

A 'unique boutique' opens in John Day

Store offers variety of handmade gifts

By Angel Carpenter
Blue Mountain Eagle

"Shop small." That is Sherrie Rininger's theme these days. She wears a pin with those words on her sweater at her new shop, called Etc.

When Rininger opened the doors of her "unique boutique" Dec. 5, she also opened doors for several local artisans.

"I needed a spot, and I wanted to help out the crafters in the area," she said. "I felt there was a need for them to have a place to showcase their crafts."

Browsing the shop at 133 W. Main St. in John Day, visitors will find one-of-a-kind handcrafted gifts from a total of nine Grant County vendors.

Rininger's display of handmade jewelry includes several styles, incorporating semi-precious stones such as turquoise and opal, as well as jasper, agate, amber and coral. She even uses antler, buffalo teeth and bullets for some necklaces and earrings.

Also on display are unique wind chimes she has made of wine and liquor bottles with colorful beads and a variety of themes such as hunting, horses and sports, as well as more traditional chimes. She also makes hummingbird feeders.

The other vendors offer an array of choices, including scented soaps and lotions from Rose Howe, wildlife woodcarvings from Sue Cockrell, upcycled crafts from Sherri Preston-McGuire and wooden drinking vessels from Rick Callahan.

Michele Bishop sews aprons, receiving blankets and other items for the store. KJ Kuhn offers handmade chocolates, and samples are available. Tim Coe creates wooden toys such as airplanes and small rocking horses. And Janine Justice paints gourds and stones.

Rininger's husband, Dale, is her right-hand man when it comes to running the shop. He also makes the display cases and furniture for the store out of wooden pallets and cuts glass bottles for wind chimes, as well as the bullets for jewelry.

The Riningers, who have lived in John Day for five years, have been regulars at the local bazaars and the John Day Farmers Market.

Sherrie has been making jewelry for 10 years.

"It all started at a Starbucks," she said.

She and her friends would



Sherrie Rininger, right, shows Kristi Haberly a necklace she recently made at her new shop in John Day called Etc.



Sherrie Rininger shows one of her many necklaces available for sale.



This friendly rooster follows Sherrie Rininger wherever she goes, and is now perched near the window of her Etc. shop.

gather at the coffee shop in Monterey County, California, on a regular basis to make crafts at one of the tables. Sherrie started transforming the coffee cups and napkins into earrings and necklaces, giving them to the baristas to wear.

"My friends encouraged me to start making jewelry," she said.

What started out as a hobby has turned into a passion.

A good portion of her time designing jewelry is spent searching for the perfect stones that catch her eye at bead shows.

"I spend hours upon hours and days upon days searching for stones — it has to speak to me," she said. "I never order stones through the mail. I

have to feel them, touch them and make sure they're good quality."

Sherrie retired from her position as executive assistant to the CEO of Harbor Freight Tools, and Dale retired from his career in the Navy and as manager of various outpatient facilities.

"We knew we wanted to retire in Oregon," Sherrie said. "You couldn't ask for a sweeter town. We just love it here."

She and Dale plan to eventually open a back room for crafting workshops, and they would like to include more vendors in the future.

She said the store is gaining in popularity, and she has repeat customers.

"I wanted to open before the summer, so that visitors to the area could take home a piece of John Day," she said. "When you walk into a place and see something that is unique, that you can't find everywhere, that's special."

Etc. is open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesdays through Saturdays and from 12-4 p.m. Sundays.



The Eagle/Rylan Boggs

Larry and Bonnie Maplesden stand for a photo outside the old John Day Fire Hall. The couple's bid for the building was recently approved by the John Day City Council. They plan to repair the building to house Hutch's Printing Co., which they are purchasing.

Old fire hall to become print shop

By Rylan Boggs
Blue Mountain Eagle

Hutch's Printing Co. will be getting a new home in the old John Day City Fire Hall.

Bonnie and Larry Maplesden are in the process of finalizing the purchase of the old fire hall and are preparing to turn it back into part of the community.

The Maplesdens' bid of \$67,000 was approved by the John Day City Council during a Jan. 24 city council meeting.

The couple said they were attracted to the fire hall because of its price, location and the cement floors.

"Print presses are heavy and they beat a wood floor to pieces," Bonnie Maplesden said.

They plan to offer all the same services, just under a different roof.

However, the fire hall is in need of repairs before it can be a functioning business again. Among them are new paint, electrical work, improved lighting and fixing the leaky roof.

They plan to keep the current color scheme of red, white and black. They also want to devote part of the building to memorializing the old fire hall and past firefighters.

"When people come visiting, they like to see the history of the local area," Bonnie Maplesden said. "There's the Kam Wah Chung, the Oliver museum, the rodeo museum and this has history too, so

we'd like to develop that."

John Day Fire Chief Ron Smith said the memorial is a kind gesture, and he was looking into letting the Maplesdens use old hoses, nozzles, turnout gear and potentially even an old hand cart used for fighting fires in the early 1900s.

Smith began working at the old fire hall in 2004 and said the building was outdated for the firefighters' needs and modern engines were too large for the building. The current fire hall was built last year, and while it was bittersweet to leave the old one, Smith said he is thankful taxpayers were willing to invest in a new facility.

The Maplesdens are moving the printing company because the currently facility is vulnerable to flooding and has a high ceiling, making it difficult to efficiently heat. Current owner Bill "Hutch" Hutchinson will continue to work at Hutch's but wanted to dedicate more time to his maps of motorcycle routes in the area, Larry Maplesden said.

His maps are known around the northwest and bring tourists into the county, Bonnie Maplesden said, adding the motorcyclists are typically amicable and appreciative.

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MON-THURS 7:10

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