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NuggetNews.com

BUSINESSES: Retailers are seeing a lot of traffic this summer

Continued from page 1

How have pandemic restrictions and updated health and safety guidelines affected Sisters businesses?

Harmony Thomas, proprietor of Bedouin on Hood Avenue, said, "The mask mandate that recently went into effect actually makes it easier for all of us. Before they were required, we hoped that when people entered our shop that they would be wearing a face mask for everyone's safety. We now sell face masks, and there's a hand sanitizer station for people that come in through the door. We've had great foot traffic here and patrons have been incredibly positive. And I think it will continue to be a good summer for us."

A slow rollout isn't happening only in places like California. In Sisters Country, some owners also took a wait-and-see approach. Although Janet Kronemeyer, owner of Gypsy Wind Clothing, had curbside pickup, she waited a few weeks after Phase 1 to open her doors.

Kronemeyer told *The Nugget*, "My husband and I are both older and we wanted to wait a bit until we felt it was safe enough to open up

the store."

Although her shop isn't doing business as usual compared to last year, she is content with what business comes her way.

"What I'm trying to do is not to judge this summer by last summer. I can't complain with what I'm being given. So, it doesn't stress me out. I choose not to look at last year's numbers. I'm making the most of what we have. My sales are decent. We are working it out and watching what we spend."

Over on Cascade Avenue, Kent and Marla Stevens, owners of Painted Lady Antiques, were in the process of expanding right before they had to close in March.

Kent said, "We recently opened up another side of our space for vendors to sell their goods. The Sisters community has been really good to us. They've been coming in and buying local. We are keeping our prices down as low as we can to give back as well. We have been extremely blessed and fortunate. Everyone has been working together, it's definitely been a team effort."

It's been an adjustment process since the pandemic began for Kara Lappe, owner of Sisters Cascade of Gifts and The SweetEasy Co.

"We opened Sisters Cascade of Gifts on Mother's Day weekend and it was slow for a couple of weeks and then when Phase 2 happened

everything went crazy busy, although we haven't met last year's goal," Lappe said. "The outside window where we serve ice cream at The SweetEasy Co. remains the most popular even though we have opened the inside of the shop recently. I think people feel safer outside."

She added, "We can pay our bills and are doing the best we can right now. But not having events takes away profit. And with all the new restrictions we have to open an hour early so the staff can disinfect everything, so with that's an increase of overhead. We now have extra staff since we have to disinfect every time someone leaves from a table. It's a little more costly but people are still coming by."

Sarah Wilder, daughter of Jill and Chris Wilder, owners of Sisters Log Furniture & Home Décor, said, "We opened the Friday before Mother's Day, and June was normal for us. But I felt that energetically-wise everyone was very tense."

Chris noted, "We are grateful for every day we are

open. And we keep our doors open wide, so people feel like they are more outside than inside. We are happy and healthy and are very appreciative for all who come in."

Sarah added, "June was great, the same as last year, but it won't make up for being closed for two months. Right now, the problem we see is the ODOT neon sign at the front of town that says to use an alternate route. We want people to go through town, the slower the better for businesses. We need all the traffic we can get!"

On Hood Avenue, shop owners Brian and Heather Olson were feeling positive about reopening their doors to The Hen's Tooth last May.

"We are happy to be open and grateful for all who are coming in," Heather said. "But I finally had to take a comparison how sales are this year from last year. It was depressing. It's just going to be one of those years. The foot traffic isn't so good right now, but I am staying optimistic. We've had to cut our staff some, and without the events, it really hurts."

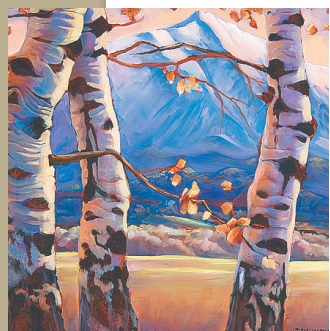
For Ben Redlich, owner of Bullseye Carpet and Upholstery Cleaning, business is better than ever.

He said, "People are concerned, now more than ever, about having their homes and businesses as clean and healthy as possible, so for me business is booming."

“What I’m trying to do is not to judge this summer by last summer.”
— Janet Kronemeyer

ALL NEW! Oregon Artisan Showcase

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