Written by Kristyn Halbig Ziehm
Wednesday, 26 January 2011 19:19

TWO DOWNTOWN PORT WASHINGTON buildings will soon house new businesses. The former North Shore Homes building at 404 N. Franklin St. (above) will become a counseling center while the former Graff Jewelers store at 223 N. Franklin St. will become a tea room and gift shop.

Photos by Bill Schanen IV

Officials hope opening of counseling center, tea room will help spark renewed interest in shopping district

Two new businesses are preparing to open in downtown Port Washington, a sign of renewed interest in the central shopping district, officials said.

“Maybe that’ll bring more interest to downtown,” City Administrator Mark Grams said. “It’s a sign properties are starting to move.

“There seems to be a little more interest in the buildings now. I think you’re going to start to see things happen a little bit.”

The former North Shore Homes building at 404 N. Franklin St. has been sold to Harry and Rosemary Schaumburg, who will open the Stone Gate Resources counseling center there.

The former Graff Jewelers building at 223 N. Franklin St. is expected to be sold this week to Port residents Urszula Cholewinska and Dan Micha, who plan to renovate the structure and create a tea room and gift shop.

For Schaumburg, the move is a return home. He lived in Port Washington more than 30 years ago, when he worked for the Ozaukee County Social Services Department.

He said he moved to Colorado, where he has operated a counseling center in a 12,000-square-foot lodge on 80 acres, but is returning to Ozaukee County to be near his family.

Stone Gate Resources is a Biblical-based practice that deals primarily with couples counseling, Schaumburg said. The center will open in Port on Feb. 6.

As many as six couples at a time will come from throughout the country for weeklong intensive counseling, arriving Sundays and leaving the following Saturdays, he said.

“You can accomplish a whole lot more in that week by focusing without distractions than if you were doing this week by week,” Schaumburg said.

Port, he said, is a ideal setting for the center with the lake as a backdrop and hotels and restaurants nearby that can be used by the couples attending his center.

“It will be a little help to the local economy,” he said.

The former Graff Jewelers will be renovated by Cholewinska and Micha, who said they hope to open their business in May.

The couple said they are working with the city, Port Washington Main Street program and architects in making final decisions on how to restore the building.

The shop, they said, will feature items from throughout the world and complement the current downtown retail mix.