

Best Labor of Love



Heather and John Chandler. Photo: vivianjohnson.com.

When **John Chandler** bought a **dilapidated shop-house at 3039 SE Stark St.** on March 7, 2007, he got a little more than he bargained for. Along with four 40-cubic-yard Dumpsters of junk and dead cats, rats and mice, Chandler and his wife, Heather, found sterling silver, what appears to be a Nazi dagger, and walrus tusk scrimshaw. "The guy who owned the building for decades before us was a hoarder," Chandler says. "It's been a renovation of discovery." The Chandlers also got an **1891 building** that leaned 20 inches to the southeast and had the first 20 feet of a 70-foot elm growing out of the basement. (The tree had to be cut down, but Chandler saved slabs of it to make tables and benches.)

Over the past three years, Chandler, 38, an Intel construction contractor, has poured all of his spare time and a considerable amount of money into the building, which formerly housed a brew-and-smokes emporium named Sindee's Market. To correct the Pisa-like lean, Chandler dug out a new foundation; adding a new iron fence around the building triggered a city requirement that he install a new sidewalk. This being Portland, Chandler is most excited about the building's green features and energy efficiency. "We spray-foamed the entire building [for insulation]," Chandler says. "My gas bill was only \$5 last month."

The Chandlers live on the building's second floor. Next month, they hope to start test-roasting coffee for their new company, **Oblique Coffee Roasters**. "It's what gets me out of bed in the morning," Chandler says of the new venture. "You've got to follow your dream." NIGEL JAQUISS.