

## THE GRATE ART HAPPENING By Bobbi Mastrangelo



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“What’s an Art Happening?” Jacquie Brunner and Glenda Stearns inquired. I told them about my project to locate a sandy environment in which to set my camouflage base and grate. We would add a few effects to create a visual Tribute to Our US Armed Forces. This scene would be reproduced for National Post Card Week.

In the past my annual post card has been based on a photo of a manhole sculpture, which included simulated cement or stones around the cover. Inspired by the artist Jasper Johns who incorporates real objects into his work, this year I planned to move my sculpture into a ready-made setting. Jacquie agreed to be our photographer for this adventure and Glenda Stearns, a Marine Vet, thought she could offer a military point of view.

It was a sunny Saturday morning when we set out from The Solivita Community in Poinciana, Florida. We headed west on Johnson Avenue until we arrived at the perfect sandy setting. Once we found the right spot for the sculpture, we removed the sand gently, being careful not to destroy the little mounds as we set in the base of the grate.

As part of The Grate Art Happening, we included ourselves in the documentation. Jacquie snapped photos of us lifting the manhole grate. Glenda struck a commanding pose. Her camouflage -patterned outfit complimented the camouflage grate.

As “The Grate lady,” I wore a yellow hard hat, fluorescent orange vest, work gloves and boots. The image of a woman holding a manhole cover always invites curiosity and questions. It’s true and very amusing for us. People ask, “How are you women able to lift a manhole grate?”

For the last part of our mission, we scouted around for appropriate additions to the camouflage grate. I found a vine with orange and gold leaves, which I snaked around the opening and the rim. Glenda threw on her tropical hat. Perfect! We had our scene! Together we named it “FREEDOM!”



Digging In



Jacquie Brunner,  
Photographer & Bobbi



The Grate Lady



Glenda Stearns,  
Marine Veteran



Bobbi Checking  
The Scene



Camouflage Grate  
With Grass Accent



“FREEDOM”