BELMONT — As residents of the town welcome the return of Spring this year, they will find everything they need to get out and enjoy the nice weather with gardening, outdoor projects, animal care and even some backyard relaxation, thanks to the new Osborne’s Agway Farm and Garden Center in Belmont. Owner Paul Osborne is no stranger to the farm and garden supply business, having owned and operated Osborne’s Agway in Concord for the past ten years and his Hooskett store for the past 25 years. When he looked to develop a third location, he said he was pleased to find the property on Route 3 in Belmont.

“This has been a great town to work with, and I like this location. Everything’s going well,” Osborne said.

While the doors of the new farm and garden center first opened on April 1, a Grand Opening celebration was held at all three locations last Saturday, offering customers free giveaways and many items, as well as door prizes, to look for a little entertainment. Customers in Belmont were all so encouraged to visit their new “country store.” The charming shop can be accessed by a short stroll under a covered walkway, which winds amongst the hundreds of flowering plants on sale behind the main building and greenhouse.

“We wanted to tie the two buildings together, and this walkway was a nice way to do that,” Osborne said.

Inside the store are home and gift giving items like elegant furniture, wooden rockers, Salmon Falls Pottery and Bog Hill Pottery of Andover, works of art and locally themed antique-looking wooden signs. Wind chimes, stained glass and many eye-catching decorative items for both indoors and out are available.

The country store offers food items, too, and Osborne’s shelves filled with pickled eggs, relishes, maple syrup, Camp Mix all-in-one seasoning, and other canned and dry goods. There is even raw milk, cheeses and local eggs in the coolers.

“We have a commercial kitchen downstairs, and soon, we’ll be selling pies and other baked goods in here, too,” he said.

Preparing all of these delicious treats will be Debbie Consineau, who is known as “AuntieDebbra” for her magic she works in the kitchen.

In the front store are all one would expect in a farm and garden center. From grains, incubators, cages and fencing to dog, cat and equine supplies, the store is stocked with aisles of items for animal care, feeds, bulbs, planters, fertilizers and decorative wrought iron hooks will keep the gardeners well supplied, too. The greenhouse and garden center out back are filled with fountains and ornaments along with many beautiful selections of flowers and shrubs.

Osborne’s also offers a variety of Carhartt clothing and footwear, and for the little outdoor enthusiasts in your life, there is a great selection of collectible miniatures from Frank and Licia and a country store for other home or garden needs and wants. The store is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Saturday from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

“We really are so much more than just a grain store,” Osborne said.

The store is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., from 8 a.m. to 9 a.m. on Saturday, and 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. on Sundays. Osborne’s Agway Farm and Garden Center is located on Route 3 just east of Mosquito Bridge in the Winnipesaukee area of Belmont. More information on all three of their stores can also be found at www.osborne-sagway.com.

LACONIA — Understanding how and what to be prepared for before approaching a lender is especially important to business owners during these challenging economic times.

On Wednesday, May 16, SCORE Lakes Region will offer a discussion during a workshop entitled “Bank Financing for New or Existing Businesses.”

Sponsored by the Bank of New Hampshire (formerly Laconia Savings Bank), W. Stephen Leighton, Senior Vice President, Laconia Savings Bank, will share his expertise. Steve has been a commercial lender in the Lakes Region for more than 30 years and lending experience to large and small businesses. Leighton graduated from St. Bonaventure University and from St. Bonaventure Graduate School of Banking.

This session is part of the May 16 workshop, which will be held from 5 to 8 p.m. at the Lakes Region Chamber of Commerce, 383 South Main Street, Laconia, NH 03246. Tuition is $25 per person if paid in advance or $30 at the door. Checks may be sent to SCORE Lakes Region, 383 South Main St., Laconia, NH 03246. To register, call SCORE Lakes Region at 524-0137 or register online at lakesregion.score.org/localworkshops.

SCORE Lakes Region is a not-for-profit, volunteer organization and Small Business Administration resource center providing free counseling, mentoring and coaching for the life of your small business.

Rustic Raven finds a new place to nest

Tracy Mertz, owner of Rustic Raven, has chosen the Belmont Village Store to “nest” her business! Specializing in baked treats like pastries, pies and cakes, Tracy also provides area residents with an “eat-n-go” Friday Joe’s Deli Put on a Star. “Friday Night Feast’ is becoming increasingly popular with the neighborhood, offering a dinner-to-go package at a special price. Music is often coupled with a baked treat from Mertz’s oven, giving patrons an opportunity to sample her creations, while, or for catered events, Mertz can’t help but to serve them to go! I love to cook, and I love Belmont; I feel the entire village is a family,” Tracy states. This week’s special is a meatloaf, mashed potatoes and a side salad. Check in every Friday for a new special and support your own favorite location as well!

Other baked goods in the shop entitled “Bank Financing for New or Existing Businesses.”

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This discussion session include:

• How to prepare before approaching a lender.
• Conditions that affect the decision making process.
• What documents are necessary to approach a lending institution.
• How the current economic climate affect business loans.

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Osborne’s Agway Farm and Garden Center in Belmont, posing with Beth Frost amidst some of the wonderful artwork and locally themed Pottery of Andover, cards, Hog Hill Pottery and Hog Hill ornaments now available in their New Hampshire Country Store, located behind the main Agway building and greenhouse on Route 3 in Belmont.

SCORING Lakes Region to host financing workshop

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