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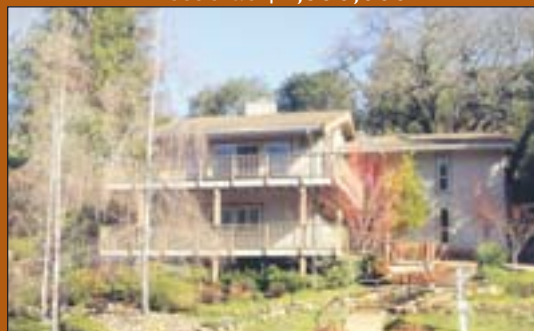
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business briefs

A Zeeba of a Different Stripe

Zeeba, 3574 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette, www.zeebaliving.com, 299 9400

Simin Lalefar says she didn't have a choice. The land where her store stood was bought by the town of Dublin in an imminent domain action. "What better place than Lafayette to move my store?" asks Lalefar. "My parents had a home in Orinda, I always loved the area and have many friends here." One month ago, she opened shop for her collectibles, vintage accessories, antique furniture, women's clothing and accessories. "The community has greeted us very warmly," says the store owner, "they like to come here and hunt for unexpected treasures." Zeeba is located next to Knox on Mt Diablo Blvd.



Simin Lalefar in her new store, Zeeba, in Lafayette Photo Sophie Braccini

Big Hat Press, Where Local Authors can get Published

1014 Oak Hill Road Lafayette, www.bighatpress.com, 380-1381



Diablo Rapid Print has launched a new business: Big Hat Press, its new book-publishing subsidiary. Big Hat specializes in personal publishing and offers a variety of services to help authors complete their book project. "Whether it is your personal memoirs, poetry, a history book, a cookbook, or perhaps a fictional story you have written, we can help you get it done," says owner Polly Bemson. The business owner sees her target clientele as individuals and companies that write for their own pleasure and want to share with their family, friends or clients. Big Hat offers a complete service for authors: design, formatting, an ISBN and barcode. "If customers want it, we can help them put their book on Amazon and we will handle the delivery service directly." Clients can choose among a variety of binding styles and printing options. The cost of the books will vary depending of these options, as well as the number of books ordered. "Most of our clients order 250 copies," says Bemson, "and you can order 20 books for about \$609, including the setup." Bemson prefers it when people come to her store to get their new book. "We can mail it of course," she says, "but seeing the look on their face when they first hold their new book is a precious moment." Big Hat Press will host a ribbon cutting ceremony with the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce on Thursday March 19 at 4:30 p.m.

Curves in Moraga Fights for Survival

384 Park St, Moraga, 376-0110

The Curves gyms in Lafayette and Orinda closed in February but the Reynolds, who own the Moraga franchise, are not giving up. The Lafayette Curves had been under new management for less than a year and the start up results weren't enough to create a positive momentum. In Orinda, Pati MacDonald had been managing the Curves in Theater Square for years. She owns another franchise in San Diego but according to her it's not doing so well. MacDonald had to get a full time job with the County in order to pay the bills, "it's just a sign of the times," says MacDonald. In Moraga, Dave Reynolds and his wife will not give up in spite of challenging times. "Many consider fitness a luxury," says Reynolds, "may be they could think of their health and well being as a first necessity item, what better investment can you make than in your own health?" Reynolds organized a strategic meeting with some 30 clients to plan for future marketing actions. "We have 175 clients," says Reynolds, "it would be nice to reach the 250 range." As part of the new marketing plan, during the second and third weeks of March, every new client who brings in a bag of groceries for the Food Bank will receive free sign-up fee.

One of Moraga's Oldest Restaurants Closes its Doors

356 Park St, Moraga

Tamami's restaurant served its last diners on Valentine's Day. It was a very emotional evening, the Ongs have owned the place for more than 25 years and it is their warm personalities as much as their food that made their long success. However, the latest recession was too much for the restaurant to survive, "it was time for us to sell," says owner Fely Ong, "we got an offer from a Chinese couple and had to make a quick decision." Tamami's will be missed. "We have been eating there almost every Friday night, my husband and I, since we started dating, about 20 years ago," says Moraga resident Karen Orwig, "it was as much about the relationship as it was about the food. We saw Fely's kids growing up and they've known our daughter since she was born." Orwig doesn't know where she will have dinner on Friday nights now, "there are other good restaurants in the area, but nowhere that makes you feel at home like Fely did."



The Ong family during the last evening in Tamami Photo courtesy of Tamami's

Community Marketing, Does It Work?

By Sophie Braccini



Community event at Aegis where business owners and town officials meet Photo courtesy Moraga Chamber of Commerce

Some say it works, others say it doesn't, there are books written about it and opinions galore. "It" is community marketing, or how to engage and cultivate business in the communities that naturally congregate around one's product and/or service. In Lamorinda it typically takes the form of business owners giving their time to community activities and/or contributing goods and services to community functions. For business owners, it is part of a virtuous circle where what you give will come back to you in many different ways.

