



SMALL
BUSINESS

Spotlights

BY
Linda Margison

PHOTOGRAPHY BY
Martin Boling



Ed Schwartzman.

Gables Bagels

Ed Schwartzman, Owner



As a 60-year-old Jewish man born and raised in Queens, a borough of New York City, Ed Schwartzman says bagels are in his

blood. He remembers waking up Sunday mornings to the sound of a bagel bag being rustled after his dad had stopped at Slim's Bagels in their neighborhood and brought home a bag stuffed with warm bagels.

"He would scream out, 'Bagels!' and I would come running down like a Doberman smelling cheese," Schwartzman says. "Those bagels were fresh from the oven—you would hear the bag, and he would open the bag, and the smell would just permeate through the whole house. It was heaven."

Schwartzman's first job was baking bagels in that same neighborhood shop, which had the perk of allowing him to "shove as many bagels in your gourd as possible," he says. "When you're 16 and burn calories for a living, it wasn't unusual for me to eat three or four bagels, literally, with eight ounces of cream cheese."

But then, "life takes you here and there like a leaf," and Schwartzman landed in Bloomington, bought BuffaLouie's restaurant, and conceded that he would have to live life without exceptional bagels. That is, until a restaurateur in Ohio wanted him to open a bagel franchise here. While the product

didn't meet Schwartzman's standards, the experience sent him on a quest to bring New York bagels to the Midwest. His search steered him to a bakery that makes bagels, flash freezes them, and ships to sellers around the world.

With a simple business plan—no storefront, online orders only, no cash—Schwartzman opened Gables Bagels. Every other day he receives 10 to 15 cases of authentic New York bagels, which he keeps frozen at BuffaLouie's and sells by the dozen either frozen or freshly baked.

"Bagels are kind of like chicken wings—they're okay to eat by yourself, but, to me, it's a group food," Schwartzman explains. "My family and friends, at the temple—it always meant I was with people eating bagels."

Adding to the plain and strawberry, Gables Bagels has hired a sous chef to make fresh spreads—cream cheese and chives, lox, and cinnamon raisin. "You put the cinnamon raisin spread on a plain bagel, and you're gonna want to be alone for a few minutes," he says. "Now I've got killer bagels, killer spreads."

Even though he admits it sounds hokey, Schwartzman says Gables Bagels is a labor of love. "It's something that was my first job and it's part of my childhood," he says. "I feel like Johnny Appleseed turning people on to New York bagels." **Visit gablesbagels.com.**



Global Gifts. Courtesy photo

Global Gifts

Dave Debikey, Manager



As a nonprofit, fair-trade organization, Global Gifts, 122 N. Walnut, provides opportunities for marginalized communities in

India, Nepal, Kenya, Ghana, Peru, Ecuador, Guatemala, Thailand, Vietnam, and other countries that would otherwise be unable to access the marketplace. "We provide that opportunity by paying fair prices, ensuring families can afford to send their kids to school, have access to clean water and medical care, and have their basic needs met," says manager Dave Debikey.

That has been especially difficult because of the pandemic. Although fair-

trade importers continued to buy product, artisans have had to find ways to work around extended lockdown periods and curfews, says Debikey. "It's been a huge challenge, but it's something that is part of what we've all been doing."

While Global Gifts continues to require masks and has limited capacity requirements for the holidays, Debikey encourages patrons to plan ahead, shop early, and to use online shopping if possible. "We have really worked through and improved our website and how it functions so people can shop online," he says, adding that shoppers can choose to pick up curbside. "We provide a space where people can come in and feel good about the items they are purchasing, knowing that they are ethically sourced and that they are supporting families."

For more information, visit globalgiftsft.com.



(l-r) Kelly Jennings and Amanda Hyde.

MIRTH

women's apparel • accessories • footwear

Kelly Jennings and Amanda Hyde, Co-Owners

By making a move that doubled their retail area, MIRTH is providing a more comfortable and open environment for customers to peruse their collection of products that had been overflowing its smaller shop space. “This has really allowed us to spread out the merchandise, and we’ve brought in much more,” says Amanda Hyde, who co-owns MIRTH with Kelly Jennings.

The extra space has allowed Hyde and Jennings to expand their footwear collection and add lifestyle and home

décor products like blankets and candles. They also have an additional fitting room and are situated on the street front where people can walk in. “It’s just good all the way around,” Jennings says.

“We’re very thankful for the customer base that has helped us grow, but we’re also not afraid to make big decisions or take the leap,” Hyde adds. “The theme we’ve had since the beginning is to not be afraid to take the next step. We moved to a location twice as big during a pandemic, and that comes with a lot of expenses. Some might think it’s risky, but for us, we knew that we needed to expand in order for our business to grow. We had to take that step.” **For more information, visit MIRTH at 101 W. Kirkwood, Suite 117, or mirthmarket.com.**



Mary Ramsey.

Rebel Purl

Mary Ramsey, Owner



When Mary Ramsey first moved to Bloomington from Seattle, Washington, 11 years ago, a girl she worked with invited her to a knitting group. When she said she didn’t knit, the girl told her, “Oh, that’s fine. They’re cool people.” Ramsey felt an instant connection with the welcoming fiber community, and soon learned she could never stop playing with yarn. “I was like, ‘I gotta learn how to do this,’” Ramsey recalls. “So I got a library book and learned how to knit.”

As her love for yarn crafts grew, Ramsey began dyeing yarn and selling it

from an online shop. After three years, she decided that she really wanted to create a gathering space similar to her first encounter with knitting, so she found affordable space to rent and opened the brick-and-mortar Rebel Purl.

Besides her own dyed yarn, stitch markers, and tools, Ramsey provides a venue for local artisans to sell and display their products, including Evie’s Craft Room, Indigo Guinea Fibers, JC Llamas and Alpacas, Fairywood Fiber, Studio Knitboop, and more. She also offers beginning and advanced classes taught by her and outside teachers. “I want Rebel Purl to be a good community for other people—somewhere they can go and be comfortable,” she says. **For information, visit 303 S. Hickory Drive or rebelpurl.com.**



Juniper Gallery. Courtesy photo

Juniper Gallery

Jaime Sweany, Owner



Sweany says much has transpired since she lived in Owen County 25 years ago. She owned and operated two successful Bloomington businesses—

Wild Birds Unlimited and Wandering Turtle Art Gallery—and Spencer has transformed its previously shuttered downtown storefronts into colorful, renovated shops and eateries, bustling with energy and life.

In 2018, impressed by Spencer’s rebirth and potential, Sweany says she turned to Owen County to combine her passions for art and nature into a world-class gallery and creative hub. Juniper Art Gallery features artwork by the Midwest’s

finest regional artists in the Paul & Margaret Sweany Legacy Room, and visitors enjoy a nature-themed artisan gift shop and monthly art and music events.

“Spencer has a friendly, small-town feel, with the oldest state park in Indiana nearby and the meandering White River at the end of Main Street,” Sweany says. “It is gratifying to help Spencer become a destination for art and shopping. With Indiana University and Bloomington only 20 minutes away, and McCormick’s Creek two miles from the Square, a drive to Spencer is a perfect daytrip.”

In addition to Juniper Art Gallery, attractions include Owen Valley Winery, Tivoli Theater, Relics, Unraveled Quilt Store, Dragonfly Gallery, Spencer Pride, Main Street Coffee, Jit’s Thai Bistro, and the Civilian Brewing Corps. Hours vary by season.

Visit juniperartgallery.com.