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Antique trail makes shopping simple

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FOR THE RECORD

The Alabama Antique Trail highlights over 130 antiques shops across the state. Not only are a few of the shops in the area, former Madison resident Marcia Arnold developed the trail.

Arnold, a retired Information Technology Manager for Boeing, was also a contractor for NASA and worked in configuration management for Raytheon in Kwajalein, an island in the Pacific Ocean.

Fascinated with antiques since she was just a teenager, it was no surprise when she retired

she began visiting antique shops in her new home, Auburn.

She grew frustrated with the fact there was sparse information about the various shops in the area.

Many times she would drive to a shop, only to learn it had moved across town or gone out of business.

"I was talking with a shop owner one day and my husband kept rushing me," Arnold said. "When the owner asked what his hurry was he said that he had a tee time on the trail."

It was at this moment she realized a 'trail' for Alabama antique

shops could be a great thing for shoppers and businesses alike.

She phoned software professional Bruce Pate, who owns LakesOnLine.com, and the two became business partners in a venture that has provided a wealth of information to antique lovers across several states.

In addition to the 130 shops and malls part of the Alabama Antique Trail, there are over 420 more shops on the trail sites that now cover four additional states, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi and Tennessee.

Madison Station Antiques in downtown Madison is one of the

shops on the trail.

Madison Station Antiques were a finalist for Start-up Business of the Year at the Madison Chamber of Commerce Small Business Awards dinner Thursday night.

Ronnie and Pat Williams of Madison Station Antiques joined the Alabama Antique Trail because it helps people locate various shops, "especially visitors to the area," Ronnie Williams said.

Madison Station Antiques specializes in American Southern antiques.

"We've been really pleased with the traffic through the shop since

we've been part of the Trail," said Sharon Dinkle, manager of Madison Station Antiques.

Piddles Antiques and Gifts in Belle Mina is another local destination on the Alabama Antique Trail.

Owner Susie Montgomery, her husband Earl, and their son, Morgan, agree belonging to the Alabama Antique Trail has helped bring new people into their shop.

"We have folks from as far away as Texas and Colorado who come in to shop," says Susie Montgomery. "Many of our customers say they found us by checking the listings on the Alabama

Antique Trail."

Piddles Antiques and Gifts specializes in primitives antiques and stock a large selection of antique crockery, Hoosier cabinets, possum belly kitchen cabinets, and old doors and windows.

You can find Madison Station, Piddles and other Alabama antique shops at www.AlabamaAntiqueTrail.com.

For more information on Madison Station Antiques visit www.MadisonStationAntiques.com or call 256-772-4444.

For more information on Piddles Antiques and Gifts, call 256-206-2750 or find them on Facebook.