

Family-owned businesses adapt amid pandemic

Some have reevaluated and expanded

By **ABBEY McDONALD**
Coast River Business Journal

It has been two years since the first coronavirus case was identified in Oregon, and since then family-owned businesses on the North Coast have weathered pandemic surges alongside their communities.

Some businesses that stayed afloat during the pandemic did so by reevaluating their approach — and in some cases — expanded.

'We're pretty optimistic and easygoing'

Danny and Yvonne Lee, a couple who own Hobo Junction in Long Beach, pivoted to focus on online sales for the first time, and were surprised with how much demand there was.

Their salvage store near Pacific Avenue sticks out, surrounded by sculptures and piles of fishing equipment.

On the right side of the house sits a pile of floats, bought from local fishermen, nearly as tall as one of several life-sized decorative skeletons on the property.

The secondhand equipment became one of their bestsellers during the pandemic, according to Danny Lee.

"Anytime there's a lockdown in a state, you can tell because the sales pick up on Etsy," he said.

He figures that most of the floats went to decorate people's homes and nautical-themed restaurants. One man drove from Texas to fill his truck with it. Joe's Crab Shack, which has no locations in Oregon or Washington state, was another buyer.

"I was surprised that these were even selling," Lee said. "They're such a big box, too. Over 50% of our price is shipping."

The couple bought the property around 20 years ago from a man who amassed a collection of things like fishing equipment in the yard, baubles and Marilyn Monroe collectibles. The couple has kept up



PHOTOS BY ABBEY McDONALD

Yvonne and Danny Lee are the owners of Hobo Junction in Long Beach.

with the general theme and has added their own art and work from local artists to the mix.

Lee said the pandemic brought more customers looking to decorate their yards.

One popular item has been Lee's metal recreation of the robot Bender from the cartoon "Futurama." The sixth incarnation of the character stands

See Page 9



Danny Lee makes metal art and said that his sculptures of Bender, from the television show 'Futurama,' have been popular at Hobo Junction.



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