

Note: Feature story in a series of Women Entrepreneurs in the Corridor region

## A place to play with clay

STORM LAKE – Growing up near Chicago, Veronica McFadden was introduced to the arts at an early age. Her uncle had a pottery studio for 30 years, and while she didn't get to play in it as much as she would have liked, it gave her a start in getting her hands involved with clay.

In May 2011, McFadden opened Cool Catz Pottery Studio in Storm Lake, located behind Heritage Bank, at 210 ½ East 5<sup>th</sup> Street. She looked at the community's needs, and realized there wasn't a place to do pottery, unless she enrolled in a college course. She wanted to own a business that was artsy and family oriented. Opening a pottery studio meshed with her desire to own a business and provide a place for families to spend time together.



Veronica McFadden opened Cool Catz Pottery Studio in Storm Lake in May 2011 to give people a place to be artsy and gather with friends and family.

McFadden offers several activities for those who come to her studio. Paint-your-own-pottery is popular with people of all ages. She offers plates, mugs, bowls, ornaments and more; when people come in, they choose a piece, and can decorate it anyway they choose. Over 100 colors of paint are available, as well as stamps, stencils, sponges and writing paints to make the piece truly unique.

Monthly classes are offered for youth and adults, usually held the third Thursday of the month. Chomp, Chat and Create, the adult class, increases painting abilities. "I teach them the technique, and they embellish," said McFadden. For the next class, Oct. 20, participants will be painting bottles and learning to use specialty glazes.

A Halloween Party is offered Friday, Oct. 21, for youth ages six and older. Participants will paint a skeleton tile wall hanging, eat pizza, and enjoy ghoulish treats.

Silver clay jewelry making is also offered at Cool Catz Pottery Studio. McFadden has the basic forms and stamps. The whole process takes approximately 90 minutes, and participants walk out of the studio with their own jewelry.

McFadden will be bringing new activities to the studio as well. She would like to have glass fusion available this fall. This is taking small cut pieces of glass and fusing them together under high temperatures. "Even if you're not an artist, it still comes out beautifully," said McFadden. She is also hoping to get a pottery wheel in the studio next year. "Lots of people came in and asked for a pottery wheel right away." She also plans on using her outdoor space next summer for concrete sculpting classes.

Cool Catz is able to handle parties up to 44 people. There is a smaller room that can accommodate 24 people. McFadden has had bridal and baby showers, family reunions, summer field trips, birthday parties and more use her facilities.

Contact Cool Catz Pottery Studio to sign up for classes, schedule a party, or to just relax and paint some pottery, at 712-213-0089, or visit on the web at [www.coolcatzpottery.com](http://www.coolcatzpottery.com).

### **Women in Business**

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 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).