

New owners re-open Antler Arts

By Jodi Schneider
Correspondent

Jaimi Warren and her husband, James, residents of Alfalfa, took over the reins as the new proprietors of Antler Arts, a mainstay in Sisters since 1995, just days before the well-loved store was to close permanently.

“When my cousin told me that my favorite store was going out of business, we stopped by their huge blow-out sale because we wanted a piece of history to take home,” said Warren.

“My mom suggested that I offer to buy the inventory and keep the store open. I looked over at Antler Arts owner, Sharon Gladden, and she looked at me, we talked, and it happened. It’s been a dream of ours to make a sustainable living with a store like this.”

Warren, who previously owned a tanning salon on Wall Street for 16 years, grew up in Bend as a fifth-generation Central Oregonian.

“My family has a long history in this area, and we still have the wagon wheels that my great-great grandparents used to travel over the Oregon Trail,” she said.

For years, Warren and her husband drove to Sisters every Sunday after church to browse Antler Arts.

“I’ve always come to Sisters to get away from it all, the town has a slower pace that I enjoy,” Warren told *The Nugget*. “And that store was always like Disneyland for me.”

Warren grew up being the kid that had a passion for rocks, like the kind you’d find on display for sale in Antler Arts.

Warren noted, “My dad, Buck Jenkins, was a rockhound, and Oregon has the best thundereggs and petrified wood. That’s what brought my dad here.”

At one point in time during the 1960s and ’70s Jenkins and his partner owned the largest petrified wood and geode collection on the western side of the U.S.

Warren said, “I remember growing up with my dad’s rock cutters, polishers and turners. It was like being a kid at Christmas, because you never knew what you’d see inside a geode after he would saw it apart.”

A thunderegg may be referred to as a geode if it has a hollow inside.

Warren’s dad introduced her to Antler Arts decades ago, and over time Warren got to know the Gladdens.

She added, “Their son Josh and son-in-law Ralle Johnson managed the store

since the owners traveled a lot. And for the last 10 years it was Ralle. We would come to the store, visit and chat.”

One of the things that attracted Warren to the unique store is its diversification. There are “one-of-a-kind” finds; everything from a \$1 purchase up to a stunning handcrafted elk chandelier.

“I love the décor in the store; they had put a lot of hard work into the building to give it the right rustic look, so that when you walk in, you feel like you’re walking back into time like in an old Western town,” Warren said. “And we’re not taking any of that away. What we’ve done is given the store a bit of a facelift. New carpeting etc. We took everything out and we sanded, stained and polished.”

Warren said that the charm of Antler Arts in Sisters is that the locals love it, too.

“The inventory changes on a weekly basis and we believe in recycle, repurpose and reuse. So if we find something at an estate sale that we think somebody would love, we grab it up.”

The Warrens focus on Oregon-made items for the store. They feature handcrafted items primarily from

Central Oregon.

She noted that they will be selling their own items but will also have artifacts on consignment.

“We have two artisans that have been creating antler art for over 40 years, and everything will be integrated into one big store.”

Warren added, “For the last three years I’ve researched my family from North Dakota and found out we originated from the Lakota Sioux Blackfoot tribe.” (Blackfoot Sioux is a division of the Lakota people, distinct from the Blackfoot Nation).

The Warrens have an entire area that will have handmade authentic Native American crafts. Antler Arts will be a blend of the old Western and native American.

Jaimi is also an artist and crafts dreamcatchers, and will be creating dreamcatchers for sale in their store. She will also be displaying her father’s favorite piece, an amethyst geode, and will have petrified wood and geodes for sale.

“I am so blessed with our relationship with the owners, they have given us all their inventory and have paved the way for us,” said Warren. “They have been so



PHOTO BY JODI SCHNEIDER

Jaimi Warren kept her favorite store in Sisters open and operating.

helpful and are like family to us.”

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