

Interior designer's 'stash' for sale

Nobody navigates the interior design universe like a smart designer and Karen Benson, ASID, is one of the best. When she opened Inspire For Your Home (an element of Karen L. Benson & Associates) on First Street in Fort Myers less than two years ago, customers felt like privileged insiders.

Inspire holds Benson's best "stash" — the stuff of her award-winning residential design projects. Retail customers get to shop it.

"Inspire increases our ability to put the final touches in a room," she says, "And clients like having access to everything."

Clients and customers also like local, Benson says, so she carries products made here by friends and neighbors, including woodworkers Wes Strickland (tables) and Wes Cypher (grandfather clocks; fish cabinets customized to match to client colors).

Benson's firm supports local charity, donating 10 percent of sales to Community Cooperative Ministries, which operates the area's largest soup kitchen.

Inspire is at 2037 W. First St., Fort Myers. Hours: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays; 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday. Call 628-1114 or visit inspireforyourhome.com

— Notes and photos by Joanna Hogan, special to The News-Press

FRENCH FLOWERS

Former Fort Myers resident Jodi French hasn't forgotten her fine following here and continues to supply Inspire with wonderful belt buckles, fine art and hand-painted flower pins (\$15 each). French also crafts more elaborate, hand-beaded silk and linen pins (\$22 each).



CURIOUSER & CURIOUSER

Fringe Studio's 2.25-inch glass cube paperweight captures nature in liquid-seeming sections, one vintage snap sliced into another (\$29.50).



Lovely and accommodating for a vanity or dressing table is the Fringe Studio 12-by-6-inch glass tray (\$29). To have and to hold something small and sweet, the 4.5-inch-square bird dish (\$12) is part of the line's transfer ware.

GOOD NATURED

SPRING FELT

Texas-based designer Ron McIntyre calls his hand-made Square Feathers line "the haute couture of decorative pillows." The 22-inch-square linen version pops with colorful felt lattice, flower and monogram embellishments (\$160 each).

