



By Tina Kitt

The Wauneta Breeze

After jumping through the required hurdles, Christopher Hansen of Wauneta has launched a new business enterprise—Christopher's Tattoo Shop—offering tattooing and body piercing services.

The new business is located in a portion of Hansen's home located at the east end of E. North Railway Street, two blocks east of downtown Wauneta.

With Hansen's home located in a residentially-zoned neighborhood, he was required to seek approval of conditional use permit from the local zoning board, with the Wauneta Village Board giving final approval to operate an in-home business.

Hansen said he appreciates all the help he received from local officials in resolving the zoning issues. At one time Hansen had sought a business loan through Wauneta's revolving Community Development Block Grant funds, but instead opted to pursue other funding sources.

Hansen and his mother moved to Wauneta in 2003 from the Phoenix, Ariz., area where he worked as optician while pursuing a sideline business as a tattoo artist.

His first foray into the world of tattooing began when, as a 16-year-old, he provided his younger brother and sister with free tattoos.

"Let's just say my mom wasn't too happy," says Hansen.

Little did his family realize that a career was in the making.

As a young man Hansen was offered an art scholarship, but he chose instead to enter the Army. During his military service he trained to be an optician, utilizing his precision skills in making military eyeglasses.

Later, Hansen operated a mobile tattooing business from his van in Arizona and Colorado, where such enterprises are allowed.

"I've met some very interesting people along the way," says Hansen.

In Nebraska, however, his business operation hit a snag.

His newly adopted home state has significantly stricter regulations in place regarding tattooing and piercing businesses.

This fall, Hansen and his mother worked to convert a portion of his small, tidy home into a tattoo and piercing shop, in line with Nebraska's stringent requirements.

His shop has a separate entrance and restroom facilities. The facility includes a wrap around workstation counter and granite tile floor, work which Hansen completed himself. On the wall hang licensing certificates from Nebraska's Department of Health and Human Services. An autoclave for sterilizing tools sits on the counter. As funds allow, Hansen plans to add a Q-switch laser, which is used to remove tattoos when people have a change of heart in body art.

His new shop has been open for a month, during which time he has inked nearly a dozen tattoos, with most of his customers traveling to Wauneta from out of town. It is believed that he is one of the first licensed tattoo artists, perhaps the first, to set up shop in Chase County.

A two-year employee of the Chase County Roads Department, Hansen offers his services on weekends and evenings. He can be reached at 308-882-0220 or 308-394-5704.