

AT C AND C CYCLERY, FIXING BIKES IS EASY, FIXING BARRIERS TAKES HEART



By **CYNTHIA COOPER**
For the Courier

When Carmen Hines talks about opening C and C Cyclery, she does not romanticize it.

"We opened the shop in April of 2023," she said. "When we first came in here, the building was a disaster. There were extra walls, all smoky yellow, and a dirty carpet. Why was there carpet in a bike shop? It was just janky and dirty."

"I told Casey that just being in the building, my asthma was acting up. We had to redo the place."

C and C Cyclery, located off Highway 69 in Prescott Valley, now looks open, bright and human. That is deliberate.

"I wanted it to feel welcoming, especially to women," Hines said. "Bike shops can feel like man caves. That's not what I wanted."

That instinct, to make space instead of guarding it, runs through everything the Hines do. It is also how Pedal Forward, the nonprofit that now operates out of the shop, came into existence.

RAISED TO STEP IN

"My grandparents, who went through the Great Depression, World War II and desegregation, raised my brothers and me. We weren't split up and sent to foster homes because they took us in."

"We were raised with the idea that if somebody needs help, it is your responsibility to step up."

That sense of responsibility deepened after she lost a brother to addiction.

"Because of that, I have a very soft



spot for people in recovery and people who are struggling," she said.

"When people know that you're not judging, that they're safe, they open up," she said.

A bike, a basket, and a line that changed everything

"We never thought about starting a nonprofit," Hines said. "We just started helping people."

A young woman came in who had tried to commit suicide multiple times.

"She had just gotten out of a behavioral health center," Hines said. "She had \$50 in her pocket and a job opportunity."

She needed transportation and asked whether the shop had a used bike for \$50.

"I told Casey, fix that bike, put a rack and a basket on it, and give it to her," Hines said.

At first, he hesitated.

"He said, 'We're a business. We're supposed to make money.' And I said, 'I don't care. She needs transportation.'"

"She comes in now, she's employed, she has a place to live, she's healthy," Hines said.

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