

Magnolias Shares Decorating Fantasy With Home Consulting

Customers are flocking to Magnolias, the home accessory store that is dedicated to all things beautiful.

And, having seen the wonderful painted furniture, porcelain, and unique pillows artistically arranged in the shop, they began to ask owner Missy Christie if she could share her amazing sense of color, fabric, and style.

Finally bowing to her customers' requests, Christie expanded into interior design consulting.

"It's been a wonderful addition to our store," Christie said. "It also lets us visit our customers in their homes and see what they need and want, so we can get it when we go buying for our shop."

In addition to being dedicated to her customers, Christie is very involved in the community. She gives her time to worthy causes such as the Michigan

Humane Society, the Detroit Historical Museum, the Detroit Institute of the Arts, the Red Cross — and several others.

This spirit of giving is also reflected in the warmth and comfort of the furnishings and accessories in her store.

"We have everything to make a home look really inviting and Christmassy," she said.

She also has a wish list for her customers, where friends, spouses, or relatives can peek to see what their loved one would like for Christmas.

And at Magnolias, wishes and dreams can indeed come true.

"There is a fantasy quality about being in our store — a wonderfully stimulating experience dedicated to sparking our customers' imaginations," Christie said. "Our ever-changing merchandise and ever-changing ways of presenting items are designed to suggest new ways of setting a table, decorating a home with accessories, or just to keep things always changing at home so they are more exciting and fun."

Magnolias is located at 288 E. Maple in Birmingham and can be reached at (810) 433-0860. The hours are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday, Thursdays open until 8 p.m. After Thanksgiving, the store will be open seven days a week, until 8 p.m. each evening for the convenience of holiday shoppers.



Magnolias' Missy Christie.



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Shoona Kids Offers Fun Clothes For Durability and Function



Kerri Cassar, owner of Shoona Kids

Since its birth just over a year ago, Shoona Kids has become a neighborhood sweet spot for moms, duds, kids, and grandparents.

Delectable children's clothing and the popular "Shoona" fleece outerwear are the star attractions at this "kids friendly" store. The staff is always available with smiles on their faces and warm greetings for all who walk through the door.

Owner Kerri Cassar has put a great deal of effort into providing customers with an easy, comfortable atmosphere. A mother of five children herself, Cassar insists that kids are allowed to be kids in her store and often can be found holding or playing with one or several of her customers' children.

But customers don't come to shop at Shoona Kids just for the atmosphere. The store also has a wonderful selection of children's clothing that are a welcome change from those found elsewhere. She chooses clothes for her store based on what she, as a mother, would want to put on her children.

Cassar carries a full selection of brand-name clothing specially chosen to be age-appropriate and very functional. In addition, Cassar also personally designs garments to meet her exacting requirements.

"People are tired of impractical, expensive clothing," she said. "And they

are too value-conscious to purchase clothes that are trendy, non-functional, and that won't last long enough to hand down."

The "Shoona fleece" outerwear line has established its own cult following. It is warm, practical, "abusable" and 100 percent functional, and, yes, "hand-me-downable." Jackets, hats, mittens and pants are all part of the "Shoona fleece" basic line, and the line will expand even further in the spring of 1997.

Cassar's unlimited creativity is what drives her to create a more and more complete line of clothing for "Shoona kids" and makes all the hard work that goes into running the store worthwhile.

"It hasn't been easy to be the 'new kid on the block' this year," said Cassar. "But if this business were easy, as they say, everyone would be doing it."

Despite all the obstacles that have come her way, Cassar has persevered — and succeeded.

"I have a desire to create something new," she said. "And that's what keeps me plugging."

In addition to her artistic drive, her warmth, honesty, and friendliness are contagious and help make the store a clear winner.

"We're down to earth and different," said Cassar. "That's a great combo."

Shoona Kids is located at 2454 Orchard Lake Rd. in Sylvan Lake and can be reached at (810) 738-0579. Hours are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday, Thursday until 8 p.m. and Sunday from noon until 5 p.m.

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