

THE COLLEGIATE SHOP

APPAREL AND GIFTS



Lisa Bugg (Owner) heading to the game with her two children Charlie and Aleksey Bugg.



BY BRUCE FRANKEL

Throughout the history of our Nation, there has always been a great passion, enthusiasm, and pride associated with sports teams that represent educational institutions. No matter the season or the specific team sport, we love to show our support and allegiance.

Now celebrating their one year anniversary at their new location, 244 North Main Street in Kernersville, The Collegiate Shop owned by Lisa Bugg is the perfect place to purchase your school's team apparel, accessories, and gifts.

As a premiere retail outlet carrying only official merchandise of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) with a focus on the SEC and ACC Conferences, customers are assured of purchasing items that have the integrity and quality necessary to possess these collegiate trademarks. The Collegiate Shop carries infant, youth, and adult apparel and gifts from brand manufacturers such as Scout, Logo, Colosseum, Magnolia Lane, Corkcicle, Glory Haus, and more.

In addition to carrying the traditional items like shirts, caps, decals, cups, and flags, Lisa also has a great eye for unique items that are the 'newest and coolest' products that fans love to add to their collection. "One of the newest items we offer are garden statues which I would not have considered





in the past,” commented Lisa. “Our inventory is always changing from small gifts to durable tailgating items including tables and chairs.” You can find everyday items like dishtowels and functional items like bow-ties. The best way for customers to keep informed of new merchandise is to visit the store often or ‘like’ the store’s Facebook page.

A great feature of The Collegiate Shop is their ability to add customization. Shoppers looking for a unique gift can create their own specialized products such as insulated cups and stationery items in various color palettes. The Collegiate Shop also offers monogramming and decal services personalized to each customer’s taste. These can even be processed within three to five days.

Prior to relocating to their current location, The Collegiate Shop was founded four years ago when Lisa and her husband Kevin were approached to take over Your Team Store in Oak Ridge. The owners at the time knew the Buggs owned the commercial building on Route 66 where there was vacant space for Lisa to set up her new business.

The timing was perfect. Lisa was at a point in her career where she knew she would enjoy owning and running the business. “Ever since I was a young adult, I always wanted to own a gift store. I love gifty items and would spend hours bumping around my favorite gift shops in Richmond, VA, my hometown,” shared Lisa. “Although it was not quite the traditional gift store I had envisioned as a young lady, I knew it would give me the opportunity to develop and grow it into something.” Plus, Lisa and Kevin both saw it as a great chance for their two high school age children, Charlie and Aleksey, to have part-time jobs to gain valuable work experience while allowing them a flexible schedule so they could participate in team sports.

During those first couple of years, when the store changed retail space within the complex, Lisa concentrated on evolving the merchandise. She upgraded the items by carrying less t-shirts and introducing specialized merchandise and gift items with collegiate game day colors. Better quality clothing such as golf shirts and women’s dresses were added. In addition, there was more emphasis placed on the most popular regional schools.

The Collegiate Shop has also benefited from Lisa’s creative insight. As a result there has been an ongoing expansion of unique gift accessories for parties and events, personal gift items like jewelry, ceramics, and wall art that is perfect for students, their family, friends, and alumni. Customers began to appreciate the new quality focus and their word-of-mouth referrals have helped her business continue to grow.

Just as popularity of specific schools shift between different sports (even among the same customer), the seasonal shift in customer traffic can help keep the store focused on select and



currently popular items. For example, you will see more high school students in March through May when they are picking up items for sporting their new University colors. In September you will see more alumni stopping by for all of their game day needs and holiday gifts.

As a result of the growing business, Lisa made the decision last year that The Collegiate Shop would need to move to a high volume retail traffic location. The corner store on North Main Street in downtown Kernersville across from the iconic Musten & Crutchfield Grocery Store was the perfect fit. When you walk into the new store you are uplifted by the colorfully bright and cheerful environment where all the displays are easy to browse.

Customers are happy to discover how competitive the prices are as well, often lower than the big box stores for the same item. Lisa takes pride in making smart wholesale purchasing decisions where she can then pass on the savings to further promote ‘buy local’ which is something she herself has always done.

For Lisa, one of the biggest challenges is ordering apparel over six months in advance of a season. She must predict who will be the top placed teams even before the season starts. Since the Bugg Family are avid sport fans, they study each preseason to obtain and share insight on who the most popular teams could be for the upcoming regular season before an order is placed. As you can imagine, this will work out better some years than others, but for Lisa the business is an ongoing learning process—always looking to make it better. One bet that always pays off is that win or lose, the North Carolina teams have a loyal and dedicated fan base who are always ready to showcase their favorite school.

Supporting the four local area high schools of East Forsyth, Glenn, Bishop McGuiness, and Walkertown is important to Lisa and she makes sure all the school colors are stocked for students, teachers, and the community. The Bugg Family continues to be active and involved in the community and they all take pride in their support of Kernersville.

With The Collegiate Shop now entering its fifth year, for Lisa, the simple joy of having fun is really what it is all about. As Lisa will readily share with you, “I love talking to people! I am passionate about the customer service experience and I love sports.” Creating and maintaining a happy environment where everyone can benefit and have a positive experience regardless of whether it is a customer, staff member (who are all students), or a vendor, Lisa will always be the captain of her winning team.

For more information on The Collegiate Shop visit their website at www.TheCollegiateShop.com or call 336-992-9900. Like their Facebook page at www.facebook.com/TheCollegiateShop, follow them on Instagram at www.instagram.com/collegiateshop, or on Twitter at www.twitter.com/TheCollegiateShop.

