

BEST GARDEN CENTER

BRIM'S FARM & GARDEN

ASTORIA

Runner-up: Basketcase Greenhouse, Long Beach

Honorable mention: Dennis' 7 Dees, Seaside

By RYAN HUME

Well, it has happened again. The country feel and top-notch customer service of Brim's Farm & Garden has won over Coast Weekend readers once more, handing them their 10th award for Best Garden Center in as many years.

This family-owned feed and garden operation is tucked away on the U.S. 101 Business loop, south of the Old Youngs Bay Bridge and just before the turnoff onto Lewis and Clark Road.

Mike and Linda Brim opened the business on March 6, 1986, as primarily a feed store, though they also sold apples and berries, too. Interest in becoming the North Coast's premier garden center didn't arise until 1995 when Linda quit her day job. "I went back to school," she said.

Taking classes at Portland State University and running through Oregon State Extension's Master Gardener class a number of times gave Linda the expertise to build up a garden stock and greenhouse specific to the needs of land adjacent to the coast and river.

Brim credits their success to the knowledge of the owners and staff. "The ability to come in and ask face to face, 'How do I do that?'" Linda said, is



RYAN HUME PHOTO

Linda Brim co-owns Brim's Garden Center with her husband, Mike Brim

a powerful motivation for repeat business. The Brims also know their clientele. "Most of our customers have a rural, self-sustaining mindset," she said. For this reason, Brim's stocks plenty of non-GMO vegetable seeds and starts and carries enough high-quality feed on site to keep Noah's Ark sustained for at least a few days. Whether cattle, alpaca or calicos are your thing, Brim's stocks the feed they need. They also carry a wide array of fencing.

Now that Spring is on its way, expect live poultry to appear soon. Young chicks have just arrived, ducks will return around Easter and turkeys, too, are on their way. With more than 30 years of

excellence under their belt, know that whatever you need for your yard or farm, Brim's can help. **CW**



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ASTORIA COFFEEHOUSE & BISTRO

243 11th Street, Astoria, OR 97103
503-325-1787

BEST FLORIST

BLOOMIN' CRAZY FLORAL

ASTORIA

Runner-up: Erickson Floral Company, Astoria

Honorable mention: Artistic Bouquets & More, Seaview

By RYAN HUME

Diane Berry, owner of Bloomin' Crazy Floral on Commercial Street in downtown Astoria, refers to her quaint little shop squeezed into the eastern corner of the Sanborn Building as "a continuing work of art."

Coast Weekend readers certainly seem to agree, having fallen in love once again with Berry and staff's arrangements and evolving aesthetic, honoring Bloomin' Crazy Floral with another Readers' Choice Award for Best Florist.

Berry has been working in the floral business in the Columbia-Pacific region since 1975, but she did not set out on her own until opening Bloomin' Crazy Florist in November 2009. "We started out with plants,

flowers and a few gifts," she said.

Today the shop has expanded to include clothing, jewelry, tchotchkes and ceramics. Berry also recently installed a blind built of reclaimed wood from a local barn due to be razed, which separates the interior of the shop from the elaborately curated display window facing Commercial Street. Though, even as this "work of art" continues to grow new limbs, the focus remains on crafting unique flower arrangements and bouquets for all manners of events and holidays. They deliver, too.

Bloomin' Crazy has also proven to be a good neighbor in the Astoria Downtown Historical District, opening their doors during Second Saturday Art Walks to showcase the talents of local artists and



RYAN HUME PHOTO

Diane Berry, owner of Bloomin' Crazy Floral

jewelry makers.

But how to stay ahead of the curve and anticipate the needs of your customers? "I spend a lot of time on the internet looking at arrangements when I should be doing housework," Berry said. "We follow trends and try to have our own distinctive look."

Berry is constantly searching out new suppliers and available products. She often works with a wholesale supplier in Swan Island in Portland. "Every Friday I ask, 'What do you have that is fun and funky and affordable?'" **CW**

COASTER THEATRE PLAYHOUSE



February 2-24, 2018

Tickets \$20 or \$25

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Sunday shows start at 3:00p.m.

Sponsored by Mike & Tracey Clark

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