

Jolene Steffen

Artwork



Jeff and Jolene Steffen each grew up on a family farm, Jeff, near Fordyce and Jolene near Crofton in Northeast Nebraska. They married in 1984 where they began a farm life together as they both shared a love for the land and the rich life that the area provided. They also had many hobbies and one of Jolene's was painting. After losing their second and third child, two daughters, to Werdnig-Hoffman's disease (Infantile spinal muscular atrophy), Jeff encouraged Jolene to pursue her life long love of the visual arts and she began to capture the area landscapes, people, animals and flowers that were around her on canvas and paper. She painted in oil and watercolor and when they began to accumulate, a family member encouraged her to attend her first Summer arts show in 1991.

The hobby grew and before long, the room Jeff originally organized needed expanding and eventually they added a studio, gallery and framing area on to their home where they welcome guests to visit anytime by appointment.

Being a self-taught artist, Jolene's realistic/contemporary style has grown from the soft pastels of watercolor florals and children to the rich and vibrant colors of oil landscapes, mostly scenes within a half hour drive from her home studio. Over the years they have traveled to some of the largest summer arts festivals in the Midwest. Together, they agree that the people they have met so far at the shows and through the interest of those buying her art have been the most rewarding part of the business. Jolene has always framed her own works with the help of Jeff. He is now also responsible for the fine art printing of her limited edition prints on canvas as well as paper. She has over 50 editions and nearly 10 are sold out.

Their daughter, Jenna, 23, also developed what began as a 4-H project involving plaster tiles where she imprinted leaves, flowers, seedpods and berries. She painted and framed them in a variety of sizes. For four years she traveled to the art shows and managed to cover expenses for her undergrad education. She no longer has time to devote the long hours required to keep up the production as she is now in medical school. Their son, Cole, 13, is beginning to show interest in a woodworking hobby as he created Christmas ornaments from wood scraps leftover from his Dad's woodworking projects. These items have been displayed at Jolene's annual open house that takes place in the late fall for the past 11 years.

Jeff and Jolene find it most rewarding to work together, each helping the other in the everyday tasks of working a farm and the art business. Together, they agree that if you are passionate, work hard and enjoy what you are doing that success will come. "I am always learning and the subject matter is right around the corner in this beautiful area" comments Jolene. "I am blessed to have an excuse to meet and be connected with the people who are interested in my art."

Jolene welcomes visitors to her home studio and gallery anytime by appointment by calling 402-357-3740 or they can view her website at: www.jolenesteffen.com

