

Tribal members open local bead shop

By Danielle Harrison

Smoke Signals editor

Tribal members and cousins Bee Foster and Kaylene Barry have been dreaming of owning a bead shop for years.

Now, their dream is coming to fruition with the opening of Bee and Barry Beads in Willamina.

Located in Swan Hall on Main Street and nestled between an Indigenous-owned tattoo shop and an events hall hosting yoga, community gatherings and concerts, Bee and Barry Beads is far more than just a business.

For Barry, a full-time firefighter/EMT and Foster, a full-time mom to four children ages 3 to 9, the bead shop is therapeutic, a place for them to decompress and a creative outlet to relieve stress.

“I have pretty much been dreaming of this as long as I can remember,” Barry said. “This is something we are very passionate about and it makes me happy. It’s like good medicine for me.”

Barry works at the bead shop every weekend and her full-time job during the week.

“This doesn’t really feel like work most of the time,” she said. “My family comes in and I get to sit here and have a cup of coffee and talk, so it’s a really nice environment and relaxing.”

Foster works in the shop during the weekdays while her children are in school.

“I enjoy being here because I’ve been a stay-at-home mom for the past nine years and with young kids, it’s really hard for me to be able to sit down and make jewelry and do these things but also just having a place for our Tribal members to go when they need supplies is a big thing,” she said.

Before Bee and Barry Beads



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

Tribal members and cousins Bee Foster, left, and Kaylene Barry recently opened Bee and Barry Beads in Swan Hall in Willamina. In addition to selling beads, the store has an Indigenous market with products made by other Native people.

If you go

Bee and Barry Beads

Hours: Wednesday to Friday, 10 a.m.–2p.m.; Saturday and Sunday, 10 a.m.–4 p.m.

Address: Swan Hall, 242 N.E. Main St., Willamina

For more information:

bee.n.barry.beads on Instagram, Bee and Barry Beads on Etsy. Additionally, there will be a booth at the Tribe’s Restoration celebration at Spirit Mountain Casino on Nov. 22-23

opened in September, beading enthusiasts had to travel to the coast, Shipwreck Beads in Vancouver, Washington or order beading sup-

plies online.

“Our biggest inspiration in opening this business was to have a local option to go to get beads and other supplies,” Foster said.

Both women have been beading since they were young.

Foster, 32, learned how to bead from Tribal member Travis Mercier.

“He’s a huge part of why I love doing this stuff today,” she said. “This was a huge part of my life as a teenager and then I taught Kaylene how to bead years later.”

Barry, 24, recalled that beading helped her utilize a creative outlet she didn’t realize existed.

“I was only like 8 or 9, but Bee and I would get together and spend days just eating and beading together, which was fun and really therapeutic,” Barry said. “It was a creative outlet and that was the appeal for me. And my grandma (Laura Gleason) used to bead and make jewelry when she was young, and when she saw us beading together, she would think back and reminisce to when she was young.”

Bee and Barry Beads hosted its grand opening on Sept. 28. So many people stopped by that much of the inventory was purchased and had to be reordered to replenish the supply.

“Opening day was the coolest day ever,” Barry said. “It really showed how much support and love that we have in our lives because everybody showed up for us. It was the best thing we could have asked for.”

Both Foster and Barry are excited that Tribal members are continuing to see more representation in Willamina, as their business is the third storefront to open downtown. Wildwood Hotel and Restaurant is owned by Tribal Council member Matthew Haller and Nebula Ink is owned by Tribal member and tattoo artist Noel Pond.

“My favorite story is how Bee’s 3-year-old daughter was making plastic necklaces and carrying them around, and telling her dad she was going to sell those at her shop,” Barry said. “Here she is, already a little Indigenous businesswoman who can be anything her little heart desires and that it so cool to see.”

Long-term goals for the store are to have a continual supply for Tribal members and anyone else that is interested in making jewelry, with the primary focus on Indigenous jewelry and supplies.

“Right before powwow, everyone is trying to get everything made and before, they had to order online and sometimes that’s hard because it’s like you’re looking for a specific color and it’s not available because everyone is trying to get it, so it will be nice for people to just be able to run into Willamina and get whatever they need,” Foster said. “I feel like beadwork is a really popular thing and I pray that doesn’t go away because it is very therapeutic for a lot of people and a huge part of Native culture...not that long ago, Native people were not allowed to have anything like that. So, this is really special.”

Barry added that the store inventory will not remain stagnant.

“I want people to be aware that everything is going to be always changing,” she said. “We’re really trying to have during the holiday season, things that are great for gifts and then during powwow season, we want to have materials for people to make their personal regalia. It’s going to be consistently changing and it is worth coming in because you’re never going to see the same things twice.” ■



Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde



Institute for Applied Ecology

IAE Volunteer Event

Champoeg Volunteer Day

Help restore habitat for First Foods at Champoeg State Heritage Area

November 9, 2024

9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Champoeg State Heritage Area

This fall, you are invited to join the Institute for Applied Ecology and the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde to help restore prairie habitat—at a **First Foods Harvest Area** in Champoeg State Heritage Area. All are welcome! Join us to help restore indigenous First Foods, while contributing to the recovery of the land. Thanks to the Marion Soil and Water Conservation District for funding this project.

When: Saturday, November 9, 9am – 1pm
Where: Champoeg State Heritage Area
What: Planting native plants in a First Foods harvest area
RSVP: Contact Evan at evanlasley@appliedeco.org

A restroom is available on site, and limited carpooling from Corvallis is available. Learn more at [appliedeco.org/calendar](https://www.appliedeco.org/calendar).

What are "First Foods"?

First Foods were eaten by indigenous groups before the arrival of Europeans, and continue to be harvested, grown, and collected today. Native Americans have a long history of food gathering at Champoeg State Heritage Area. The word "Champoeg" comes from an indigenous word that names it as "the place of the yampa," an edible root that was harvested there. As part of the Plants for People project, yampa has been reintroduced to this site, as well as many other First Foods such as camas, brodiaea, oonow, yarrow, and many others.



Learn more about our work to conserve native species and habits in the Willamette Valley at www.appliedeco.org.



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Minors'

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The answers to all of these questions and more can be found on the Tribal website / member services.
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