Personally chosen shoes, handpicked jewelry and well dressed mannequins are just a few things a shopper will see when walking into Garrett’s and Meg’s Boutique, a local small business located just down East Main Street from one of Radford’s popular scenes Sharkey’s.

Owner Meg Weddle has found a way to keep her business flowing, even though it’s in a small college town.

Weddle and her husband began their boutique together in 1986. After her husband decided to get out of the business in 1995 it was her job to keep the boutique thriving.

The shop was originally located in Studio C on East Main Street. In 2003 Weddle decided to move the business just a couple doors down to their current location. This allowed easier access for her elderly customers seeing how the old location had a large set of stairs in the building.

Most boutique owners may not think of this for their customers, but then again Weddle is not most boutique owners. She strives to help her customers in any way she can and that is the main reason why she has been able to keep her business afloat through the tough times.

“A good way to describe us here is we all aspire to be someone’s personal shopper,” said Weddle.

Weddle said she has two main focuses for her boutique, customers and product. Although product used to be her main focus, after the economy turned in 2009 Weddle had to find a way to still generate revenue while not changing what she wanted in her boutique.

The business that started with four full-time and five part-time employees, but it was forced to two full-time and still five part-time employees; in a result of two jobs lost because of the economy.

The boutique owner found her spot by being smarter and doing things a little bit differently. She will open her business early for anyone who may need to come in early to shop due to living far away or other circumstances. The wardrobe services that the boutique provides have really become their main hitch.

Staff helps clients find the perfect outfit or piece they may need to complete an outfit described Weddle.

Weddle feels that she really connects with her clients and tries to serve them in any way she can. If they do not have a certain product a client is looking for she tries to guide then in the direction where they can find that item.

Weddle will also buy certain items for her store based on her clients. Because of her close, maintained relationships with her clients she knows what they like. The pieces in her boutique are based off what the customers like, not just what she thinks the store may need.

“I have lifelong friends in this business that are so awesome and we share a common bond,” said Weddle.

Employee Heather Viers has been working at the boutique since last February. Wanting to go into the fashion industry, Viers feels she fits very well at Garret’s and Meg’s boutique.

“One thing that Meg has told me since day one is the customers are the main thing,” said Viers.

A typical day for Vier’s includes doing routine housekeeping, helping clients find an outfit for events coming up and helps clients find pieces that they can fit into their wardrobes. Of course there are other background things that are done but the clients are the first and main focus.

Vier’s originally worked for a company that did a lot of manufacturing in the fashion industry. Once hearing about this job opportunity, she jumped at the chance to become a part of the retail community.

Viers favorite part about the job is working with the customers. “When someone comes in looking for something specific and you can dress them head to toe is fabulous,” said Viers. “When they feel good about it then you feel good about it.”

Weddle’s main cliental is not what an on-looker may expect in a small college town. Her age median is about 60. She does sell to some college students but tends to sell more to higher cliental. She makes sure to work at least 40 hours a week to service her clients the best she can.

When buying products for the store, Weddle has a lot to think about. The boutique carries a lot of Canadian manufactures and Weddle had a great explanation why.

The corporate tax rate in Canada is about 15 percent. In the United States it is about 25 to 30 percent. She explained that because of that difference Canadian manufactures are able to make more than U.S. manufactures can. Weddle tries to stay away from products made in China or things like that. She feels very comfortable buying products made in North America.

Radford University Professor Tammy Johnson has been shopping at Garrett’s and Meg’s boutique for six year now. Johnson teaches fashion merchandizing at the university has really taken an interest in Weddle’s store.

“The personalized service is why I shop there,” said Johnson. “She has learned my style, what I like and what would look good on me.”

Johnson said that Weddle has done some special orders for her and also has bought things at market that she thought Johnson would like.

Another thing Johnson really appreciates is the boutique will also do alterations. If something needs a little tweaking, Weddle has an in store tailor that will adjust whatever the client wants done.

“This is her 26th year in the business and she has made it very successful,” said Johnson.

A typical day for Weddle can consist of so many random things; she has learned to just go with the flow.

“Some days I just have to laugh at how many balls and knives and boxes and cotton balls I have to juggle,” said Weddle.

The business can be tough sometimes. The hardest part of her job she said was dealing with the vendors.

“It has to be the right thing, at the right time, at the right price,” Weddle said of her products and what her boutique carries. If they order the right thing at the right price but the wrong color for the season, then they could be in trouble. Weddle stated that this business is really a moving target which that in itself is very difficult.

Weddle one day would love to have her own label. She realizes that in the future it may be one thing she will need to survive. She does have plans for the future and is very smart when it comes to keeping on her toes about the business.