

Plaza sees big changes

The former site of The Walton Sun has been transformed from drab to delightful with Scavengers, a showroom filled with antiques and interior furnishings.

Hanging sheer fabric to cover the ceiling tiles, adding a fresh coat of paint and a unique floor, has given the 3,500-square foot space has been given a facelift.

Scavengers' business owners, Joseph Cook and Michael Hayes, removed the carpet and created a one-of-a-kind floor covering. Some describe it as cloud-like, while others think the surface looks like pastel cake frosting. "The floor has been a big hit," Cook said.

This is their second location. Another Scavengers is just off U.S. Highway 98 in Panama City Beach.

"In addition to furnishings and antiques, between the two stores, we carry 350 species of sea shells and sea life," Cook said.

The shop is open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. It is located at 3906 Highway 98 West, Santa Rosa Beach.

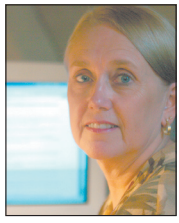
The telephone number is (850) 267-1255.

WINE PAIRINGS AND DINNER THAT WORKS

Some restaurants and certainly many wine shops offer customers the opportunity to learn more about wines and what to serve with them with wine pairings.

But it can be an intimidating process.

For those who only know the basics but want to learn more, help has arrived at Cooking with Creehan. On the second and fourth Thursdays of each month at the Culinary Center, Chefs Tim Creehan and Dan Pettis offer a relaxed, intimate setting - only 12 - 30 guests - that blends good food and wine with entertainment.



IN GOOD COMPANY
Joyce Owen

The Culinary Center is located in one of the former Centex model homes on U.S. Highway 98 just west of Holiday Road in Miramar Beach, marketing director Shannon Rubado said. The Center features indoor and outdoor cooking areas with appliances supplied by Fisher and Paykel. Creehan renovated the model home to create a larger display kitchen. While six diners are seated directly in front of the cooking area, with overhead mirrors and TV screens all diners can view the cooking demonstration.

At one of his most recent dinners, Chef Dan Pettis prepared a four-course meal with wines for each course. Champagne was served while he made preparations for the dinner.

"Some people shy away from champagne, but the more you try, the more you like them," Pettis said.

Guests received a printout of each recipe and as Pettis cooked, he discussed various aspects of the preparation including why each wine was offered. He also provided tips from the types of olive oil and honey to buy to the way to use a handheld lemon juicer. Many diners made notes on the recipes and wrote down the names of the wines that were offered with each course.

The cooking sessions are designed to be a low-key, but educational experience, Rubado said.

Cooking with Creehan is \$75 per person. There are also "exceptional events" scheduled for October, November and December to celebrate the holidays. To sign up for a cooking demonstration or event, contact Rubado at (850) 259-8046 or go to www.beachwalkcafe.com

The Culinary Center is at 12590 Emerald Coast Parkway, Suite C, Destin.

In Good Company is a weekly column by Walton Sun Business and Real Estate reporter Joyce Owen. To let the community know what's happening in your company, contact her at joyce_owen@link.freedom.com, (850) 267-4555 or fax (850) 267-0929.



Jennifer Browning, owner of Design Lab Destin, works with materials at G & L Marble in Destin. (Photo by Frost)

Interior designer offers timeless approach

By Joyce Owen

joyce_owen@link.freedom.com

Some people think an interior designer is a professional who helps select the right color scheme or places furnishings in a pleasing arrangement. And that is a portion of the work an interior designer handles, but Jennifer Browning says her primary job is to create the right chemistry with clients.

Browning is a commercial interior designer and owner of Design Lab Destin.

"I used 'Lab' in the name, because I like to invite my clients to step into my lab," she said.

There, with an emphasis on timeless designs, she helps clients determine a theme and pick out things that bring the project together.

"I stay up with the latest, but not necessarily the trendy things," Browning said. "I really believe a good designer is only as good as her resources."

"I read the trade magazines, get samples of new products and attend trade shows. When someone hires you to provide a design, it's important to have those resources available," she said.

Browning is the daughter of Destin Realtor Sally McMorrow. She was born in Panama City and studied design at LSU, but she has lived in Atlanta, New Orleans and Los Angeles, where she worked for restaurateur Wolfgang Puck. During three years with Puck, "I fell in love with restaurant and resort design," Browning said.

After moving to Houston, Texas, she worked for 10 years in the commercial design industry. However, she tired of the rat race in Houston and wanted to be closer to family.

She and husband, Jim, moved to Natchez, Miss., a location that offers easy access to the



Although the focus of Jennifer Browning's work is commercial interior design, she does residential design work including this condo at Signature Beach Condo in Destin. (Photo by Frost)

Mississippi Gulf Coast where he handles fight promotions and makes for a quick commute to Destin for her.

Although Browning also works on residential jobs, two of her current projects are Jim Altamura's restaurants - Marina Café in Destin and Chops on 30A in South Walton.

Marina Café will undergo a complete facelift next year, she said.

The restaurant had taken on a tired appearance and most of the furniture had been there for years, said Browning.

After consulting with Altamura, she learned he wanted to retain the nautical theme, but wanted to create something that would not go out of fashion.

"Jim wants his new restaurants to stand the test of time," Browning said. "We don't plan to deviate from the strong nautical theme," Browning said. "The restaurant is right on the harbor, but we will give it a fresh look."

The restaurant will close in January with an anticipated reopening of Feb. 1.

Simultaneously, Browning will manage the design of Chops on 30A, which is scheduled to open on March 1. The energetic designer said she would have a hectic winter as she tries to complete a second radically different design on a tight schedule. She's an on-the-scene designer, visiting each job site daily to ensure the work is progressing. Her approach to the steak house won't include dark and heavy pieces. As she describes the bar area with a lighting system that is programmed to change colors throughout the evening, it will be a swanky and sophisticated setting.

"It will not be a traditional steak house," she said. "The concept is timeless, not trendy. The common thread of the color scheme is metallic - copper, bronze and silver with sharp angles and forms."



Dan Pettis (center), chef at the Beachwalk Cafe in Destin, emphasizes what is going to happen during a cooking demonstration on July 26 at The Culinary Center. The center is a new venture by Beachwalk Cafe's Tim Creehan designed to entertain and instruct guests on the art of fine cuisine. (Richard Owen/The Sun)

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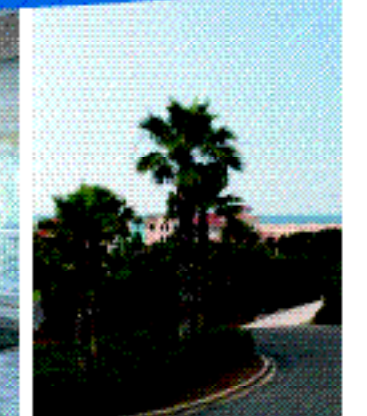
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