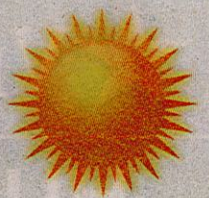




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Seeking Chameleon has a selection of delightful, affordable gifts, including new pottery, vintage items, dishes, vases, plants, jewelry and other items. MANDY MARKSTEINER/Monitor

Seeking Chameleon offers treasure trove of gifts

BY MANDY
MARKSTEINER
Special to the Monitor

The story behind the name "Seeking Chameleon" illustrates how owner Catherine Richmond's personality breathes life into the business. She said, "My husband says I'm a seeker. A chameleon is something that is always changing and full of color. That's seeking chameleon. That's me."

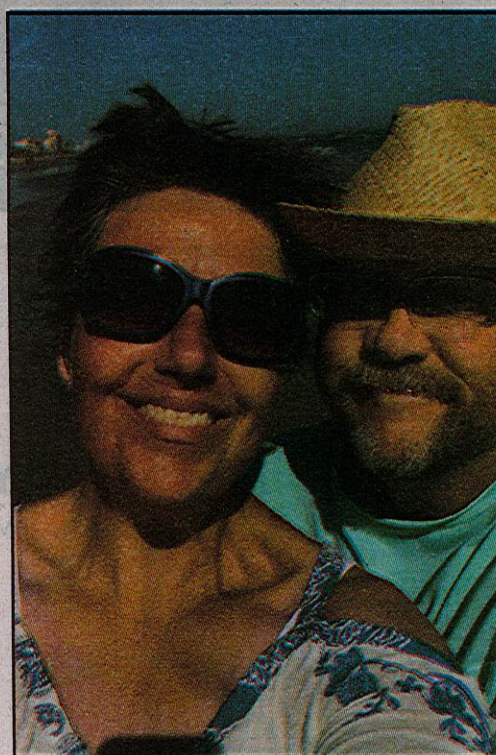
"I enjoy seeking, hunting and finding treasure. I always just bought stuff for me, because I just had to have it," said Richmond. "I have a full house. I like things to be visually interesting."

But eventually her treasure-hunting ways led to her having a house that was way too full. So she opened the shop five years ago, where Jemez House used to be. It is now located at 35 H Rover Blvd., in White Rock.

"I started with overflow from my house," she said. "It was the best decision I have ever made. Once I opened the store I learned that I loved the feeling of finding something wonderful, holding onto it for a little while and then see it go to the next person. Sometimes something is purchased too soon, and I hate to see it go!"

Last week Richmond and

See **CHAMELEON**, 2



Seeking Chameleon owner Catherine Richmond, left, said the story behind the name of her store is the story of how she is always changing and full of color. Courtesy

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CHAMELEON

From Page 1

her husband went on a buying trip to South Padre Island, Texas. She said, "I am bringing back so many cool things from my trip! I have a car that holds a lot of stuff, and I completely filled it and had to order a car topper to bring everything back. But that still wasn't enough space so someone that I ordered a lot of stuff from is going to meet me in Denver with the rest of it. I got some great stuff from the store and I'm really excited about it."

Seeking Chameleon is focused on selling vintage, second-hand and handmade items. But a recent trip to Colorado, to the Rocky Mountain Gift Tradeshow, led to her stocking the store with some new items, like pottery, home decor, figurines, singing bowls and Raku dream jars. (The tag on the dream jars says, "Take the first step towards your dreams. Write down your dearest dreams and place them in this earthen vessel.")

"We're excited about the new things that we brought in but we'll never lose focus on the vintage and secondhand nature of the store," said Richmond.

Richmond has a bachelor's degree in art from the University of Vermont and used to own a boutique clothing store called "Chameleon Studio" in Patagonia, Ariz. She loves making things and sells her own fused glass pieces, jewelry and table cloths, runners and pillows and is now offering custom made items. She said, "If any of my customers have a favorite piece of fabric, but don't sew, I can make something special out of it."

Holly Robinson, the store manager, has been working there for two years. "I love it. This is possibly the best job I've ever had. Catherine is a wonderful person to work for. The way she treats us is just so nice. And if there is anything she can do for her customers she doesn't hesitate."

There are a lot of gifts for creative people, like yarn, beads, buttons, crystals, thread, knitting needles, and fabric.

Karen Esquivel is a frequent customer. She said, "I love the variety. I get a lot of beads, because I make my own jewelry, belts, antique copper. I love the African mudcloth pillows."



The store is full of holiday gift ideas from ornaments to vintage records.
MANDY MARKSTEINER/Monitor

Seeking Chameleon is well-curated and organized. "We work very hard to make the shop look organized, and it does not happen easily," said Richmond.

If you're holiday shopping this weekend, Seeking Chameleon has a wonderful selection of unique, delightful and affordable gifts.

There are:

Nativity scenes, ornaments and other holiday decorations, science-themed gifts like trinitite, fused desert sand from the first atomic bomb test on July 16, 1945. Musical gifts, like a guitar, an accordion, printed sheet music, records and cassette tapes. Things for the home, like bowls, dishes, wine glasses and vases and plants. Antiques like a stove, refrigerator, dishes, phones, a bed, sewing machine. Collector's items like old fashioned medical supplies, barber's tools. Gifts for guys, like vintage tackle and tools. Clothes, handbags, jewelry and watches.

Discounts are possible, if you ask the right way

"In second hand shops people often ask for a discount. Many people feel like that is part of the experience," said Richmond.