



RICHARD GREEN/THE SALINAS CALIFORNIAN

Margarita McCown stands with the sign denoting her place of business, 'The Painted Horse,' in Soledad. McCown, who found herself retired and all by herself, found her calling in owning the collectables and antiques store.

# Owning business is a thrill

*Soledad antique merchant finds her fulfillment*

By **CHRISTOPHER ORTIZ**  
The Salinas Californian

Running her own antique store has Margarita McCown thrilled.

"I absolutely thrive on it," said McCown, who runs The Painted Horse in Soledad. "I love it; it fulfills me."

The longtime Soledad resident decided to open the shop this spring, a few years after her husband died.

"I found myself retired and

## THE PAINTED HORSE

n **BUSINESS:** Collectables and antiques.

n **ESTABLISHED:** 2006

n **EMPLOYEES:** 1

all by myself," she said, "and thought, 'I need to do something.'"

The 600-square-foot store is open from noon to 6 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday.

"Every day, I bring in new items," she said. "There are constantly new things."

McCown's customers can find bone china, vintage jewelry, furniture and 1950s-vintage oil and watercolor paint-

n **ORGANIZATION:** privately held.

n **LOCATION:** 1082 Monterey St., Soledad.

n **INFORMATION:** 678-9135.

ings.

She offers pieces from Mexico, Japan and Germany and elsewhere. Some of her wares come from friends and other customers, but McCown acquires most from estate sales.

She purchases some items on trips, such as a recent vacation in China.

"I'm trying to get more (paintings) from local artists,"

she said.

Her most sought-after merchandise includes an antique sewing machine and an oak cabinet in perfect condition.

McCown is not a first-time entrepreneur. About 30 years ago, she ran the Soledad Flowers shop.

"The people that buy the collectables are people in their 50s and older," she said. "But I have a younger clientele, too."

She said she treats her customers like friends.

"I want people to return," she said. "It's the service that brings them back."

Contact Christopher Ortiz  
at [chrisortiz@thecalifornian.com](mailto:chrisortiz@thecalifornian.com).