

Life scare gives artist new direction

Villager captures Snowmass on canvas, in cards

Story and photo by Ann Larson

SUN SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Five years ago, Ann Doody sold her business in Madison, Wis., and moved to Snowmass Village. Suffering from ovarian cancer, she thought she didn't have long to live, so she decided to fulfill her dreams of being a ski bum and an artist.

Having taught skiing on the weekends in Wisconsin, she had credentials as a PSIA level two instructor and got a job with Aspen Skiing Co. as a ski pro.

Today, Doody has an exhibition of her art work at WC3, the official name for the Woody Creek Community Center, located next to the Woody Creek Tavern.

As a child growing up in Ohio, Doody was always artistic and athletic, always sketching and painting things or skiing and swimming.

When she went to college at Ohio State University, she used her artistic talent to get a degree in medical illustration, studying anatomy and looking at cadavers. She then worked at the University of Illinois in the medical school and learned technical drawing from a medical standpoint.

Doody used that education to start her own business, creating design and construction plans for offices and clinics. Then she became ill.

"Cancer is a strong warrior. I wasn't



Ann Doody

sure how long I would live," she said.

After chemotherapy, radiation and several operations, Doody decided to follow her dreams and headed to Snowmass, even though she had never been here before.

"Aspen and Snowmass ski schools have the best reputation. I bought a small studio on the ski slope and got a full-time job with the Buttermilk ski school. I'm a natural risk taker, so I had to give it a try," she said.

One dream down and one to go.

Doody was an artist, but she wanted her work to be shown in gallery here to really feel that her art was appreciated.

While in Madison, she had turned many of her floral and nature paintings into greeting cards.

"My card line had done really well and is sold at Borders and Whole Foods in Wisconsin," she said.

In her exploration of the Roaring Fork Valley, Doody came across WC3 and really felt at home there.

"It's a lovely place. It's not only a cafe,

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— ANN DOODY

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but also a unique used bookstore and a gallery that has a different show each month," she said.

Owners Kris and Martin Cooney liked her work and decided that she could have a show in December.

Preparing for a gallery show is a daunting task and can be extremely expensive if all the paintings must be framed.

That also makes it expensive for the buyer.

"Artists want to make art, but there are not enough places to sell or show it. What I've been into is making art accessible. I'm trying to bridge the gap that art must be framed and on the wall and that it must be expensive," she said.

She has cut down on the cost by making some of her own frames. There are also prints that are matted but unframed and some are unmatted but made to fit standard frames. Some are original watercolors, including on big piece that depicts the construction of the Elk Camp gondola, which is unframed.

There are also giclee prints of the originals using archival ink on 100 percent

rag paper. These prints start at \$45.

There are also watercolors on stretched canvas with a fine art UV protective coating which prevents fading and scratching. These are easy to clean and ready to hang.

Some of her paintings are winter scenes of the Snowmass area. They are available in giclee prints and also as greeting cards.

In fact, many of her snowy aspen cards are available for sale in the six locations of Skico's Four Mountain Sports: Snowmass Mall, Ullrhot, Viceroy Hotel, Buttermilk, Aspen Highlands and the Sundeck on Aspen Mountain. There are single cards and sets of note cards. One wall of the gallery is filled with a variety of greeting cards.

Some of the paintings are made on handmade paper; that gives the pieces the look of a collage.

With this show at WC3, which runs through the first week of the new year, Ann Doody has fulfilled her dreams.

"All this great life came from having cancer, now I guess I'm going to live," she said.

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