

Note: Feature story in the series of Women Entrepreneurs in the Iowa Lakes Corridor.

Wild Rose Inn brings back fine dining

SPIRIT LAKE – The Wild Rose Inn is bringing fine dining back to the Iowa Lakes region. Some may have heard of, or even attended, the monthly Wine Dinners. April’s Wine Dinner, scheduled for Saturday, April 30, is already sold out. “Private Chef Jeff Zernechel and consultant Jeff Lenz have been great additions,” said Shelene McDermott, who owns the Wild Rose Inn with her husband Mark. The Wine Dinners consist of gourmet continental cuisine paired with wine. Seats are available for the Friday, May 20, dinner.



Figure 1 Shelene and Mark McDermott with their daughters Madison and Ali. They purchased the Wild Rose Inn in June 2010.

The Wild Rose Inn is a Victorian estate with 13 suites on 2.5 wooded acres. McDermott’s bought the estate in June 2010. They had a bed and breakfast in Boone, The Barkley House, nearly 10 years ago. While on vacation in Okoboji, they saw the Wild Rose Inn, but didn’t stop. At home, they looked it up online and came back several times to see it.

They made a number of upgrades when they purchased it, and are continually improving the interior and exterior. Inside, they redecorated the entire Inn, including new bedding, linens, tiling around the fireplaces and paint. Outdoors, they finished the balcony and have done more extensive landscape and lighting.

“We want people to feel like they’re coming home when they stay here,” said Shelene. “We enjoy pampering our guests. They become family while they’re here.” Each room has a private bathroom and separate temperature controls. Amenities include a TV, VCR, microwave and refrigerator. The Inn has honeymoons suites, a family suite, business suites, fireplace suites and Jacuzzi suites.

The McDermott’s are members of the Iowa Bed and Breakfast Innkeepers Association. This holds them accountable to state-wide standards, such as standards of cleanliness and comfort, and each room is required to have certain amenities. “We work hard because our reputation is our best advertisement,” said Shelene.

The Wild Rose Inn isn’t just an Inn. It’s also a place to hold weddings, bridal showers, graduation receptions, corporate retreats, business meetings, birthday parties and much more. With a formal dining room, living room, admirals quarters and a commercial kitchen for catering, they can host just about any event.

The pond behind the Wild Rose Inn makes a perfect setting for an outdoor wedding. The large yard to the west of the Inn has been used to put up a tent for wedding receptions. A small



wedding was recently held indoors in front of the fireplace in the formal dining room.

Tours and consultations of the Wild Rose Inn are available by appointment. Contact Shelene at 712-332-9986, wildroseinn@wildroseinn.us, and visit the website at www.wildroseresort.com. To reserve space at Wine Dinners, call consultant Jeff Lenz at 712-337-8165.

Side bar:

The Iowa Lakes Corridor is proud to launch the Women in Business Club. To join, a woman must own her own business and want to meet with other women in business to share ideas, challenges, successes and grow professional relationships. Those interested in joining should contact Pat McGill, at 712-332-2965, patmcgill@mchsi.com or Jean Tennant at 712-490-5165. Women from throughout the Corridor region are encouraged to attend these meetings.

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The Iowa Lakes Corridor Development Corporation is the regional economic development agency for Buena Vista, Clay, Dickinson and Emmet counties. Its mission is to foster, encourage, aid, promote or otherwise assist in the economic growth and development of the region. For more information about the Iowa Lakes Corridor Development Corporation, call 712-264-3474 or visit www.lakescorridor.com.