

A prairie home companion

Artist finds inspiration in landscape of Midwest

By Eva McKendrick
STAFF WRITER

Artist Nancy D'Agostino has lived in New York, California, Europe and Arizona, yet it is the Midwest where she finds inspiration.

"I love the prairie," she said. Pictures of prairies cover the walls of her home studio — paint-

ings of the prairie in pastel, after a storm, at night, with trees in the background.

It's a style she said she could replicate forever.

Some of D'Agostino's themes come from real places, like the Morton Arboretum. Other paintings come from her head.

"I use my imagination to think

of something beautiful and peaceful in my mind," she said.

Working as a full time sales representative, D'Agostino doesn't have as much time as she would like to pursue her passion, but she fits it in whenever she can.

"I paint whenever I have a spare minute," she said. After growing up in upstate New

York, D'Agostino moved to Arizona, where she opened her own art studio and seasonal business.

After her father suffered a stroke 23 years ago, D'Agostino moved to the Lisle area to help him. Now she can't imagine living anywhere else.

This painter is willing to go to any length to put the image in her head on paper, even if it means grinding up the shirt on her back.

Once, she was looking to get the perfect texture of tall prairie grass for a painting, and she thought the ribbed shirt she was wearing was perfect.

Now the shirt is embedded on a canvas, covered in paint.

Her favorite painting?

"The next best painting is the one I'm working on," she said.

D'Agostino is a member of the



Danielle Gardner / Staff photographer

With a wooden bench as her canvas, Lisle resident Nancy D'Agostino paints in her backyard as her dog, Raffie — short for Raphael — keeps her company. The artwork, to be titled "A Prairie View," is for the Benches of Lisle project.

D'Agostino says the bench will include a surprising element that she is keeping secret for now.



See ARTIST, Page 3

ARTIST

From Page 1

Downers Grove Art Guild and is running for president of the group.

She is also a member of the Naperville and DuPage art leagues.

The DuPage Art League hosts shows every month, and D'Agostino tries to get a painting in each time.

One of her creations, an antique milk carton, is on display at 1010 Curtiss St. in Downers Grove.

D'Agostino is working on her bench for the Benches of Lisle project.

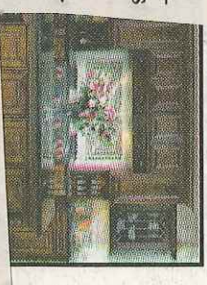
A reception will be held May 24, and then the benches will be placed around downtown Lisle for viewing on Memorial Day weekend.

Until then, D'Agostino is keeping her bench theme

top secret.

"Let's just say that people will want to sit on this bench," she said.

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