

# Murals a bright career

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Brenda M. Rizwan spends her days turning ordinary bedrooms and hallways into football fields and galaxies.

The 60-year-old Saginaw resident did not discover her skill until 2002. Rizwan feels fortunate for stumbling upon her abilities after completing a mural of Spider-Man on a skyscraper for her grandson six years ago.

"I always liked art, but unfortunately, I never did anything with it," she said. "I was encouraged to get into this to make extra money. I'm fortunate that God blessed me with this talent."

Through her self-run business, Artistic Accents, 1503 State, Rizwan creates murals and faux finishes, does stenciling and paints furniture by appointment for those looking for an added spark in their homes.

Rizwan's most recent job is two murals for Sagar and Saketh Kamaraju, the 8- and 5-year-old sons of Praveen and Ramani Kamaraju, whose home, in The Grove in Thomas Township, was featured in the Parade of Homes over the past two weekends.

Sagar's bedroom wall features a game at Michigan Stadium between rivals Michigan and Michigan State in which he is catching a pass as a Wolverine.

Saketh's bedroom wall is a city vista with a busy superhighway of many types of vehicles, including a car with the Kamaraju family painted inside.

"You can take liberties when you work as an artist," Rizwan said. "(Ramani) wanted something that could last a few years and the kids would still find appropriate. I do like to make things as realistic as possible."

Other projects Rizwan completed include a hallway decorated with painted galaxies in the children's ministry wing at New Life Christian Fellowship,



Rizwan paints a scene with highways, cars, trucks and skyline. Right, a recessed ceiling light is incorporated as a streetlight in the mural.

6115 Shattuck in Saginaw Township. She used pictures from the Internet to come up with her designs.

Receptionist Sarah G. Anders said the mural symbolizes the theme of the Sunday school: "Shine like the stars and the universe as you hold out the word of life."

"(Rizwan) did a good job researching the things to paint on the walls — it took a lot of time," Anders said. "It creates an atmosphere that would put children in wonder of what God has done."

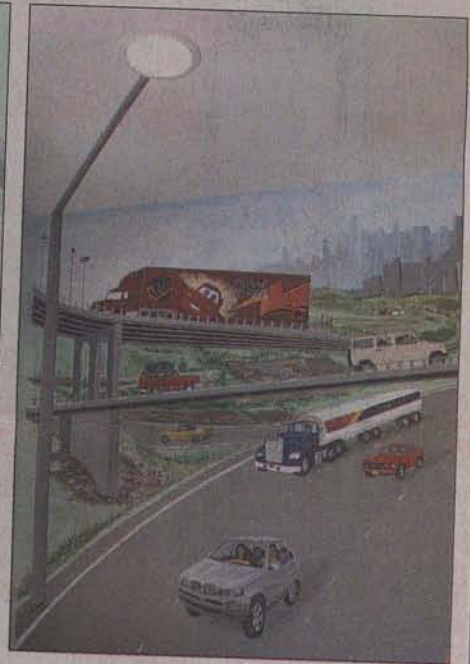
## Training to paint

Rizwan's new job is a far cry from her previous 22-year experience working at Dow Corning Corp. in Midland.

But she said being an artist takes much more time than picking up a paint brush and creating a picture.

Rizwan teaches herself using the library, taking courses with painter Gary Lord in Cincinnati annually after discovering his work on television, and through her own experiences. One of her biggest challenges is finishing a project in the time she estimates.

"I always underestimate the time it's going to take," she said. "There's a lot



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more than just painting. There's design, there's laying everything out, there's sketching ... but I enjoy it. It's a lot of fun."

There also is the business aspect of the job. A Minneapolis woman who started painting at 75 inspired Rizwan to begin and maintain Artistic Accents.

"I was just so amazed — she never thought 'Well, I'm going to die in a few years, why should I start doing this now?' She's 89 now, and she still paints," Rizwan said.

"I thought, you know, just because you get older doesn't mean you're useless anymore. I still feel like I can do this for at least 10 more years if I have good health."

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