

Norfolk Insider

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“Magnolias Home Décor and Design- Norfolk Small Business - Celebrating Small Business Saturday”

When Amy Renter and her husband, Allan, decided to move from South Dakota back to the Norfolk area where they had both grown up, Amy and her mom, Rachel Kurpgeweit of Madison, had already discussed starting a business together. Kurpgeweit took an entrepreneurship class at Northeast Community College in preparation for their new endeavor. Six months after the move back, Amy and Rachel established Magnolias, a home décor store in Norfolk, Nebraska and twenty years later Magnolias Home Décor and Design is one of the most successful small businesses in Northeast Nebraska.

“We had an idea and we worked hard through the years learning by trial and error and transforming our product mix to what we’ve heard from our customers as to what they want. Our customers have been great to us through the years,” Renter said.



Amy and Rachel started Magnolias out of Amy’s home in Plainview, doing home consultations, craft shows and providing clients with the different silk floral pieces they needed. Soon they were able to open a storefront in downtown Norfolk until 2003 when they moved to their current location at 2118 Market Lane along Highway 275 in Norfolk. In 2005 they expanded their business into the empty space next door. Recently they started also selling and installing window treatments and custom bedding and fabric treatment.

“Owning a small business isn’t for everyone. It takes many hours and a determination to keep current and profitable. Many people have a rosy picture of what owning their own business is like. It’s a good idea to find resources that can give you a reality check about what it takes to sustain a business,” Renter said.

The entrepreneur class Rachel took gave them the tools to create a business plan. Renter said she has also benefitted from being a member of the Norfolk Area Chamber of Commerce.

“Through small business resource organizations you can network with other people and interact with those who may be able to help you out with something in your own business. Being a member of the Chamber board has been extremely beneficial for me from meeting people to learning where to get help for a problem I might have,” Renter said.

She added that their worst mistakes as a small business were the ones made early on that might have played differently if they had known who to go to for small business advice.

The Small Business Resource Team (SBRT) was established in 2012 with 12 different economic development entities working together to provide that type of assistance to owners of small businesses.

“We congratulate Magnolias on 20 years of success and commend every small business owner who provides jobs and economic activity for the area. The SBRT is all about helping new and established small businesses succeed. We are here to connect people to who can best help them no matter the stage of their business,” said Courtney Dentlinger, Norfolk Area Economic Development Director and the point of contact for SBRT.

The Small Business Resource Team is helping promote Small Business Saturday on November 29 to encourage people to do their holiday shopping at local small businesses. For more information contact Dentlinger at 402-844-2260 or go to www.norfolksmallbiz.com.

To promote shopping at local small businesses for the upcoming holiday season, the Small Business Resource Team (SBRT) is spreading the word about Small Business Saturday held on November 29.

“Small Business Saturday is a nationwide event sponsored by American Express that encourages people to seek out and shop at small local businesses. These business owners support our communities in many ways. Now it’s our turn to shop at their stores and support them,” said Courtney Dentlinger, Norfolk Area Economic Development Council Director (NAEDC). The NAEDC is one of 12 organizations that make up the SBRT and are committed to helping establish and grow small businesses in the area.

Dentlinger said that for every \$100 spent in local, independent stores, \$68 returns to the community through taxes, payroll, and other expenditures.

“If you spend the same amount in national stores, \$43 stays locally. If you spend the same on the Internet, \$0 stays locally. We encourage people to shop in Northeast Nebraska and promote our regional economy,” Dentlinger said.

American Express has designed marketing materials that are free to Small Business Saturday participants. Businesses interested in participating can learn more about Small Business Saturday and all of the free marketing tools available for use at <https://www.americanexpress.com/us/small-business/shop-small/>.

The Norfolk Area SBRT Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/norfolkareasbirt>) is available as a central place where participating businesses are welcome to share their participation status, sales or giveaways for Small Business Saturday.

For additional information, please contact the Norfolk Area Small Business Resource Team at 402-844-2260 or email grow@ci.norfolk.ne.us.