



LUKE WHITTAKER

Purple Cow Toys sales associate Carrie Ank spoke about the classic, retro and award-winning toys that distinguishes their inventory from big box stores. “We have toy lines you can’t buy at big box stores,” she said.

and small gifts, largely due to an emphasis on quality products with a personal touch.

“We try to offer a more personal service and higher-quality product,” said owner and designer Diane Berry.

Berry utilizes local delivery and unique add-ons and arrangements unmatched by big box store floral departments.

As a result, Walmart’s more recent arrival has had little impact, Berry said.

“Costco definitely does with their wholesale flowers. Fred Meyer and Safeway a little bit, too. The big box stores other than Walmart have definitely cut

into business. But for our floral and gift boutique business, we don’t feel Walmart has been any competition at all, because we have two different sets of customers.”

Valentine’s Day is the busiest season, bringing a two-day surge in business each February. Mother’s Day is the second busiest.

“Christmas is probably third, because it goes for about two weeks,” Berry said.

### Award-winning fun

**Purple Cow Toys**  
Carrie Ank, sales associate

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ASTORIA — Curating store shelves with rare, classic and award-winning inventory has become source of pride for another Astoria business.

“We have entire (toy) lines you can’t buy at the big box stores,” said Purple Cow Toys sales associate Carrie Ank.

The store carries an extensive array of classic to contemporary toys from Brio Trains to Mad Matt.

“Mad Matt is extremely cool and sells a lot,” Ank said regarding the soft

modeling dough akin to a Play-Doh 2.0.

“It’s like Magic Sand but it’s non-toxic, gluten free, casein free and doesn’t stick in fabric,” Ank said.

Several toys on the shelves are award winners, including a lightweight, inflatable ball engineered from kite material for indoor use called the Ollieball.

“It’s used for playing ball in the house,” Ank said.

“We have a lot of stuff designed to be played during those months of sideways rain.”

Classic retro toys from the 1940s, 50s,