

business briefs

Curves of Lafayette Under New Ownership

3534 Golden Gate Way, Lafayette
www.curves.com, 962-0206
Curves of Lafayette is embracing change and has announced it is now under new ownership. Sue Cannon took possession of the club in June. "I'm so excited to become part of the Lafayette Curves community," said Cannon. "I'm looking forward to helping the women in our community reach amazing results, both physical and emotional, through our Curves workout program and support network." Changes to the club include new equipment, extended hours and local management. Cannon's background of 18 years in Clinical Nutrition and Diet Management make her a great asset and source of support to the Lafayette Curves.



Sue Cannon (middle in yellow) exercises with her clients at Curves. Courtesy of Curves Lafayette

Moraga Hardware and Lumber and Rite Aid Orinda Sponsor E-recycling

GreenLight Recycling will set up shop at the Moraga Hardware and Lumber store in the Moraga Center on August 23rd during business hours, and at Rite Aid in Orinda on the 30th. You can bring your computers, components, monitors, VCR's and DVD players, audio and medical equipment, scrap metal and wire and miscellaneous electronics such as keyboards and mice. GreenLight is an environmentally conscious business that makes sure that recycling is properly done in the United States. They are engaged in negotiation with landfills to collect the electronics that sit there and which dangerous chemical will eventually contaminate the grounds; they do office clean up (including furniture), donating what works and recycling the rest. www.greenlight-recycling.com

Lavande Spa Announces New Services, 3589 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette, 299-8877

The Lafayette spa has announced a series of new treatment and services such as the new 25 minute facial called Facial Express.

Veteran Real Estate Agent Sheila Small Earns Broker's License

for Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage Orinda, 2 Theatre Square, Ste. 211, Orinda sheila.small@cbnorcal.com. 253-6312
Agent Sheila Small has earned her real estate broker's license. Small is a specialist in residential real estate and has been affiliated with Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage since 2004. Small graduated from the University of California, Davis with a bachelor's degree in psychology. She lives in the East Bay with her husband, Dave Rivera, who is also a Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage agent.

Tran's Jeweler - A Master Jeweler Takes Charge, 3608 Happy Valley Road, Lafayette, 283-2137

D. Tran is a master jeweler who worked for many years at Charles Jewelry in Lafayette. When Diane and Charles retired and closed up their shop, he decided to strike out on his own. Besides being available for your repairs, he sets diamonds and can create and manufacture custom designs.

Yankee Pier in Lafayette Celebrates Summer, 3593 Mt Diablo Blvd, Lafayette, 283-4100

A special heirloom tomato menu greets diners at the restaurant that is part of the Lark Creek Group, with an assortment of dishes featuring those glorious late-summer tomatoes. Guests will delight in such offerings as an heirloom salad, BLT, or BBQ Glazed Flatiron Steak with Grilled Heirloom Tomatoes, Whipped Potatoes and Crumbled Blue Cheese from Chef Michael Dunn; the restaurants' extensive and award-winning all-American wine lists offer many options to pair with the best of tomato season.

News from the three Chambers of Commerce

Tri-Chamber Mixer

September 10th, 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., Stratford at Countrywood, 1545 Pleasant Hill Road, Lafayette (just up hill from Lunardis Market).
This is a great opportunity for business owners to meet fellow Chamber members from Moraga, Orinda and Lafayette. Stratford at Countrywood is hosting this event, providing the additional opportunity to take a look at senior living at its best! The hors d'oeuvres will be prepared by executive chef Saul Ramirez, who has 20 years of fine dining experience.

Lafayette Chamber of Commerce

- Don't miss the final Rock the Plaza at the corner of Mt Diablo Blvd and Moraga Road. On the 22nd the Spazmatics will be the last group to delight all generations. Concerts are free of charge, food sold by Lafayette Rotary Club.
- Come learn sun safety from UV experts. Try free samples of various sunscreens, check out hats from local vendors, Live entertainment, Kid Zone Raffle and prizes too! The event will run from 4:00pm -7:00pm on August 23rd, at the Lafayette Community Park, 480 St. Mary's road. For more information go to www.safefromthesun.org/events.

Moraga Chamber of Commerce

- Chamber members and their spouses are invited to participate in a good 'ol fashioned Barbeque on Tuesday, August 26th, at the Moraga Commons Park from 6 to 7:30 p.m. The Chamber will provide the meats, buns, potato salads and chips. Bring your beverage of choice and a side dish or desert to share. Rsvp Yelena Mucovich at globalsecuritysystems@juno.com.
- Aug 28th the Chamber will be present at the St Marys Fair for new students from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. 600 to 800 new students will be present on campus with their parents.

Orinda Chamber of Commerce

- Chamber Breakfast Meeting 8:00 a.m. - August 28th at Shelby's Restaurant -Theater Square. Cost \$10.00 (paid at door). The guest Speaker will be Tom Chen, Subcommittee for Emergency Preparedness. He will address the following topic: "Is Orinda Ready?"
- A very big first in Orinda is coming up: the First "Orinda's Restaurant Tour" set for September 30th. It will be held from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. starting at Theater Square. Come enjoy sampling Orinda's great restaurants. Shop and Dine in Orinda! More details in the coming issue of the paper, call 254-3909 for more information.

If you have a business brief to share, please contact **Sophie Braccini** at sophie@lamorindaweekly.com or call our office at 925-377-0977.

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Tieren Zhou Sees Big with TechExcel in Lafayette

By Sophie Braccini

Tieren Zhou was always driven by success. He was raised in China at a time when private enterprise was not yet flourishing. His father repaired watches and as soon as the government allowed private enterprise his mother started a small business, reselling fashion items. After graduating in China, he came to Kansas University to study chemistry, artificial intelligence and robotics. He had two dreams, becoming a professor and developing his own company. During his PhD work he realized that his Nobel prize ambitions might be out of reach, so he decided for a business career. Since the barrier to entry is high in the chemistry field, he decided to earn an MS in computer science before completing his PhD. His doctoral work focused on laboratory automation, conceptual modeling,

robotics, and artificial intelligence.

Dr. Zhou began working for KeveX Instrument in the fields of quality control and analytical instruments. When he felt he was ready to start his own venture he proposed a subcontract arrangement to his employer. TechExcel was born and within four months he had hired his first seven employees.

Zhou says he discovered there was no program for testing bugs in software, so he invented bug-tracking software -- used by large companies today such as Jenny Craig. He became an expert in the growing field of Application Lifecycle Management (ALM) for distributed development teams and uniting service and support with development. His vision is to bring order to the underlying chaos of software design planning and implementation.

Zhou says TechExcel's ALM solutions have been designed specifically to manage every aspect of the software lifecycle, from concept to delivery.

Growing a company is not only about developing the best products. In the early days of TechExcel, Zhou confessed that he completely underestimated the role of sales. "We had one sales person who was the least paid in the company," he recalls, continuing, "I couldn't fathom why we should pay a non-research person any serious money." When he came to the realization that only a solid sales department would allow the company to grow, he looked for the best and brightest in the field. "Now the best sales people are the ones earning the most," says the CEO with a big smile.

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