Grant Stubblefield started his business as a result of his community involvement. Fresh out of St Mary's College, he joined the Moraga Chamber of Commerce and helped implement the Shop Moraga First campaign. His volunteer activities led to the startup of his own business, naturally called, "Community Marketing."

Getting around and helping out has been Roos Pal's modus operandi even before buying Terzetto Restaurant in the Moraga Shopping Center. "I always wanted to do social work," says Pal, "so I joined Kiwanis." Pal believes that her social activism is what has made her business successful. "I serve on the Parks Foundation, I support the Chamber of Commerce and I enjoy it," she says. "Roos does things right," comments Stubblefield, quipping, "Don't ask what the community can do for you, ask what you can do for your community."

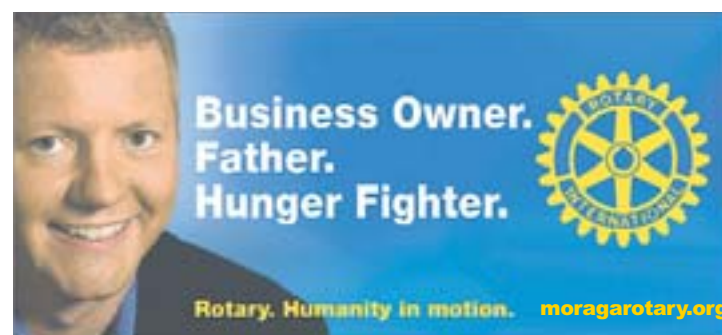
Jay Lifson of the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce says, "That's what chambers do, connecting people to people."

Lifson believes that most people get involved with volunteerism because they decide it's the right thing to do or because they've been asked to help out, but that they should not be looking for immediate rewards. "The only pay-back one should expect is an opportunity to help," he says, adding that he's seen that people often get back more than what they've invested.

"In Lafayette the quantity of businesses that have been practicing community marketing is innumerable," says Lifson. Business owners such as Ed Stokes (Diablo Foods), Mike Reardon (Oakwood Athletic Club), Dave Arghandiwal (Casa Gourmet Burrito), Anthony Ruiz (Fastframe) and Mo Levich (Generations in Jazz), among others, each give their expertise, time, and donations whenever they can.

Keith Miller, the President of the Orinda Chamber of Commerce and a real estate agent, follows the same credo. "When I joined the Chamber of Commerce, I had no idea what it could really do for me," states Miller, "but now after so many years of networking I'm convinced of its importance and try to persuade my agents to join." Miller offers Carlos Rangle, of Shelby's Restaurant, as a good example of someone who gives his time and energy to the community. "He was on our Board of Directors and always contributes to our events."

... continued on page 23



Moraga Rotary Is Hosting An Open House!

Come and learn what it means to be a Moraga Rotarian.

Learn About:

- Our History
- Our Local Projects
- Our International Projects
- How to Become a Member



Please join us for a hosted lunch at our open house on:

Tuesday, April 14th, 2009 at Noon
at ... **Saint Mary's College, in the Soda Center**

Please RSVP: Let us know if you will be attending the Open House by phone, Day: (925) 376-2244 Night: (925) 631-0725

or by email, Mike@MikeisThere.com
(Limited Space Available)

We are looking forward to seeing you there!

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Limit 1 per household or business, max 5 per week.

Lafayette Chamber of Commerce

Lafayette Chamber of Commerce

- Shop Lafayette meeting Tuesday March 10 8:00 a.m. chamber conference room
- Green Committee Wednesday March 18 11:45 a.m. bring your lunch, chamber conference room.
- How to survive in today's economy presented by Mechanics Bank 3640 Mt Diablo Blvd. Tuesday, March 24, 5:30 – 7:30 p.m. RSVP lafayetteevents@mechbank.com.

Moraga Chamber of Commerce

Chamber meeting, Hacienda de las Flores, Fireside Room, Friday, March 27, starting at 7:30 a.m.

Orinda Chamber of Commerce

Special Roundtable Coffee Business Idea Sharing Event, Thursday, March 26, 8:00 a.m. to 9:15 a.m., Village Pizza, 19 AB Orinda Way. Come hear what fellow Chamber Members are doing differently in today's market and share what you are doing, as well. Enjoy coffee & pastries, too. Mark your calendar for this informative event. \$5.00 per person (paid at door).

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

www.holcenberg.com

Chef's Delight in Campolindo with Private Yard

3945 Paseo Grande, Moraga

Remodeled single-story, 4 bedroom, 2.5 bath home with a dream kitchen. From the Wolf range with French cooktop to the Fisher Paykel Double Dish/Drawer dishwasher, the Vinotemp 180 bottle wine refrigerator and the built-in Sub-Zero refrigerator, this home boasts a kitchen that would make a professional chef proud. With granite countertops and custom cherry cabinetry, the kitchen offers views of the private yard with two large, level areas and patio. The luxurious master bath features a Kohler DTV Custom Shower Experience, as well as dual vanity with glass countertops and sinks and generous closet space. From the composition shingle roof, dual-paned windows, Feather River front doors, and central air, this home has been lovingly updated. Close to top-rated Campolindo High School and the Cabana Club.
Offered at \$1,225,000.

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