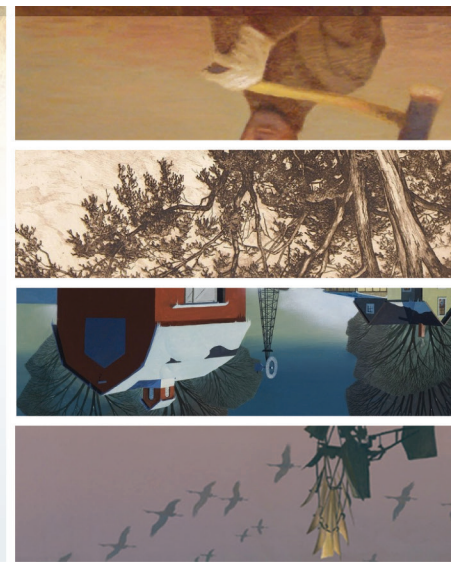


**BONE CREEK**  
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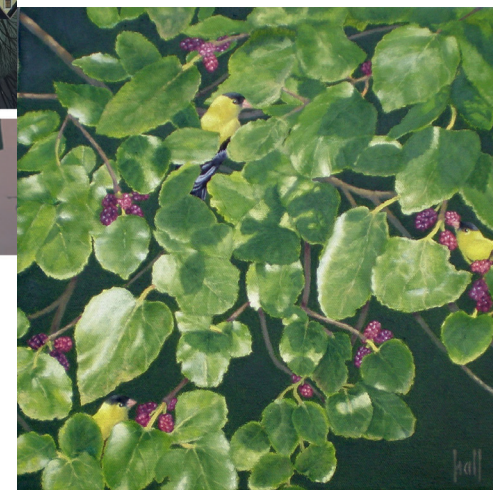
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Wendy Hall, "Gardens and Chickens,"  
 10x10" oil on canvas



Wendy Hall, "Goldfinches & Mulberries,"  
 12x12", oil on canvas

Ashlund, Nebraska artist, Wendy Hall, comes to Bone Creek Museum with a heartfelt collection that was inspired by the family homestead. Each of the paintings is a scene that emerges from her husband's great-grandmother's (Cecelia Hall) journal. The Halls still live on the original homestead. The Hall family homesteaded in Nebraska in 1869.

Two of Mrs. Hall's journals have survived. The one used for this exhibition dates from 1910-1915. At this point in time, Mrs. Hall was a widow. With her steadfastness and the help of her sons, the farm kept going. A record in her diary dated June 13, 1914 reads, "Oh I can hardly tell how much I am enjoying my garden and chickens and my life. I never was so free from care and worry. I know now that my home that I worked so hard to save will not be taken away from me, for if the crops are good we can pay the rest of the mortgage this year." The reader can feel the joy and relief in her writing. Wendy Hall has envisioned this sense of peace in her own way with the painting, "Gardens and Chickens."

However the realities of homesteading did not begin so blissfully. In the entry that inspired the idea for the exhibition, Cecilia was recalling how difficult it was in those early days. "We lived on bread and molasses, milk, salt and potatoes for weeks and I was ravenously hungry for butter, eggs and meat. We had a cow but she gave very little milk and as there was no cellar or anything of the kind and no cold water, there was no cream." Later their meals improved but not without much labor. Constantly gathering eggs to sell and preserving and canning food for the pantry, there was not much time for leisure, except maybe to admire the flowers she loved so much.

Journal entries were selected based on a general historical interest. The artist focused on common themes that many homesteaders would have shared so that the exhibition becomes about the trials and triumphs of many, rather than one specific couple. The determination of the early settlers to stay and make things work is the overarching theme. The diary's play-by-play of daily life makes tangible the life of the pioneer.

Cover: Wendy Hall, "Plowing on the Plains", 10x20", oil on canvas

**BONE CREEK**  
 MUSEUM OF AGRARIAN ART

Agriarian Art  
 NEWSLETTER

FEB  
 2022  
 VOLUME, ISSUE I



# CALENDAR -of- EVENTS

**13**  
MAR  
**Debra Joy Groesser:**  
**Yes, This is Nebraska**  
Through Mar. 13, 2022

**13**  
MAR  
**Closing reception**  
Mar. 13, 2022, 2-4PM

**14**  
MAR  
**Closed for Installation**  
Mar. 14-17, 2022

**18**  
MAR  
**Wendy Hall:**  
**Paintings and Pages**  
Mar. 18-July 10, 2022

## CURRENT Museum Hours

Wednesday-Saturday:  
10AM-4PM

Thursday:  
10AM-6PM

Sunday:  
1PM-4PM

Monday, Tuesday, Major Holidays:  
Closed

Appointments and tours available

FREE admission

402.367.4488  
www.bonecreek.org

**BONE CREEK**  
MUSEUM OF AGRARIAN ART

575 E St, David City, NE 68632

# NEWS & EVENTS

## CAPITAL CAMPAIGN UPDATE

In just a few short months, we have raised nearly **\$2,000,000** in pledges and donations for the renovation of our future museum location, almost one quarter of our total goal. We are thrilled by the support we have received. Many of the commitments came from local donors, people in Butler County and the surrounding area who believe in the value of preserving and displaying art that reflects our families, our culture, and our heritage. A huge **THANK YOU** to everyone who donated to this project—and if you haven't donated, we hope you will!

