



Kim Venneman Cooper is donating part of the sales proceeds of her pink chairs to the Breast Cancer Research Foundation.

## Sitting Pretty

BY TIFFANY FIGUEIREDO PHOTO BY RALPH LAUER

Created in honor of her grandmother, Kim Venneman Cooper's pink chair symbolizes hope for those touched by breast cancer.

**K**im Venneman Cooper is in a happy place. She and her husband, Clint, own and operate Village Baking Co., a Colleyville-based artisan bread company, she has a healthy and rambunctious 1-year-old son and is expecting a baby in a few months and, if all that weren't enough, she has designed a chair collection that is enjoying a slow, but steady, growth in sales.

Her full and busy life is not all that different from the women she is beginning to hear about on an increasingly regular basis: women who, in the prime of their lives, are found to have breast cancer. With an estimated 212,920 new cases of breast cancer expected to be diagnosed in the U.S. this year alone, according to the American Cancer Society, it is no wonder that talk among women often includes updates on female friends, neighbors and family who have the disease.

"My sister and I were talking one day about all of the friends we have who've had breast cancer and wishing there was something we could do," Venneman Cooper says. "She came up with the idea of using my pink chair to raise money."

The pink chair in question is the Clementine, one of four chairs in the Ferme Chic collection designed by Venneman Cooper. The feminine chair collection, which debuted in 2003, was inspired by Venneman Cooper's grandmother, Frances "Fanny" Venneman, who, although she lived life as a farmer's wife in the hard-scrabble Texas Panhandle, always managed to look stylish and sophisticated.

"She was a strong woman, but she always had fun. And

she always looked like she just walked off of Fifth Avenue," says Venneman Cooper. "I'm so passionate about my heritage, and the chairs are my way of honoring the land where I grew up and celebrating my grandmother and women like her."

Each of the four low-slung, contemporary chairs in the collection is named for a glamorous woman whom Venneman Cooper encountered while growing up on the 100-year-old Venneman family cattle ranch down a dirt road from her grandmother's place. The modern style of the chairs is accented by luxurious fabrics in lush colors pulled from the Texas landscape: Flourishing Soil, a rich, chocolate brown velvet; Blue Sky, a pale blue suede; Ripening Wheat, a golden silk dupioni; and Prairie Pink, a soft, muted silk dupioni.

It was the pink silk Clementine chair that was the inspiration for the partnership with the Breast Cancer Research Foundation, an organization founded by Evelyn Lauder to raise funds for research in the hopes of eradicating the disease. For every pink Clementine chair sold, Venneman Cooper plans to donate 20 percent of the proceeds to the foundation.

"We thought that the pink chair would be a wonderful symbol of survival or remembrance for people who have either lost a loved one to breast cancer or are battling breast cancer. It is a special chair and is such a nice thing for someone to have in her home," says Venneman Cooper. "I chose to give money to the Breast Cancer Research Foundation because a large percentage of their donations [90 cents for every dollar donated] goes directly to finding a cure."

### Details, Details

In addition to the original dupioni silk, Venneman Cooper is offering the chair in a soft pink cowhide leather version created especially for this project. All of the chairs are handmade by a master craftsman according to Venneman Cooper's specifications and take about six to eight weeks to complete. The silk version sells for \$1,350, and the leather version sells for \$1,550. All of Venneman Cooper's Ferme Chic chairs are on display at The Perfect Petal, 55 Main St., Colleyville; 817-605-3366. The chairs also can be ordered through [www.fermechic.com](http://www.fermechic.com). For more information about the pink Clementine chair benefiting breast cancer research, go to [www.thepinkchair.org](http://www.thepinkchair.org).