

# New Owners at Genoa Country Store focus local products

by Joyce Hollister

“Want a sample?” Steve Brown handed me a tiny spoon heaped with maple nut ice cream—just one of the dozens of locally made food items sold at the Genoa Country Store.

His wife, Lynn, offered a handmade caramel twisted inside a cellophane wrapper. Both were delicious.

Candy and ice cream are big sellers for the new owners of the store. Lynn, who has been a part owner of the building for about a decade, and Steve, who retired as a biology teacher at Incline High School in June, began painting the building and planning their new venture in late July.

“It’s going to be more like a grocery store,” Lynn said. “A place locals can pick up milk or ice and won’t have to spend 40 minutes driving.”

The Browns plan to have a good supply of fresh food to go with the deli cheese and meats, sundries, paper plates and cups, soft drinks and beer, as well as the local newspaper.

During the new owners’ first week, a guest at Walley’s Hot Springs Resort came looking for snacks for a crowd. Lynn hand-sliced fresh cheese from the deli counter to serve with crackers and supplied paper plates and utensils.

The deli is the center attraction. “People really like the famous Genoa Country Store deli sandwiches,” Lynn said. Lunchtime



Lynn and Steven, new owners of Genoa Store.

brings a crush of locals and visitors who eat their sandwiches on the front deck or at the indoor tables.

At breakfast time, coffee drinkers appreciate the fresh-ground Alpen Sierra Coffee from Minden and baked goods from the Paul Schat’s Bakery in Carson City. The popular Wednesday night dinner events will return this fall.

The Genoa Country Store label is found on old-fashioned preserves and jams made with fruit and no sugar, such as Sweet Potato Butter and Strawberry Rhubarb Jam. The Jerky Junction fresh jerky is made in Carson City, and the ice cream comes from Minden.

Then there’s the wine, mostly from California—Sonoma, Napa and the coast—ranging from \$9.99 to \$32 a bottle. Six-packs of locally favorite beers like Sierra Nevada

Pale Ale stand alongside more exotic brews, such as Spice Pumpkin Ale and Black Butte Porter, in the cooler.

If you’re looking for a more healthy drink, you can try Kombucha’s Pinnacle Pineapple and High Desert Prickly Pear juices, which are supposed to be good for your digestion, Lynn said.

A bar will open this fall, and store will be open for Candy Dance, serving sandwiches and the soon-to-be famous Genoa blackberry margarita.

The store is a work in progress, with new flooring, new refrigerators, an ice-making machine, antiques and western art. Employees Darlene Machutta, Rebecca Schweigert, Karen Jakob and Erik Warren help Lynn and Steve keep the store open 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., seven days a week.

The Browns live upstairs but still own a condo at Incline, where Lynn once operated the Potlatch, now run by daughter Lisa Fine Nelson. Daughter Cassie McGinty works for the Walt Disney Company in New York, and son Kyle Fine is a firefighter for Tahoe-Douglas Fire District. Lynn and Steve have three grandchildren.

Summer has been a maelstrom of activity, and the couple expect to make more improvements to the century-old building and bring in more and different stock as the weeks go on.

They remained cheerful through it all. “We’re happy people,” Lynn told me with a grin.