, Rollie has her eyes open for family farms with character, of horses and cattle in the field with the perfect lighting or a special look that she's after. She's looking for scenes that evoke memories that grab her and beg to be painted. *W*



For more information on Rollie Brandt's art, visit her website at: www.RollieBrandt.com



"When someone in my family is injured, I expect quality care no matter what time it is. At Center For Specialty Care, we have a **24/7 hotline** and we see patients anytime; all they have to do is call."

— Holly Kotewa, C-FNP
Certified Family Nurse Practitioner



717 S. State St. • Fairmont, MN
435 S. Grove, Suite 3 • Blue Earth, MN
(507) 238-4949 • (507) 526-5191
www.centerforspecialtycare.com

