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Lamorinda Businesses Gear Up For Seniors

By Sophie Braccini



Larry Swindell in his Moraga study Photo Sophie Braccini

17th. "I like the choices for these first three movies," says Swindell, "they are very different and will appeal to a generation that does not like the new films that are shown in theaters today."

Ristorante Amoroma co-owner Hafiz Haidari is happy to be part of this new Wednesday fun. The restaurant is located next door to the theater. "We are pleased to offer a 15% discount to seniors who have lunch at our place before going to the movie," says Haidari, "all they have to do is mention that they are doing so." Terzetto Cuisine will offer a similar discount. "We are already doing it with the Senior Discount card that's been set up by Senior Helpers," says Terzetto owner Roos Pal, "extending that offer to the movie goers is natural."

Pal is one of the tens of Lamorinda business owners offering everyday discounts to seniors who hold the free card negotiated by Kevin Reneau of Senior Helpers. "We created this card as a service to the community," says Reneau, "it does not cost anything and there is no other reward for us other than servicing our elders."

Clocks Etc. in Lafayette is another of the participating businesses. "We've had inquiries about the card in the past months," says Clocks Etc.'s Scott Hampton, "we do a 10% discount on everything in the store to seniors who have the card and the cards are available in the store for people to pick up." A.G. Ferrari also offers seniors a 10% discount on anything in the store. "The more people use it, the better," says manager David McCary, who reports not having any cards available in the store anymore to give out, but always being pleased to honor its promise to senior residents. Other participating businesses in Lafayette include Jos. A. Bank, P & L Framing, Celia's Mexican Restaurant, FedEx Office Print & Ship Center, Lafayette Car Wash Detail Center, Design Within Reach, and Amarin Thai Cuisine.

In a quite different range of service, Orinda Motors (OM) also accepts the card. "We discount every service and give back 10% to seniors," said Edward, of OM's Express Oil and Tire Center, "I would say that seniors mostly use the card for routine maintenance on their cars." Moraga Auto Care also accepts the card.

Orinda Books says that the card is available there and that the store gives a 10% discount to all of its users. "It has not been very extensively used yet," says a spokeswoman, "but we are happy to honor it anytime someone presents it to us." Depending on the products, Natural Life of Orinda gives a 10%-20% discount to seniors. "We have also a special program with the Senior Village here in Orinda," adds owner Patrick Goldstein, "we deliver our vitamins and supplements there for free and give residents a 20% discount."

Other participating businesses in Orinda include Shelby's, Europa Hofbrau Deli & Pub, Loard's Ice Cream & Candies, Hilton House Consign & Design, and Scott Mc Cue Photography. Reneau reports having given out more than 2500 cards so far. To obtain a card with a complete listing of businesses go to Senior Helpers at 1550 Viader Drive, Suite D in Moraga.

The Rheem Theatre's Wednesday matinee classic movies program is clearly designed to please Lamorinda's growing senior population. The \$6/ticket afternoon show is complemented by offers for discounted lunches at nearby restaurants. There are a growing number of special deals offered to seniors by Lamorinda businesses. Another targeted marketing outreach is the Senior Helpers' discount card that entitles seniors to a 10%-20% reduction at many local retailers. With the age of the average Lamorindan rising, these programs are likely to develop in the years to come.

You don't have to ask Larry Swindell twice to talk about classic movies. The Moraga author is a recognized scholar-historian of motion pictures who has written five biographies of glamour-era movie stars, including two national best sellers. "When I was hired by the theater's management to reach out to the community and build programs to appeal to different population groups, I immediately thought of Larry," says local marketing consultant Grant Stubblefield. "He graciously suggested films and agreed to come to every show and make a short presentation." The classic matinees will be run at 1:30 p.m. every Wednesday on the big screen. The first one, on March 3rd offers the 1949 movie "Adam's Rib." "The Quiet Man" will appear on March 10, and "Dark Victory" will be shown on March

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