

Blaine Co. BUSINESS

Showing the sunny side in Ketchum

House of the Rising Sun offers paintings, items from around the world

By SUSAN BAILEY

The Wood River Journal ~ Sun Valley

There are items at the House of the Rising Sun that don't feature the smiling Sun Valley sun but that doesn't take away from the fact that the famous logo blasted the business into being.

Under its inspiration, two San Francisco area people decided to open a store in Sun Valley, right on Main Street in Ketchum. One of them, Bill Neads, owns a similar store in Vallejo, Calif., where a big warehouse keeps him stocked with imports and overstocked items bought on sale. The other one is a former resident who worked eight years for Marketron in Hailey.

They stumbled onto an idea while playing with stock in the warehouse.

"Bill was showing me these vases with a sun face and I said, 'Oh, my God, that's the Sun Valley sun,'" said Kelly Staples, who opened the store last month with Neads, a Bay Area businessman who travels the world on buying trips.

With dinnerware, boxes, vases and sculptures showing the smiling Sun Valley face as the centerpiece, they took over the Christopher & Co. storefront with its knobby pine exterior and called their place the House of the Rising Sun in its honor.

The business opened in time for Memorial Day crowds, its 1,000 square feet stuffed with merchandise, some on the floor, some high in cabinets and others in between.

"I had a lady in here who took five laps," Staples said. "She said there was so much to see."

Five truck loads came to Ketchum from the Vallejo warehouse, including oil paintings from China, some in imitation of great masterpieces produced by Chinese art students.

"Bill's philosophy is, 'Why should only the rich be able to own art?'" Staples said. "He scours the globe. He loves art."

House of the Rising Sun has applied to the



Susan Bailey/WRJ

Kelly Staples sits outside House of the Rising Sun on Main Street in Ketchum.

"We really want to be able to appeal to the local market."

Sun Valley Gallery Association for membership and plans to stay open during Gallery Walk nights this summer, showing off oil paintings in gallery quality frames, some on European themes and others with Western images.

Other items found in the store were gathered on trips to Africa, India, Egypt, Indonesia and China and range from seagrass chairs to Galli art glass reproductions, Victorian velvet chairs for children, women's evening bags and marble-topped tables.

House of the Rising Sun sells leather chairs,

imitation Tiffany lamps, wooden wine carriers, crystal perfume bottles, Japanese tea sets and a fused ball of 500-year-old Chinese coins from a shipwreck.

Staples said some of the items are admittedly eccentric. There are high prices and low prices throughout the store.

"We really want to be able to appeal to the local market," Staples said. "I know how frustrating it is to live here and not be able to buy in a local shop. I want them to feel this is their store with something for everyone."

Returning to the Wood River Valley has been like a homecoming for Staples, who said she didn't realize how many friends she had.

"This is the first place that ever felt like home to me as an adult," Staples said. "There are a lot of fabulous places in the world and this is certainly one of them." ☺

Wake up With Hailey on Tuesday

Hailey~The monthly Wake Up With Hailey will be held on a special date this month. Join the Hailey Chamber of Commerce for a Wake Up from 8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. Tuesday, sponsored by Accounting and Financial Solutions.

The Wake Up will be held at 416 S. Main St., Suite 202 (Red Fish Building). Bring your business cards and networking skills, and join Mike Beck for refreshments. ☺

Customer service training being held

The course will help employees with tourists

The peak summer tourist season is just around the corner, and in order to prepare, the Sun Valley/Ketchum Chamber and Visitors Bureau is offering a first class customer service training session for local businesses' frontline employees to help effectively serve visitors this summer.