The campaign includes plans to restore the historic edifice that was first built as a Ford dealership circa 1914. The building will have galleries dedicated to Dale Nichols and rotating exhibits as well as classroom and reception spaces. These are all big changes from our existing building. If you would like to support this exciting project, please contact us by visiting [campaign.bonecreek.org](http://campaign.bonecreek.org).

## DEBRA GROESSER ARTIST TALK

In spite of some wild storms and tornadic activity on Dec. 15th, Debra Groesser presented a talk for the monthly "Food For Thought" program at the Hruska Memorial Public Library. She recapped some of her program for us here:

"My goal in the "Yes, This is Nebraska" project was to showcase the beauty and diversity of the Nebraska landscape. Researching painting locations became a wonderful journey of discovery for both my husband (born and raised in Nebraska) and myself (a Nebraska resident for nearly 55 years now). During the presentation I shared a couple of stories from our travels during this journey. Armed with a big atlas with detailed maps of sections of Nebraska, we set out from Scottsbluff late last summer to explore some of the back roads and parks north and east of there.

I also relayed the story of the "Magic Hour at Chimney Rock" piece. We had arrived in Scottsbluff about an hour before sunset so we decided to try to make it to Chimney Rock in time for sunset. Again, armed with our atlas we found what looked to be a main road to cut from Highway 88 up to Highway 26. It ended up being a very narrow road, mostly sand (!) that went up and over a butte and at one point overlooked a beautiful canyon. The buttes were glowing in the evening light. Once we made it over and back to level ground Chimney Rock came into view with the big pink ball of the sun slowly making its way to the horizon. There had been a lot of smoke in the air from wildfires out west so the sunset was especially beautiful. We made our way to Chimney Rock along the back roads taking photos constantly as the sun was to the left of Chimney Rock then to the right as the roads twisted and turned. It was so quiet and absolutely magical. There was no doubt that this had to be one of the paintings for the exhibition.

Every painting in the "Yes, This is Nebraska" project has a story and evokes wonderful memories for me. About half of the paintings in the exhibition were created on location and the rest in the studio from my reference photos. It is my hope that this exhibition will inspire you to embark on your own journey of exploration and discovery of this beautiful state. There are still a limited number of 2022 calendars available which feature 12 paintings from the exhibition. Contact the museum for more information and to purchase one."



Groesser Presentation



## LOOKING AHEAD

### FARM ISLAND ANTHOLOGY

Below is the third of seven poems by Penny Niemi that will be the inspiration for a group exhibition in 2023, in collaboration with the Tubac Art Center. Application details will be posted at [bonecreek.org](http://bonecreek.org) this month. The official application through CAFÉ opens in April.

### ISLAND MAN

His face is old cow leather, ploughed deep by winters' winds and scorched by island sunbeams.

One cheek houses his favorite chew, and a roguish grin lurks just beyond the teasing glimmer of eyes the blue of meadow chicory.

Sun-washed denim is his uniform, worn proudly, its sleeves rolled halfway up, and grains of tractor grease lay wedged beneath torn nails on hands that undulate in river valley contours.

On snowy legs that have never been undressed to shorts, stout boots laced ankle-length forever guard his pale toes from sandal nakedness.

Excepting Sunday church folk or the café coffee crew, few friends know his thinning hair has streaked to gray and white beneath the stained seed cap. The scent of cows and hay wafts with him.

With nails toughness, work-pumped biceps smoothly slam baled hay to wagon bed. With cotton candy tenderness each new calf receives its name.

He is the last of the original Finnish family who migrated to this island in the twenties of the last Century, clearing and homesteading ten hundred acres and living off the harvest of wild game, crops and land.

Birthed here, raised here, he is father to four and grandfather to ten. His every joy and every desolation have been flung across this dusty ocean, a legacy of near 300 seasons in these uncharted waters.

Deliberate of words, persistent, hard working, authentic, kind, he is this island's undisputed lord and leader.

He is Island Man.



## DALE NICHOLS CORNER

The story of "The Sanley Farm" painting, created in 1933 and missing since 1940, has reached the best possible ending with its new ownership by the Bone Creek Museum, thanks to the Sanley Family. The family pooled their money to purchase the piece on behalf of the museum. Twist of Fate Estate Sales of Omaha worked with all involved parties to secure the sale. The painting is on view in the South 80 Gallery.



Dale Nichols, "The Sanley Farm," oil on canvas, 20" x 24"

## IN MEMORIAM

**J.R. "Jim" Hamil**  
Watercolor Artist  
of Kansas City

## SHOP



Debra Joy Groesser  
"Yes, This Is Nebraska" Calendar  
[bonecreek.org](http://bonecreek.org)