

Christmas pop-up new to the AGB gift shop



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By Chris Drost

While it is easy to pick up the phone and order a mass-produced item as a Christmas gift, the volunteers at the Art Gallery of

Bancroft are pulling out the stops this year to promote the alternative. The gift shop in the AGB has a selection of works made by local artists and artisans as well as a new pop-up display of custom-made activity kits, games and handcrafted items.

“When people think of an art gallery, their mind often goes solely to paintings at high price points. This year, during a time when buying from local producers and non-profit organizations like the AGB is so important, we wanted to put it out there what a variety of unique items we have, something that would fit everyone's budget,” says Sara Lang, volunteer. The AGB does have paintings for sale in its shop and in the gallery itself, but it also has a wide selection of locally made jewellery, pottery, woodwork, knitted items, glassworks, scarves, cards, art-themed puzzles, sculptures and more. According to the volunteers, there are actually not a lot of other places in Bancroft where you can purchase locally made artisan-produced gifts.

A new gift shop group has also assembled a Christmas pop-up within the store where all items are \$20 and under. This pop-up features custom activity kits, put together by the group, that will help inspire creativity for all ages.

With people staying home for the holidays this year, the group made the decision to assemble these activity kits as a way for individuals and families to keep busy over the holiday season.

Two original memory card games, one featuring famous paintings and the other, a selection of the works by local artist Arne Roosman, are a reflection of the art education mandate of the AGB. “They will also be a lot of fun for all ages,” says Lang.

Other activity kits include wooden pieces, some on a Christmas theme, with all the paint and brushes needed for budding artists to transform them into a masterpiece.

Kits also include a “make your own tea light candle holder and a “make a confetti covered Christmas ball.” The volunteers suggest that either should be a lot of fun to create on a cold December evening, and they would make a great gift for someone.

New to the AGB is a bluebird house kit that comes in a burlap bag with everything you need to put the house together, plus instructions on where to install it to best attract the birds in the spring. “This could be a great family project,” says Lang.

The AGB has been operating in Bancroft for approximately 38 years. It, like many other organizations and businesses in the community, has faced challenges as a result of COVID-19. This is why the volunteers are so enthusiastic about encouraging new faces to come in and do their Christmas shopping in the gallery shop.

The AGB is open Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. They also have a Facebook page at Art Gallery of Bancroft.