

Spurred to sweets



Holly McGowen hangs up a sign to her new business Sweets and Spurs at Redbud Plaza in Norman. PHOTO BY MAIKE SABOLICH

Norman shop inspired by Western wear, baked goods

BY LANEY ELLISOR
THE JOURNAL RECORD

NORMAN – Holly McGowen sits amid construction looking at swatches of tile, wallpaper and wood and dreams of what will soon be reality: her own small business.

McGowen recently left her job as director of public relations for the Oklahoma City RedHawks to pursue her dream of owning and operating a small business.

The business, Sweets and Spurs, should open in July and will feature baked goods and cowboy boots, two of McGowen's favorite things, she said.

"There's no better place than Oklahoma to combine two novelty items," McGowen said.

There will be about eight cupcake flavors, made using family recipes, and

three miniature-pie varieties, along with hand-dipped chocolates, McGowen said.

Each cupcake has a unique cowboy-themed name such as Vanilla Howdy, Chocolate Outlaw and Southern Charm. McGowen created the names with the help of her sister and friends, she said.

McGowen will sell boots for every budget, ranging from designer styles to classic riding boots. Brands include Frye and Lucchese, particularly its Diva line, an exclusive collection of only 120 pairs of each boot, McGowen said.

McGowen said she hopes Sweets and Spurs, which will be at 215 34th Ave SW in Norman's Redbud Plaza, will be where people who have been intimidated by Western-wear stores can purchase their first cowboy boots.

McGowen, who attended the University of Oklahoma, has already chosen two pairs of crimson game-day boots for the Sooners football season, she said.

Customers can now order boots and preorder sweets on the store website at www.sweetsandspurs.com.

McGowen said she has already

booked three weddings and a 4-year-old's graduation party, all by word of mouth.

No staff has been hired, but McGowen has a few people in mind and is looking for the right baker, she said.

McGowen worked at a boutique called Cloverleaf throughout high school and college, where she learned the ins and outs of small business ownership hands-on, she said. This experience is what first attracted her to the idea of having something of her own.

The idea for a cupcake shop was inspired by a post-college trip to Sprinkles in Dallas, McGowen said. However, she knew cupcakes alone had already been done, so she added boots.

"There isn't another store like Sweets and Spurs in Norman or Oklahoma City," McGowen said. "I'm just going to strive to be unique in everything I do."

The final decision to actually realize the dream of Sweets and Spurs was made in December 2010 due to an ownership change at the ballpark and after many prayers, McGowen said.

"At the end of the day, I really just want to sell cupcakes and pies and cowboy boots," McGowen said.

Emily Byrd, who worked with McGowen at Cloverleaf, has helped throughout the planning process. As an accountant, Byrd suggested accounting software, she said. She also helped McGowen name the store while the two were vacationing in Hawaii.

Byrd was McGowen's go-to brainstorming partner for cupcake names, calling once at 1 a.m., Byrd said.

"When I first heard the idea of cupcakes and boots, it sounded just like Holly," Byrd said.

Oklahoma Attorney General Scott Pruitt, former RedHawks co-owner, strongly encouraged McGowen to pursue Sweets and Spurs when she was his personal assistant, he said.

They discussed the concept of sweets and boots, and Pruitt thought it was a unique offering, he said.

Pruitt said he will absolutely visit the store and purchase a cupcake, and maybe a glass of milk as well.