

OTTAWA DELIVERED

Round 2 at Pre-Season Farmers Market

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This past Saturday, local vendors brought their goods to the second installment of the Pre-Season Farmers Market at Jeremiah Joe Coffee. While harvest season has been yielded by cold temperatures, a variety of specialty items were highlighted.

Although some of the vendors do not have a background in culinary school, they crafted their baking skills in their *(see end of article) own kitchens.

Jamie Knoll, of Henry, showcased her products of coffee based items, from gourmet syrup and candy to espresso bars.

Knoll has been touring the La Salle County markets since last year with the home business she and her husband, Brian, started after 12 years of running a restaurant in Las Vegas, then New York. However, Knoll does not have a restaurant in Ottawa, and is not planning on it anytime soon.

“We’re just getting started now,” she said of her new business, Java & Co. “It’s all online sales, we go to local markets to get interest.”

Instead of the expenses that come with operating a restaurant, Knoll also sells her products through other vendors, as well as through the markets. She noted that Beyond the Grapevine, at 215 Jefferson St., is one store that sells her products.

“This is working out in this economy,” she said. “This is a wonderful business model.”

Also setting up at the preview to the market, with a similar business model, was well known local, Jayne Grzetich, who has been at the market for all 15 years.

While she also does not have a store front in town, she generates a lot of interest through word of mouth as well as the markets.

“I’ll get call during the offseason,” Grzetich said. “We have good support from the city and the people of Ottawa. That’s why (the market) is so successful.”

Grzetich explained that the location for the market is significant.

“It’s the area we are in, people make of day of it,” she said.

Daphne Mitchell, of Ottawa, who was browsing Grzetich’s baked goods, said she has been attending the markets for the last 15 years.

Being with environmental organizations for the last 30 years, Mitchell has been a frequent shopper at the markets, finding flowers and plants to take home.

“It’s about supporting the local growers and the organic growing,” she said.

The Pre-Season Farmers Market will meet once more at Jeremiah Joe Coffee on Saturday, April 3, from 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The Farmers Market will officially kickoff on Saturday, May 1, on Jackson St. and continue every Saturday until Oct. 30.

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****JAVA & Co. Note: In reference to the opening paragraph. For clarification, JAVA & Co. specialty foods are crafted in a state approved and FDA registered commercial kitchen.**