

# Herbal remedies' popularity prompts new local store

By SEAN McNEELY  
Star Reporter

Bev Gray, chartered herbalist and owner of Earth Scents Herbs and the Yukon Tea Factory, has left the comfort of her herbal garden to try the jungle on Main Street.

Feeling a little cramped working from home, and encouraged by customers and friends, Gray opened her own shop of herbal remedies, healing salves and teas, called Aroma Borealis, just three weeks ago.

"Business has been amazing. I've been told, 'It's about time something like this opened up,'" she said in a recent interview.

The store combines her own home-grown collection of teas, herbs and salves with other herbal soaps, shampoos, vitamins, essential oils and other organic goodies from all over the world.

Gray also offers supplies for do-it-yourselfers who prefer to make their own herbal blends.

One thing Gray could count on for opening her own shop was word-of-mouth. She already supplies her teas to gift shops, food stores and coffee shops around Whitehorse. Many of the Blackstone Café regulars are already big fans of Gray's recipes.

Her network extends throughout the North, supplying stores in Dawson City, Skagway and Haines. It also reaches out across the country, with customers in the Northwest Territories, Alberta and as far as Nova Scotia.

The vast collection of her organic products is used for medicinal purposes.

For example, for burns, cuts, and various skin irritations, Gray offers Boreal Balm. It's a medicinal balm made up of Balsam Poplar buds, beeswax, olive and almond oils and Vitamin E.

For bruises, pains and muscular aches, Gray recommends Wolf's Bane - another healing salve from the arnica montana flower.

And for any other kind of skin or body ailments, Gray is sure to have some kind of herbal mix to fix the problem. Her products are for maintaining health "inside and out," she says.

But Gray's shop is not just for healing maladies. Teas range from the basic Chamomile and Raspberry leaf teas to blends like the Autumn Harvest, that includes rosehips, hibiscus, lemon grass, nettle, peppermint, spearmint and orange peel.

Another popular tea is Aroma Borealis, the inspiration for the store's name. It combines rosehips, blueberries, nettle leaves, oat straw, lemon grass and corn flowers.

For those interested, but new to herbs, Gray can easily provide or suggest pamphlets and other literature on the benefits of going organic. Or, if Gray doesn't have the answer to a question, she'll personally research the subject.

"I do a lot of research through the Herb Research Foundation in Boulder (Col.) or the American Botanical Council," she said.

However, often Gray is surprised by the knowledge of her customers.

"There seems to be a large knowledge base here - they are really concerned about control over their own health. I've been educated by the public, as well."

Gray welcomes the free lessons. She's the first to admit: there's still much more to learn about herbs.

"It takes a lifetime to learn this craft. Sometimes, I still feel like I'm in diapers," she said.

Ever the student, Gray is writing her thesis to earn her Masters of Herbalism. The title of her thesis is Ethical Wild Harvesting of the Northern Boreal Forest. She hopes to complete this over the next couple of years.

As well, Gray was also recently elected to the Canadian Herb Society, based in Vancouver.

The national organization focuses on the education and acceptance of herbs. Gray intends to contribute to its quarterly newsletter when she has time.

## Stock market surges

TORONTO (CP) — Canada's leading stock market has yet to shake off shivers from the so-called Asian flu, analysts say. But you wouldn't know it by looking at the latest trading numbers.

The Toronto Stock Exchange's index of 300 big stocks, having gained 22 per cent since mid-January, seems poised for a record-setting dash in 1998.

On Tuesday, the blue-chip barometer gained another 12.49 points to close at 7,440.37 — the fifth record high in the last six sessions.

"The real surprise of 1998 is likely to be just how well corporate Canada will fare," Michael Manford, chief economist at Scotia Capital Markets, wrote in a report Tuesday.

"At present, the equity markets are doing their level best to panic about the Asian flu. However, what they may well be missing is that the fundamentals behind corporate Canada are bordering on embarrassing."

Inflation remains flat. Labor costs are falling. Government budget surpluses are mushrooming. Consumer and investment spending is booming. The loonie is recovering. Interest rates might be coming down.

Most importantly, corporate profits are climbing.

Indeed, profit margins are expected to rise up to 25 per cent this year after gaining 15.7 per cent in 1997, Manford suggests.



Star Photo by CATHIE ARCHBOULD

**HERBAL HEAVEN** - Bev Gray, owner of Aroma Borealis, has left her cramped quarters at home to open a new herbal shop on Main Street. She reports a booming business thus far.

## Making Your Golden Years Your Best Years

### How Taking the Right Steps Now on Nutrition, Exercise and Attitudes Can Affect Your Aging Process



Dr. David Gayton is a specialist in geriatric medicine in White Rock, B.C. and has studied the affects of aging.

Dr. Gayton will talk about our attitudes on aging and "old age" and some of the steps we can take to slow down the aging process and learn how to live better as we live longer.

His talk is part of the Gerontology Conference being held in Whitehorse. The evening session is open to everyone.

**Wednesday, March 25, 1998 - 7:00 p.m.**  
**Ball Room - High Country Inn**

For more information please call 667-5338

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