

FOUR SEASONS

Covering Sawyer County and parts of Douglas, Washburn and Bayfield Counties

PRESS RUN 7109 • SATURDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2010 • VOL. 55 NUMBER 28 • BOX 919 • HAYWARD

Whispering Pines Gift & Gallery

Cable gift gallery celebrates 30 years in business

Story and photos by John Adler

Whispering Pines Gifts & Gallery kicks off its 30th anniversary with gourmet food and wine sampling.

Set for October 29-31, the gallery will offer premium sales on select merchandise and will compliment the sale with wine tasting and gourmet foods along with door prizes for Saturday, October 30, from 10-5 p.m. Celebration hours for Friday and Sunday, the 29th and 31st will be 10-5 p.m. and 11-3 p.m.

"We owe a lot of our success to both our loyal customers and employees," says Lora Vanderploeg, who along with her husband Ron own Whispering Pines. "Our employees have such a good eye for detail, we couldn't do it without them."

The diversity of their goods successfully addresses the needs and desires of a diverse clientele.

"We carry items of interest for both our seasonal and year round residents," Vanderploeg continues, "so we work hard to carry things that provide for our customer's needs and desires."

It's also their mix of maintaining relations with both local and national artisans while updating, expanding and revolving quality goods in the gift shoppe that accounts for another part of their success.

Their entryway alone revolves in tandem with the seasons, always promising new items to fit the current season's theme.

From there, the customer can take a left into the potter's gallery which features long-time local favorite Reg Behrends' Blue Moon Pottery. KC Pottery of Minnesota, most famous for their Lake Mug Series, is on display here, as well as First Avenue Pottery, out of St. Paul, Davy Pottery of South Dakota and Stegall Pottery, coming from Tennessee. Such a broad selection of products and artistic vision helps keep the displays fresh and interesting.

Venture straight back from the entryway and you'll be greeted by a walk-in pantry of outstanding gourmet foods, including grains, pastas, relishes, salsas, teas and oils, just to name but a few of the selections guaranteed to bring out the chef in you.

Beside the pantry is a fully stocked wine room, complete with everything you need along the lines of wine and cheese entertaining. The room showcases a full assortment of accessories, from bottle openers to bamboo cutting boards, local wine and what every customer who has bought one calls 'the best cheese knife ever made.'

Over the years the Vanderploegs have worked hard to expand the space. They took over the business from Seddie Cogswell, who along with five other artists, started the gallery back in 1980. Cogswell eventually bought out the other artists. When



Whispering Pines Gift & Gallery in Cable is celebrating 30 years in business.

Cogswell expressed an interest in selling back in the early '90s, the Vanderploegs stepped in.

Back then, a couple of offices shared the building. Those offices now showcase the two rooms of exquisite pottery. The back room was once a framing shop, which Lora took over when she and her husband bought the business. Expanding the gallery inventory and shop, the Vanderploegs turned that space into the gourmet pantry and wine accessory room.

The front room opens up to reveal the gift shoppe. The Vanderploegs have added lines of quality scarves and oodles of both costume and fine jewelry.

"We do have something for everyone," Vanderploeg continues. She's right, too. From a new line of decoratively mismatched mittens, quality crafted from recycled wools, to a vast array of scarves, both men's and women's fine soaps and hand care products, to local guidebooks and puzzles on area flora and fauna, they carry something for any taste, from finery to curios.

There are even a few select editions of children's books. But with all the diversity of wares displayed, no vantage point clutters the eye; for interspersed and prominently displayed lay more fine art examples of blown glass, photography and exquisite watercolors.

The photography of local James Netz adorns the walls, along with watercolors by both Jean Acola from Durand and local talent Diana Randolph. Randolph, a perennial favorite, currently displays autumn themed works until the end of November, at which time she will change to themes more fitting to winter.

As a whole, the gallery, while encompassing a broad array of fine art mediums mixed with foods, wines and gifts is spread out in such a way as to always be inviting one to venture round the next corner, satisfying the visitor's eye for wonder and for the feet a pleasant wander.

And because it's just around the corner, we couldn't leave without venturing upstairs to the Christmas Attic.

"This keeps us young," Vanderploeg says with a smile. "We see

customers come in year after year to pick out new ornaments for their trees. It's a real treat to see children pick out one too."

Simply put, the Christmas Attic is a one-stop shop for all things celebrating the Yuletide. If it's an ornament you're after and it's made under our sun, chances are the Christmas Attic has it.

From gilded glass and glitter collections to the name drop, gilded leaf, s'mores, sports, wildlife, patriotic or a complete tree of wine-themed decorative collections, it's all here. And these barely scratch the surface of the attic's inventory. One must surely see it to believe it.

As if all the above isn't yet enough to light up a gift idea, the Vanderploegs have also turned the building next door into The Candle Cottage. Highlighted with a complete line of Colonial Candle offerings, there total over 30 plus different lines of candles, both scented and unscented. Interspersed between the candle displays lay several greeting card lines for just about any occasion.

There is also a large selection of candle holders, accessories, aromatherapy rings and wreaths, as well as seasonal selections of candles and accessories to please the eye.

The Whispering Pines Gift & Gallery, along with the Candle Cottage, is sure to please both seekers of fine art and curios. Regular hours are Monday through Saturday, from 10-5 p.m. and Sundays from 11-3. Hours will change for the month of November so call ahead.

Then, starting November 26, they will revert back to regular hours, just in time to participate in this year's Christmas in Cable on December 4, where they'll be once again providing gourmet samples.

And on Sunday, December 12, they will take part in The Road Less Traveled Tour, beginning with lunch at the Brickhouse Cafe followed by a tour of retail stores and ending with the hor d'oeuvres at The Rookery.

In the meantime, come on out and help them celebrate their 30th anniversary. They can be reached at (715) 798-3133.