

FEATURES

Beads galore: Store introduces Chapel Hill to do-it-yourself jewelry



The Original Ornament on Franklin Street stocks a diverse array of beads for the creative in Chapel Hill

By Elena Bourgojn
Staff Writer

An urge to create leads many people to Franklin Street.

Since opening last March, The Original Ornament, located at 145 E. Franklin St., has catered to students and townspeople who enjoy designing and creating their own jewelry.

Rebecca Martenis opened the bead store with her husband John after working as a metalsmith out of her home. She said she named it The Original Ornament because beads were the first type of bodily ornamentation.

Martenis said she opened the store because she was very interested in beads. "I've been in bead stores all over the country," she said.

Martenis chose the store's location as carefully as she chose its name. "I waited for this location to open up because it is absolutely pertinent to have a high amount of foot traffic," she said.

The store provides an alternative to mail-order catalogues that many craftspeople use to obtain supplies.

Martenis noticed that customers entering the store for the first time tended to be "overwhelmed in a positive way" by the variety of materials from which they may choose.

Glass jars of brilliantly colored beads line two walls of the narrow store. The indecisive need not worry, however. Martenis and her two full-time employ-

ees are readily available to help customers select and assemble their jewelry. They will help start or finish a piece for no extra charge.

Full-time employees Paige Laces and Jeannine Guss both apprenticed with metalsmiths before working at the store. Guss said her experience enables her to help customers with their projects.

Laces, a University alumnus, apprenticed for Martenis before the store opened. She said she enjoyed helping people figure out their tastes. "Many people come in here to look around and come back when they have a better idea of what they want," she said.

Laces said she appreciated the opportunity to apply her bachelor of arts in sculpture to her job. "It helps to be knowledgeable about stones and their quality," she said.

Martenis and her staff provide a range of services. They do custom jewelry work, including necklace restringing. Highest on their list of duties is to help customers make jewelry.

"The job is labor intensive because you have to probe people's minds for what they want," Martenis said.

Some customers come into the store with a purpose, perhaps to make a gift or replace a lost earring. Many others, however, need help deciding what to make. Martenis encourages these customers to start with earrings but stresses that the possibilities are endless.

To create jewelry in the store, a cus-

tomers takes a tray and picks out which beads he or she wants to use. The beads' prices are coded by number, and the customer records this code and the quantity used.

Beads come in all shapes and colors, and some are imported from places like Kenya. The store also offers antique beads for a slightly higher price.

The store's prices, starting at around \$1.50, may appeal to those who wish to wear attractive jewelry without spending a great deal of money. Although it is less expensive to make your own pieces, even the finished jewelry is comparatively cheaper than other stores.

The atmosphere of the store is as inviting as its prices. Martenis, Laces and Guss are friendly and talkative. The store's light purple decor blends attractively with the natural beauty of the beads and the displayed jewelry.

The store, open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday, has enjoyed success despite the state of the economy. "This business is somewhat recession-proof," Martenis said. "People will always want to ornament themselves."

A good indication of the store's success was its steady business during the summer months. Martenis taught classes in jewelry assembly in order to arouse interest in the store.

When The Painted Bird, another lo-

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Chapel Hill police officer and Team USA defeat Spanish weightlifting team

By Dale Castle
Staff Writer

Chapel Hill police officer Ed Brooks gripped the barbell with both hands slightly more than shoulder width apart.

He placed the bar about halfway down his shoulder blades and planted his right foot in front and left foot in back of his body.

The referee pointed down and said, "Squat."

The lifter's face inflated with air and energy as he slowly pushed the 611-pound weighted bar toward the ceiling.

The crowd cheered as his arms locked and he held the weight. Two white lights turned on behind him, indicating a successful lift.

Being part of the first U.S. weightlifting team to beat Spain in an international meet was "the icing on the cake," Brooks said.

Brooks and 59 other members of Team USA defeated Team Spain in the first-ever U.S. vs. Spain weightlifting

competition held Aug. 15 in Madrid.

Brooks smiled as he remembered one of his teammates saying, "It's time for the big boy to lift."

In a small slice of time, a weightlifter holds more weight than any job requires, Brooks said.

That day he lifted a total of 1,670 pounds.

Instead of getting a couple of days off after the competition, Brooks and his teammates lifted again for the awestruck crowd at the World's Fair for the next two days.

Being the first team to exhibit at the World's Fair was a big step toward having weightlifting competitions in the 1996 Olympics, Chairman of the International Organizing Committee Ed Enos stated in a press release.

"This exemplary strength athlete (Brooks) is a credit to his sponsors and his entire community," Enos stated in the release.

But Brooks didn't get to compete in Spain overnight.

He competed in the power-lifting and bench-press championship this year for the Southern states.

In 1989, Brooks won the Southeastern U.S. bench-press championship. He also held first place in power-lifting and in the bench press in the police Olympics from 1988 to 1991.

W.D. Edgerston, a friend Brooks met while hunting, coached Brooks through his first meets.

"(Edgerston) knew all the ins and outs of the game and gave pointers that were very helpful," Brooks said.

Brooks has been a Chapel Hill police officer for seven years and said weightlifting helped him in his work. "Due to the nature of this work, you have to stay physically fit," Brooks said.

The community offered Brooks the means to get to Madrid. Charles Harrison, a vice president at Central Carolina Bank on Chapel Hill Boulevard, helped raise \$2,500.

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Chapel Hill police officer Ed Brooks demonstrates the weightlifting grip that led him to competition in the Olympics

Voter

"Stop defining others, and start defining 'us' as everyone."

The speakers also urged listeners to register to vote, emphasizing that Fri-

day was National Voter Registration Day. "Political analysts say that young people don't vote—that they don't care what is happening, but you are going to

prove them wrong," Carter said.

Masur said Democrats still needed support after the presidential race was over. "It is not over after November 3—Bill Clinton is not the messiah," he said. "He is a good candidate who needs our support. . . . If we're not there to support him, someone else will be there in our spot."

Kirsten Weeks, a spokeswoman for the UNC Young Democrats and a sophomore from Signal Mountain, Tenn., said UNC was chosen for the kick-off rally because North Carolina was a large state with 14 key electoral votes.

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