



LUKE WHITTAKER

Sea Gypsy Gifts owner and artist Naomi Pena poses with one of her recent picture frames created using recycled glass. “We have more than 40 local artists in here. We try to specialize in recycling as much as we can,” Pena said.

beautiful home and I love it here.”

Rhoadarmer said the downtown core has resisted burgeoning big box stores outside Astoria, largely because each caters to a unique customer base and carries unique inventory.

“As far as the retail downtown area, I think everyone has such a niche that people are attracted to it. It hasn’t infringed much on our retail,” he said.

Each design in the store is made by Northwest artists, often Rhoadarmer or one of three business partners.

“It’s all local and one-of-a-kind. You won’t find it anywhere else.”

Recycled and reborn

Sea Gypsy Gifts
Naomi Pena, artist and owner
1001 Commercial St., Astoria
360-510-2488

ASTORIA — Dozens of local artists have work displayed in one downtown Astoria business that specializes in bringing new beauty to the broken and discarded.

At Sea Gypsy Gifts former glass bowls and plates find new life as gar-

den flowers and old wine bottle bottoms become homemade candles, while the tops are chopped into wind chimes.

Custom-made recycled glass windows are among their most popular specialty items.

“All of it is recycled,” said owner and artist Naomi Pena. “We have more than 40 local artists in here. We try to specialize in recycling as much as we can.”

Pena said the big box stores haven’t slowed her business, which recently celebrated five years.

“Every year we’re doing a little bit better than that last year, so I don’t feel like Walmart affected us. But our stuff is way different — it’s not from China,” she said.

Quality and customer service

J&S Appliance & Home Furniture

Brian Tucker, general manager
529 Marlin Ave., Warrenton
503-861-0929

WARRENTON — Despite being

located less than two miles away from Walmart, one family-owned store has felt little pressure from the retail giant’s presence.

“None,” said J&S Appliance & Home Furniture general manager Brian Tucker pointedly after being asked about the impact of having a Walmart so close.

While Walmart offers sales for discount home furniture in store and online, Tucker said the store poses little threat as competition.

“They don’t really have an effect on our business because we do totally different things than what they sell. They sell low-end furniture and we don’t sell anything like that,” he said.

Tucker conceded that other one big box store cut business temporarily, but it eventually bounced back.

“The Home Depot did for about a year, but people realized the difference in customer service between a big box store and a little, local store. I think it helped our business because people actually realized the value they got here compared to Home Depot.”



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