



Remember the *Draw Me* contests in magazines and comic books when we were growing up? I would sit for hours at our kitchen table carefully sketching with my #2 pencil.

I was born in Long Island City, NY, just a stone's throw across the East River from Manhattan. Most summer days were spent sitting on our "front stoop" playing under the watchful eyes of loving family and neighbors. Occasionally, I would bring out a pad and pencil and my young friends would ask: "Oh please draw me!". They were very patient as I attempted to sketch them, one by one. I couldn't have been more than ten years old at the time.

Once, Dad brought home a 50's Esquire Calendar (risqué then, but not by today's standards). The women were painted so beautifully that I just had to sketch them, one by one. That same year, Mom and Dad bought me a Grumbacher Paint Set for Christmas stocked with oils, brushes and canvases. I treasured that wooden case and still have it today.

Upon graduating High School in 1958, I was accepted at the *Fashion Institute of Technology* in New York City. After attending a short time, my parents could not afford to send me any longer and like many young girls of my age, I would take a job in the city. My dreams would have to wait.



In April, 1961, I married my childhood sweetheart, John L. Sullivan and we will be celebrating our 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in 2011. Blessed with two beautiful daughters who are now married with families of their own, we now have four terrific grandchildren, completing our family and we couldn't be happier. The above is an oil painting that I completed from an old 1900 photo of my husband's mother when she was about six or seven years old which I titled "Forever Margaret".

In 1979, I became a partner in a manufacturing business, creating stained glass and mirrors and for the next seven years, traveled every weekend and some weekdays from my 9-5 job in Manhattan to our studio on Long Island. Our designs were

as limitless as our imagination. We sold wholesale and retail and marketed to several chain stores nationwide.

Our family moved to Long Island in 1984 where we lived until we both retired in 2002. John and I agree that moving to the Villages was one of the best decisions that we have made (besides getting married to each other!).



I began painting here in the Villages in 2003, fulfilling a lifelong dream and have taken classes with Janet McGrath; Russell O'Brien; Jo Miller; Jan Ramsey, Jane Slivka; Karlyn Holman, Lynn Ferris, Walt Roman,

Rich Davis, Donna Caputo and Nan Klein, to name a few. I also completed an eight-week course at the Appleton Museum conducted by artist Vicki Pritchard painting in the old masters' style. The work above is an oil painting of our granddaughter Catherine at age six titled: "Kit".

My preferred medium is oil and as a realist, I favor portraits over all other subjects. Most if not all of my subjects are from cherished family photos. I have also worked with watercolor, acrylics, color pencil and pastels. The work to the right is my first pastel of our granddaughter Ashley at age three titled: "Sweet Ashley".



I love joining other fellow artists in the many workshops that are held here in the Villages. As a member of the Villages Art League, I also serve as newsletter editor. I am also a member of the Visual Arts Association and have been a member of the Wet and Wild Watercolor Club.

My favorite place to be is the art room at Laurel Manor every Wednesday morning where I paint with an intimate group of friends who enjoy art as much as I do. I cannot imagine my life without being able to express my love of art and I hope to continue to explore and share this part of me for a very long time to come.

*Thank you for the honor of choosing me the VAL Artist of the Month.*