

# SLT's iconic Cork & More to be no more



Jim and Kim Warlow are closing the Cork & More in South Lake Tahoe on Oct. 31. Photo/Provided

## By Kathryn Reed

For decades it has been the go-to store on the South Shore for a great bottle wine, unique presents, holiday items, gift baskets and specialty foods.

At the end of the month the doors to the Cork & More will close for the last time. Owners Kim and Jim Warlow are retiring after nearly 40 years. While the South Lake Tahoe shop has been on the market since February, no buyer has come forward. That doesn't mean there isn't time, but the clock is ticking.

Kim Warlow echoed the sentiment of many when she said, "It will be a really sad loss for the community if someone doesn't come in and carry it on in some form."

The couple has had a knack for creating a store that told the story of the season. The temporary items balanced the backbone of the store – wine, cheese and specialty condiments. Staying one step ahead of what could be found elsewhere was a goal of the Warlows, which made the Cork & More the place to find something beyond the ordinary.

Customer service is also what sets the store apart from others.

“Everything that we do is the best. We don’t compromise on anything. We taste everything that comes in the store,” Kim Warlow said.

Jim Warlow’s background is in wines, having been a sommelier at the now closed Christiana Inn, which was where Himmel Haus in South Tahoe is now. California wines dominated the shelves to begin with, now it’s like a trip around the world.

“We started with wines, a little bit of coffee and a tiny bit of cheese. We just kept adding on to our store to meet demands of the community,” Warlow told *Lake Tahoe News*. “I spend a lot of time in Europe. That’s where the gift and cheese influences come from.”

They started Cork & More on Nov. 1, 1976, on Ski Run Boulevard where Blue Angel Café is – just not in the same building. It was 1984 when they moved to the current location on Al Tahoe Boulevard.

They had a second store in Tahoe City from 1980 to 1992. When that store closed the catering business started.

Warlow is still on the fence whether she will continue making wedding cakes.

It’s the customers and 10 full-time employees they will miss the most. After all, one or both of the Warlows has been in the shop usually five days a week.

Retiring means more time to ski, more time to spend with their family, including both of their moms, and time to travel. It also means the first Christmas in years to be with family.

“I’m really proud of what we have done ... what we brought to the community,” Kim Warlow said.