

## DISCOVER

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Editor: Kristen Cook / 520-573-4194 / [kcook@azstarnet.com](mailto:kcook@azstarnet.com)LIKE our Facebook fan page at  
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Artwork by Planet Rabbit, Nikki Welch, Zev Rubin and others adorns the walls.

By Kristen Cook  
ARIZONA DAILY STAR**E**verything inside Broken Arrow Boutique is a bargain.

Original art and jewelry by local artists, vintage clothing, accessories — it's all under \$30.

They're deals — on wheels.

Broken Arrow Boutique isn't a bricks-and-mortar store but a big ol' truck that rolls around downtown.

Instead of paying rent, she feeds quarters into parking meters, says **Nikki Welch**, who along with **Calley Davenport** and **David Aguirre**, created the mobile gallery and store venture.

The converted San Francisco newspaper truck — tricked out with an extended roof — is surprisingly easy to drive and parallel park, Welch says.

"You just have to keep an eye out for powerlines and low tree branches," she says.

About 10 artists have their pieces displayed inside the 9-by-6-foot space, which can fit five shoppers inside at a time.



Co-owners Nikki Welch, left, and Calley Davenport get organized for the evening as they set up shop in the truck.

# BOUTIQUE on wheels

offers bargain-priced originals

PHOTOS BY A.E. ARAIZA / ARIZONA DAILY STAR  
Nikki Welch and Calley Davenport set up the mobile store for an evening's work on North Fourth Avenue.

David Aguirre wraps the mobile store with attention-getting rope lights. It was once a newspaper delivery truck.



Jewelry by Wesley Weisheit and Michael Brian is on display.

**BROKEN ARROW BOUTIQUE**Visit [brokenarrowboutique.tumblr.com](http://brokenarrowboutique.tumblr.com) for an updated schedule. Its exact location depends on available parking.

The boutique usually hits the streets Wednesday through Sunday, setting up on Fourth Avenue and Congress Street. With lights strung along the silver exterior and a life-size mannequin (often mistaken for a real person) the boutique attracts attention.

"They see us parked down the street, and it's lit up," Davenport says. "It's a spectacle, a curiosity. People think we're a food truck. They're surprised to find Tucson's first mobile boutique."

The boutique gets a 20 percent commission, which doesn't add up to a lot when you sell hand-printed T-shirts and \$1 cards. But the shop is meant to be more of a community project than a big-time business venture.

"We're trying to keep art alive and creativity downtown," Davenport says.



Liz Chapple, left, shows a shirt to Anthony Baniaga. The mobile store's interior can handle five shoppers at a time.

## '360' HELPS KIDS LOOK, FEEL GOOD

Foster children get beauty aids to build self-esteem

By Anthony Victor Reyes  
ARIZONA DAILY STAR

If you look good, you feel good.

That's the premise behind a new program aimed at building foster children's self-esteem. **Desiree Cook** founded the "I am you 360" program in November that provides foster families with beauty products and — more than that — an understanding of what personal turmoil can do to a child.

"(The kids struggle with) not having permanency, either physical or sexual abuse from biological parents, and on top of that (they) feel ugly," said Cook, 47, a local hairstylist at Artistry Beauty Studios. "They are already a target (of bullying) because of their situation. When they are self-conscious about their appearance, what happens is, they stop focusing on their education. We want to empower (foster children) to reinvent themselves, feel liberated and not let their pasts define who they are."

According to Arizona Department of Economic Security statistics, 10,803 children entered out-of-home care between October



Desiree Cook styles a client's hair. "We want to empower (foster children) to reinvent themselves," Cook says.

2012 and September 2013. During that same time, the Child Abuse Hotline received 44,193 reports, the vast majority for neglect, according to the department's semiannual report from last year.

Cook — who herself has struggled with low self-image, drug addiction, domestic violence and incarceration — empathizes with the kids she works with and has seen firsthand the positive impact having pride in one's appearance can have. She recalls one young girl who came to see her a few times and always seemed to be down.

"She hates her hair and she is always sharing about how kids at school are always picking on her, and

saying her hair smells and is nappy," said Cook. "The little girl hated herself at 11, and it just hurt me so bad. Everything was going wrong in her life. When I first did her hair and put the tiara on her and took her to this full-length mirror, to see her smile come alive and her eyes perk up, it was like she had a glaze over her eyes."

"After seeing herself, she was just amazed and she couldn't get off the mirror. She kept turning around in the mirror. It was like, all of a sudden, she was given life. Her grades went up and she is now making friends."

Through collaborations with Child Protective Services and organizations like La Frontera Center and GAP Ministries, the local

**I AM YOU 360**For more information, contact Desiree Cook at [motherearth360@gmail.com](mailto:motherearth360@gmail.com)

"I am you 360" accepts referrals from its partner agencies.

nonprofit has been providing resources to foster families and children in group homes, such as hair- and skin-care workshops and motivational seminars. Cook works with the children, showing how to care for their hair and giving them community-donated "empowerment bags," which contain personalized skin- and hair-care items, personal-care tips, even handwritten notes meant to motivate.

Cook always emphasizes that things will get better.

"My goal is to continue work with them and let them know that they can trust me," said Cook. "I am sure that a lot of them hear a lot of empty promises. So that (trust) is key. It is so rewarding when the girls see me again and continue the relationship."

Anthony Victor Reyes is a University of Arizona journalism student aprenticing at the Star. Contact him at 573-4128.

## Spring sale

**O**zma Atelier is already known for low prices on designer clothes. Well, they're getting lower. From 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Saturday, the resale boutique — 439 N. Sixth Ave., 822-6802 — is holding its spring sale. Everything in the store is discounted 30 percent, plus racks will be filled with \$1, \$2 and \$4 items.

**SHOPPING CALENDAR****TODAY**

**For the Birds** — Tucson Botanical Gardens, 2150 N. Alvernon Way. Local artists' and architects' birdhouse designs available for silent auction. "Flocktail Party" kicks off exhibit. Included in Gardens admission. 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. through June 30. \$13. 326-9686.

**THURSDAY**

**Gather: A Vintage Market** — Old Arizona Sash Building, 657 W. St. Mary's Road. Unique and vintage furniture and items for your home and garden. 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Thursdays-Saturdays; 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Sundays May 15-18. Free. 310-7531.

**SATURDAY**

**Church Ice Cream Social** — New Apostolic Church, 8282 E. Pima St. Music and crafts. 11 a.m.-3 p.m. May 17. Free. 296-3902.

**Gaslight Craft Fair and Farmer's Market** — Gaslight Plaza, 7004 E. Broadway. Variety of vendors, including jewelry, tea, natural soaps, scarves, kettle corn, unique metal and copper sculptures, yard and household art. 1-7 p.m. Saturdays. Free.

**Spring Boutique** — Saguaro Christian Church, 8302 E. Broadway. Gently used clothing, bake sale, tea and cookies. 8 a.m.-1 p.m. May 17. Free. 749-9573.

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