

near

Couple designs, markets Iowa
Great Lakes Christmas ornaments

dear

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It is a Primavera family tradition

to have a large Christmas tree filled with beautiful Christmas ornaments.

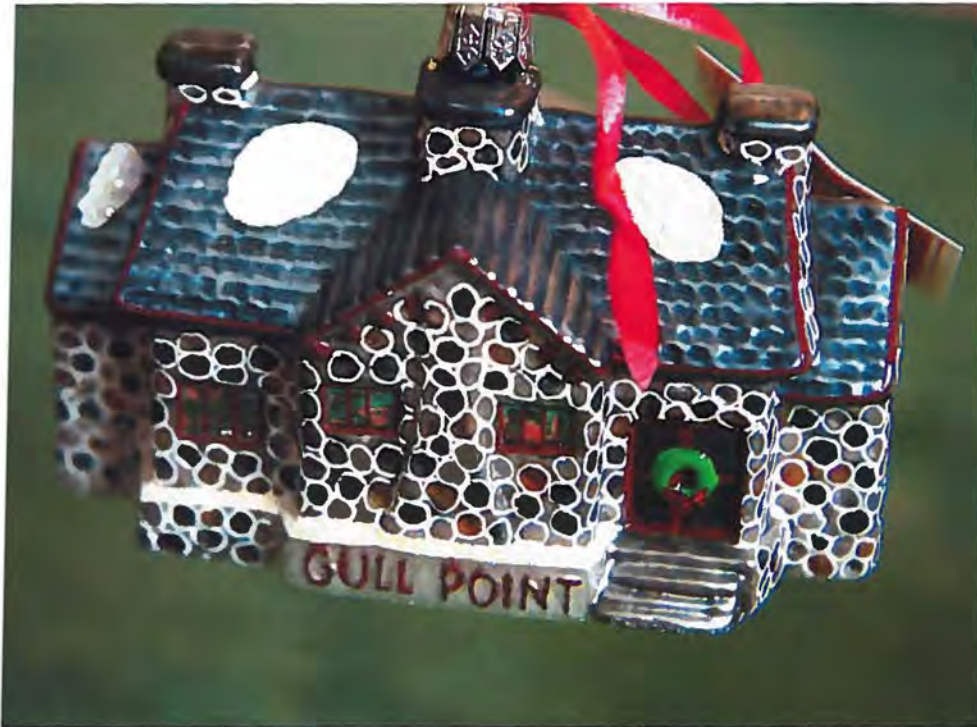
"It's becoming more and more challenging to find higher-quality Christmas things," Isa Primavera-Wipperfurth said.

Before she and her husband, Brad Wipperfurth, had children they enjoyed traveling and picking up ornaments along the way to remember their trips. However, they started to struggle to find items.

"It's hard to find something, A., you can display year-round, and B., you can have for years to come," Wipperfurth said.

So in 2003, the couple started designing their own ornaments. Primavera-Wipperfurth grew up in the Iowa Great Lakes area, graduating from Spirit Lake High School in 1991, and still visited often. After moving to Middleton, WI, and marrying Wipperfurth, Okoboji still felt like a second home. That was why the first ornament the Wipperfurths designed for their new company, WipperWillow,

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was an Okoboji ornament.

They created a beautiful design with the word Okoboji and a silhouette of the Arnolds Park Amusement Park Legend roller coaster. However, then they needed someone to make the glass ornament.

"We wanted a vendor that made a higher-quality glass Christmas ornament," Primavera-Wipperfurth said.

After researching online, the couple found a company in Poland that handmade glass pieces.

"They've been great for us," Wipperfurth said, with the artisans able to create intricate detail.

Since that first year, the Wipperfurths have added to WipperWillow's offerings with Queen II, Nutty Bar and Okoboji Summer Theatre ornaments, as well as others that portray area landmarks.

"The landmarks we started with were near and dear to our hearts," Primavera-Wipperfurth said. Those included an ornament reminiscent of their wedding at Gull Point State Park and their first



WIPPERWILLOW

Where: 1336 N. High Point Road, Middleton, WI

Cost: \$30-\$38 for Okoboji ornaments, \$5 ornament stands

Contact: (608) 833-0371; www.wipperwillow.com

honeymoon night at The Inn at Okoboji.

"They're all special in their own way," Wipperfurth said.

People from throughout the country with connections to the Okoboji area have ordered ornaments to bring a little of the Iowa Great Lakes to their Christmases.

"It's been kind of fun," Primavera-Wipperfurth said. "It's entertaining when we pick up for Christmastime. We ship to all over the country."

WipperWillow even has its own following now, with people ordering ornaments each year. Sometimes one order will come in for several ornaments, people purchasing gifts for multiple family members.

"I think we're both creative people, and that's probably the biggest driver," Wipperfurth said, with both he and his wife truly enjoying sketching out new ornament designs each year.

WipperWillow ornaments are available to purchase online at www.wipperwillow.com. □

Isa Primavera-Wipperfurth trims a tree with WipperWillow ornaments that represent landmarks from around the Iowa Great Lakes. The ornaments began in 2003.

Okoboji ornaments

- The Inn at Okoboji
- Mini-Wakan State Park shelter: Ten percent of the proceeds for the Mini-Wakan State Park shelter ornaments will go toward the shelter renovation project.
- Roof Garden
- Nutty Bar
- Okoboji Summer Theatre
- Abbie Gardner Cabin
- Okoboji sailboat
- Gull Point
- Queen II

