

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

## Turning creativity into profit

ARNOLDS PARK – Tina Edwards opened Elements Design Studio in her hometown of Arnolds Park five years ago on Memorial Day weekend. Her creativity and knack for floral arranging, not to mention two decades of experience, make her store one-of-a-kind. The store also gives her the opportunity for home decoration.



Tina Edwards opened Elements Design Studio in her hometown of Arnolds Park five years ago Memorial Day.

“I really enjoy my shop and coming to work,” said Edwards. “What we do is so individualized, and that’s what’s fun – creating things unique to a person or event.” Edwards explains that there are three main divisions for her store: floral design, home décor, and retail.

Before Edwards opened Elements Design Studio, she was a florist for 22 years, managing various stores and doing private contracting and freelance. There was enough freelance work for her, doing the flowers for weddings and other events, that she made the decision to open a store. Knowing she didn’t want a full-fledged floral shop, she opened Elements Design Studio as a specialty floral shop for weddings and special events.

March through November keeps Edwards busy with weddings – 35-40 are scheduled for this year. She purchases her flowers from wholesalers around the world, including Ecuador, Holland and Thailand. “We do whatever it takes to get what we need,” said Edwards. She enjoys meeting with the bride and groom, to pull ideas from their personality on what types of flowers to use and how to arrange them.

During the winter months, Edwards finds that people are more apt to decorate their homes. For home décor, she goes into people’s homes to pick up on their taste and style. She has traveled as far as Sioux City and Sioux Falls for home decorating. While the store may look small, Edwards is able to special order just about anything, from tables and chairs to bookshelves and beds. Decorating services also include holiday decorating, home and office staging, and office decorating.

For the retail portion of Elements, Edwards attends two trade shows each year looking for new and unique products. “There’s enough uniqueness in the area, so I try hard to get things other stores don’t have,” said Edwards. The retail store consists of artwork, accent pieces, gifts, books, jewelry, and permanent and fresh florals.

Elements Design Studio is located at 36 S Highway 71 in Arnolds Park, just south of Mrs. Lady’s Restaurant. The store is open year-round, and the hours are 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Monday through Saturday, 12-4 p.m. Sunday or by appointment. Contact Elements at 712-332-2602. Element’s website, [www.elementsdesignstudio.com](http://www.elementsdesignstudio.com), is currently being built, and will be available soon.

### *Sidebar*

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](mailto: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](http://www.lakescorridor.com).