



By Jan Rahn
Managing Editor

As if reverting back to the good old days, there's now a General Store in Madrid—it's full of items that make a person want to stay and browse a while.

The General Store at Perkins and Lowell Streets was opened the first week of March, and on a small scale, replicates Amish and Mennonite stores that are popular east of the Missouri River. The very closest is in Des Moines, Iowa, according to Sharon Zimmerman, co-owner and manager.

There are gift items, books, linens and doilies, candles, children's toys, sewing notions, and of course, food.

Baking goods, spices and candy in bulk take up an entire shelving unit.

There are dip mixes, cutlery and ovenware. And don't forget the cheese—bulk Wisconsin cheese—in a refrigerator where excess baked goods from the Mennonite women are frozen up above.



As a family-owned business, the General Store will serve the public and the Mennonite population in the community with bulk goods.

There are also some consignments, including an assortment of books.

Keith Yost owns the store along with nephews Ryan Zimmerman and Dalton Zimmerman.

Several family members help run the store, including Keith's wife Marita Yost, his sister, Sharon Zimmerman who manages it, her daughter Karalee Zimmerman who keeps books, and Dalton's wife Janelle Zimmerman.

Sharon Zimmerman's sister helped start a bulk food store 15 years ago in Barron, Wisc. Her experience has been helpful in providing guidance to those starting up the Madrid store.

The General Store is located on the lot where a former church stood.

What was originally a Methodist Church became a house of worship for Mennonites when the new Methodist Church was built on the east side of town.

The Mennonites eventually built new churches and the building became a private home for a while.

It was vacated last year and unfortunately flooded beyond being salvaged.

The building was torn down and the General Store built on land owned by Darrel Yost.

When the former church building was torn down, the windows were saved to become a part of the interior decorations for the new General Store.

The public is invited to stop in during regular business hours Monday-Tuesday-Wednesday and Friday from 9 a.m.-5 p.m.; on Thursdays from 9 a.m.-6:30 p.m.; and on Saturday from 10 a.m.-2 p.m.