

Wildflower Studio blooms in Sisters

By Katy Yoder
Correspondent

After a tough retail season, business owners in Sisters have taken a significant hit. To succeed in such an environment takes business savvy, a great product and a proven track record.

For Chris Nelson and Wendy Rickards, the seed of their idea was to create a studio where they could both make art and sell it directly to their customers.

“We didn’t want to be a gallery,” explained Nelson, “we’re a workspace studio.”

Their new business, “Wildflower Studio,” is a place for them to produce work for their shop as well as other venues. They love the chance to sell their work while they’re producing new things. Seeing people’s reactions helps them be more creative. That interaction fuels new ideas that reflect what they hear from their customers.

Chris is known for her paintings of landscapes, songbirds and flowers. She loves the blur of impressionistic art blended with her eye for detail and color.

Her career in the arts didn’t start as a painter. Chris is well known for her mastery as a framer. With 27 years of experience framing art, she knew her business endeavor had to include that passion, too. Opening the new business has brought back a sense

of fun and creativity when she’s framing. She’s excited about what her customers bring in and the joy of working toward the perfect frame for a beloved artwork.

A recent empty-nester, the roles have reversed for Chris.

“Now the kids are supporting me in my new endeavor as a business owner,” she said.

Wendy is a three-dimensional artist. Her jewelry offers a fresh and unique look for her customers. She also loves working on bigger projects. When you visit the studio, check out the tables in the shop. She built them, and plans on making more metal art in many forms.

Along with being a framer, Wendy has another job that gets her up before sunrise and hard at work for 12 to 16 hours a day.

“Two or three days per week, I drive a log truck,” she said. “I don’t have kids but I do have three Peterbilts!”

Wendy has been driving trucks for as long as Chris has been framing. It’s tough physical work and she’d like to begin the transition into more metal work and less hours behind the wheel. For both women this new business allows them to finally be who they have wanted to be from the beginning. Instead of working all day for someone else, they will be able to make art during the day and spend time with their customers, too.

The studio will feature



PHOTO BY KATY YODER

Chris Nelson and Wendy Rickards have launched Wildflower Studio – an artists’ workspace in Sisters.

other Sisters artists as well. Their plan is to be a boutique versus a gallery.

“There’s so many multi-faceted artist in Sisters, we want to support them,” said Nelson. “We’re not a huge space but we will be varied in what we feature.”

Framing will be a big part of what the Wildflower Studio offers.

“Sisters is growing,” said Rickards, “and we think there’s room for us. We hope to connect with people who want someone with design expertise and years of framing experience.”

Leaving their former employer was bittersweet.

“They’ve been nothing but supportive,” said Wendy,

who is Dan Rickards’ sister. Clearwater Gallery has been a wonderful place to work, but these two ladies are ready to flourish in a garden of their own making. To reach Wildflower Studio email them at wildflowerstudiollc@gmail.com or call 541-904-0673.

Workday set for Sisters bike park

Community volunteers are invited to turn out on Saturday, September 23, at 10 a.m. to start shaping and creating lines and building features for the mountain bike skills area at Bike Park 242.

The bike park located near Sisters High School and Sisters Park & Recreation District will include mountain bike skills features for all skill levels.

Workers will also be marking the jump lines, roll-in and up-ramp with stakes to prepare for dirt delivery from Robinson & Owen Heavy Construction, Inc. Refreshments will be provided.

Volunteers are invited to bring the whole family — Bike Park 242 is for everyone.

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