Dear Friends & Family,

I was running out of space in my studio, canvases and frames everywhere. I needed to clear stuff out, but what to do with paintings that I didn't have space for on my walls? Google had a bunch of suggestions, and one of them was to donate my art work to Habitat for Humanity.

So Donald and I took about two dozen shore scenes ~ beaches, the ocean, boats, kids playing on the beach ~ down to Habitat for Humanity's Restore in Freehold, just west of where our shore house is. Somebody told me to leave my paintings in that box over there by the door.

A week later we came back to the store to buy this small loveseat, which that was perfect for our re-designed breakfast room and amazingly cheap. While I was giving the cashier my debit card, she suddenly said, "You're Nancy Tuttle? Let me get Peggy! Please wait right here."

Peggy came out and introduced herself ~ she's the manager of Restore ~ and told me they all loved my work, they looked up my website, they were so excited that I donated so many pieces, and they want to have a special art show starting Mother's Day weekend. What?

I was expecting they would prop up all my paintings on sofas around the store and sell them for maybe $25 each. Then they called me back. They want to have a "Wine & Cheese Reception" for me for invited guests only, and then open up the art sale to the public the next day with an advertising "blast." They suggested I price my paintings for how much they sold for in galleries, and then they would sell them for half that price. They even let me design the invitation cards and mail some to my friends & family.
What??!!

I am beyond thrilled. I immediately got to work and today we are delivering an additional 50 paintings to Restore.

But not everybody sees this the way I do. Donald and I were recently driving my mother (96 this summer) around, shopping and getting some lunch, and she was saying that my art is so wonderful that I really ought to be famous. People all around the country should know my name and see my art and buy it. People all around the world!

I tried to explain that I've learned from other artists that becoming famous and selling your artwork requires a huge commitment of time and effort. I'd have to travel all over to sell myself to new galleries. I'd have to make hundreds of phone calls, engage in social media, meet strangers, attend conferences, paint scenes that are marketable...I don't want to do any of that. I just want to be free to paint when I want to, ride my bike around the park, and eat lunch on the back patio now that it's spring.

My mother insisted that I have an obligation to be famous; I have been given this Great Talent by God and it is my Duty to share it.

Donald said in a gentle voice, "Mom, I don't think you're hearing what Nancy is saying. She doesn't want to be famous."

"Of course she does!" my mother insisted.

At which point I took a different tact. "Mom, I am going to be famous: I'm having an art show at a thrift shop in Freehold."

"THAT IS RIDICULOUS!!!!"

I burst out laughing. It is ridiculous! All I wanted to do was clean up my studio. It is absolutely ridiculous that a group of people who devote their lives to building homes for people who don't have a home would also have the time and energy to help me share my artwork.

It is beyond anything I ever hoped for and I can't stop laughing out loud at how this is turning out.