

It's Your Business

Fishy business continues to grow in St. Marys

Fadelle Marine specializing in saltwater aquariums

By Jeff Heuchert
STAFF REPORTER

Brightening your home or business with a saltwater aquarium is not as difficult an undertaking as one might expect.

Earlier this year, husband and wife team, Derek and Sophie Fadelle, opened Fadelle Marine at 185 King St. S, next to Foreman Electric, where they specialize in building and maintaining all-natural marine aquariums. They also install freshwater aquariums and ponds.

"Saltwater aquariums get such a bad wrap," says Derek, noting that some people have the perception that the aquariums are high maintenance. "But if they're set up properly, there isn't that much work."

The couple started the business out of their St. Marys home about two and a half years, sticking strictly to aquarium maintenance. About 10 months ago, the couple decided to take their business one step further by moving



Derek and Sophie Fadelle next to their saltwater aquarium they installed in their living room. The couple have opened Fadelle Marine at 185 King St. S. (Heuchert photo)

into the retail space, relying on word of mouth to build a steady customer base.

"It's been amazing," says Derek of the response they've had so far, "but we're at the point where we want to show people what we're doing."

On any given day, there are roughly 25 species of saltwa-

ter fish available at the store. Derek says he gets shipments of fish, which come mostly from South Pacific countries such as Fiji and Indonesia, as well as Hawaii, every two weeks, noting that they make sure to keep some of the more popular species, such as the yellow tang and clown fish --

made popular in Disney's Finding Nemo -- in stock.

They also carry star fish, crabs, shrimp and snails, as well as coral, some of which Derek already grows and cuts himself. Tanks, from three to 1,000 gallons, and other equipment for aquariums can all be ordered, as can specific

types of fish and corral. Derek also converts freshwater aquariums into saltwater.

Derek has installed aquariums in homes, offices and restaurants. He says that with their vibrant array of colours, a saltwater aquarium quickly becomes the focal point of any room.

"A lot of people haven't seen anything like this," he adds.

The Fadelle's own home has two aquariums on the main floor -- one that's placed into the wall in their living room and another in the wall that is shared by side-by-side bedrooms. Both are connected to one filtration system in the basement.

Derek says 50 per cent of his customers have little or no experience with aquariums or with installing a filtration system. If they chose, customers can let Derek install the entire system so that the only thing they have to worry about is feeding the fish.

"Saltwater aquariums are a niche market," Derek explains. "You need someone to guide you."

Fadelle Marine is open on Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. You can set up an appointment by contacting Derek and Sophie at dssfadelle@rogers.com.