

# Where your message has impact

PATRICK BRENNAN  
Times-Journal

St. Thomas is not Hollywood, but that doesn't stop Bob and Gail McNaughton from casting people in movies.

"We help clients tell their story to get noticed," say the McNaughtons, owners of Dog and Pony Productions, Inc.

Spurred on by a career at advertising agency Young and Rubicam in Toronto and a passion for video, photography and client service, Bob started their video production business in 1999.

Their logo, which depicts a dog listening and a pony talking, speaks to two key business qualities Dog and Pony seeks to project, Bob said, "We listen to our customers, then we produce."

The company is becoming more like a virtual ad agency. They produced an integrated advertising and public relations campaign through TV, YouTube and the Internet to promote pork consumption in support of the Canadian pork industry, "Put Pork on Your Fork!" (see photo)

More integrated campaigns are in progress. They also worked with clients to produce several trade show exhibits.

In addition to product and service advertising and promotion, Dog and Pony produces videos for training and special events, Gail said. They often utilize video testimonials for customers to increase credibility and emotional impact.

Locally, they have worked with St. Thomas and District Chamber of Commerce (10 years), Crime Stoppers, Doug



Contributed

"Put Pork on Your Fork" TV filming: (L to R) Dr. Martin Misener, Veterinarian; Lori Moser, Managing Director, Ontario Pork Industry Council; Gail McNaughton, Photographer; Bob McNaughton, Producer; Jim Nakagawa, Videographer

Tarry Homes, Tru-Die, Victorian Order of Nurses, Elgin County Public Libraries, the Ontario Public Service Employees Union and the Middlesex Hospital Alliance.

A new venture for them was a trip to the Holy Land in Egypt, Jordan and Israel, where Bob's video footage and their photography was used for two TV shows and a DVD for Reach Out Ministries.

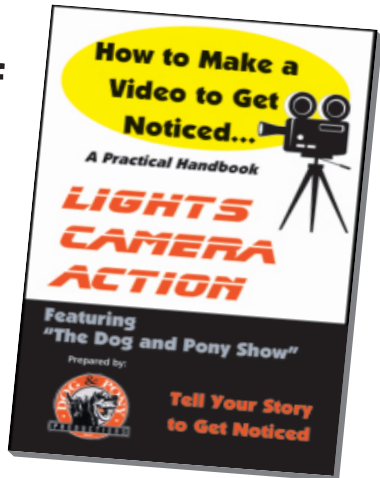
In 2009, a highlight for Dog and Pony was receiving two creative awards in the U.S. for: 1) a DVD promoting the Ontario Agri Business Association and 2) an animated story, video testimonials and research articles on an interactive CD for Schering-Plough USA Animal Health.

Bob stressed the need to advertise and promote in tough economic times, "If you're not marketing and your competitors are, you'll lose out."

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## The Creative World of Gail McNaughton

Gail McNaughton is a good example of how to transform doodles into the foundation for a small business and in fact she would like her cartoon characters to be as popular as the Disney parade of cartoons.

"I have been drawing doodle art for the past four years," she noted. "I have art in my heart and it just came forth and I was surprised that I was drawing angels, mermaids, and other animals. When God hands you a gift you just take it and say thank you and go with the flow."

Her main character is a whimsical creation named Flowercat™.

"Flowercat™ is here to heal the world," she said. "When I draw this character, I'm at peace. It is my contribution to world peace for one must start with themselves first. It is a ripple effect that passes along as an eventual wave."

McNaughton believes people can easily identify with Flowercat™ and her other doodle creations because of society's widespread appreciation for whimsy and fantasy, animals and the angelic world. From the first page it was drawn on, Flowercat™ & Friends™ doodles have been used in one of her 5 books, "To Have A Cup Of Tea With A Cat & Other Cat Tails", greeting cards, mouse pads, bookmarks, poster-art, buttons, paintings, T-shirts and antique rug hooking.

It was this "creative self expression to help St. Thomas" that helped propel the success of the Walk the Chalk art project at the Iron Horse Festival for Gail believes there is an artist in all of us yearning to get out and what better way than with chalk. The medium isn't important but finding the child within and being creative is. It helps to balance life.

In fact, Flowercat™ and many of the other doodle creations decorated a float in the St. Thomas Optimist Santa Claus parade.

On a personal note, Gail's passion for creating doodle characters has a deep and profound meaning since the death of her mother in November, 2008.

From that experience, the character Mommy Millie Bear was born. Out of this has developed the first draft of a book on grief.

"When I draw Mommy Millie Bear, it connects me with my mother and helps with the grieving process," Gail said.

Gail added she has completed writing another book, "Angel Witness" which is due to be released before Christmas in 2009 and is a coffee table book.

"This incorporates angel photography and doodle art," she explained. "I've been taking photos of angels wherever I travel and most recently in the Holy Land."

They are a backdrop to her spiritual poetry, prose and story telling which is the main thrust of the book.

She has created colouring pages from her doodle art that have been enjoyed by children at the Horton Farmer's Market and made their way to third world countries in the form of colouring books. Plans are in the works for Animal Aide in St. Thomas to produce a calendar featuring Flowercat™, the McNaughton family cat, Casey, and a story, on the back cover.

To view her work and her new website, visit [www.gailmcnaughton.com](http://www.gailmcnaughton.com). Gail is a member of the St. Thomas & District Chamber of Commerce and Communications Pivot for the Elgin Business Women's Network. She is also co-owner of Dog & Pony Productions Inc.



Gail McNaughton stands beside a large scale cutout of her whimsical doodle art creation, Flowercat™. (TJ photo by Patrick Brennan)

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