

Curious Kumquat schedules grand reopening Saturday

By MEREDITH PURVIS
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Curious about the Kumquat? Swing by 111 E. College Ave. on Saturday, April 21, during the grand reopening to get a glimpse of what the Curious Kumquat is all about.

The MainStreet Business of the Year winner has had a chance to get comfortable in its new location, the old Lusk Flower shop, just a block away from its previous setting. Owners Rob and Tyler Connoley tipped their metaphorical hats to Janey Katz and Suzi Calhoun, who helped them get started at Art and Conversation, but said the move was made for several reasons.

"We knew if we wanted to grow, we had to in our own space," Rob Connoley said. The two plan to, with the increased footage, offer a bigger selection overall, as well as a wider range of meats and cheeses in the expanded cooler section, and community cooking classes.

The business was moved literally overnight, they said, with the help of volunteering customers.

"We were pushing a cooler down the middle of Bullard Street at 1 a.m.," Rob Connoley quipped.

But he pointed out that that's what the Curious Kumquat is about: community.

"That's just part of what we do here," he said.

He said that regular customers often bring visitors to the Curious Kumquat as the first stop on a tour of Silver City.

"A big part of what we do at the Kumquat is involving customers," Tyler Connoley said.

He explained that the goal of the planned cooking

classes is to invite community members to share their skills with others, exposing people to family kitchen traditions.

The building that houses the store is a piece of community history in and of itself. The previous owners, Frankie and Moose White, wanted to sell their business and retire, but they didn't want to give the house to just anyone, Rob Connoley said. There have been some minor updates to the building, he said, but they have maintained the integrity, even painting the exterior the light-orange color that it was in 1910.

"(This location) has a great energy for us. It gives people permission to browse," Tyler Connoley said. "We like to say it's where Bullard and College meet."

One of the planned additions is a tasting room, where samples of oils, chocolates, coffees and teas will be offered, giving customers a chance to try before they buy.

And that's the goal, the say, to cater to gourmet and international food needs of their customers.

"When the store first opened, it was the 500 items Tyler and I needed in our kitchen," Rob Connoley explained. He said that his role in the store is ordering, and he works hard to ensure that customers can make the gourmet foods they see on the Food Network and in other outlets.

Tyler Connoley's role is helping customers, listening to what people want. Customers sometimes come in to get help planning dinner parties, and he pulls together a menu and helps them find all the



OWNERS ROB AND TYLER CONNOLEY

ingredients, and "voila, it's a meal!"

Saturday's event brings with it sale prices and special offers, and a free tasting of rare Chinese teas from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The grand reopening will provide customers a chance to

explore the new environment and try out some of the new offerings, they said.

"We are the Curious Kumquat," Tyler Connoley said.

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