

business briefs

New Businesses and Ribbon Cuttings:

Lafayette Pet Shoppe 3517 Mt Diablo Blvd, Lafayette 925 284 5212

The new Pet Shoppe is opening on August 10th in the former location of Petco. Managed by business owner Jorge Quintero, who also manages the Rheem Valley Pet Shoppe in the Rheem Center, the store will feature the whole range of pet supplies as well as live small animals like rabbits, rats, fish etc. The Grand Opening will be held on August 18th and 19th; come for treats, samples and balloons. The store will be open from 9:30 to 7:30 Mon to Fri, Sat 9:00 to 7:00 and Sun 11:00 to 6:00. Quintero will keep the Rheem Shoppe open with additional staff.

Diverse Business News:



Steve Lambert of Garden Lights Landscape Development

Garden Lights Landscape Development Inc. 1 Northwood Dr., Orinda 925-254-4797

Steve Lambert of Garden Lights Landscape Development received seven top honors at this year's "Beautification Awards" presented June 8th at the Pleasanton Hotel by the California Landscape Contractor Association's East Bay Chapter Board Members.

Garden Lights Landscape Development received the following awards:

First Place, Small Residential Installation, Kelly Residence, Orinda

First Place, Large Residential Installation, Cella Residence, Orinda

First Place, Small Design/Build Installation, Lee Residence, Oakland

First Place, Large Design/Build Installation, Sninsky Residence, Orinda

Achievement Award, Large Design/Build Installation, Rios Residence, Pleasant Hill

First Place, Special Effects Lighting, Pisenti Residence, Danville

First Place, Large Residential Maintenance, Smith Residence, Danville

There are 15 award categories in this annual competition highlighting the wide scope of work in the field of landscape design, construction, and maintenance. All of the project entries must meet specific criteria to be submitted for consideration in this annual competition. East Bay Landscape Contractors and Designers send in their entries anonymously and their work is viewed and judged by industry experts from outside the area. "I submitted seven entries to be judged for this year's competition," said Lambert. "That's more than I've ever entered before but we installed so many great gardens this past year that I just couldn't narrow down my entries any further." Lambert has been designing and installing landscapes, pools, lighting, ponds and water features in the Lamorinda area for the past 17 years.

Hilton House Consign & Design, Inc. 21 Orinda Way - Orinda 925-254-1113, www.hiltonhousedesign.com

Annual Customer Appreciation Day, Saturday August 11th 1 to 5:00 PM.

News from the three Chambers of Commerce:

Lafayette Chamber of Commerce- www.lafayettechamber.org
August 10th at 8 a.m. Coffee with the Mayor in the Lafayette Chamber Conference Room

August 16th at 8:30 a.m. Entrepreneur's Club meet in the Lafayette Chamber Conference Room.

Friday night at 6 p.m. "Rock the Plaza" free concerts series sponsored by the Lafayette Chamber, the City of Lafayette and Red House Studios, in Lafayette's Plaza Park (at the corner of Mt. Diablo Blvd and Moraga Rd). Groups featured are: Aug. 10th: Stone Soup; Aug. 17th: Total Eclipse; Aug. 24th: Stage Frite. Food available or bring a picnic.

Chamber of Commerce of Moraga - www.moragabiz.com:

August 25th from 5 to 10 p.m., the Chamber of Commerce of Moraga invites the community to an authentic Hawaiian "Luau" with live entertainment and Hawaiian buffet. Advance tickets are \$45 for adults and \$10 for children 6-12 (children under 6 are free). For additional information go to www.moragaluau.com or call (925) 262-4277.

Orinda Chamber of Commerce- www.orindachamber.org

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



Lamorinda Weekly's Business Reporter Sophie Braccini

lives in Moraga with her husband and children. She joined the staff spontaneously the moment she heard about us. Reach her at: sophie@lamorindaweekly.com



David McCaulou - Dominating Local Retail

By Cathy Tyson

Harken back to 1963, "Petticoat Junction" made its television debut, John F. Kennedy was President and Jack Nicklaus won the Masters. Lafayette, California was the land of opportunity, anything was possible. That's the year a young David R. McCaulou opened the first McCaulou's department store in the main Lafayette shopping center along Mt. Diablo Boulevard. It did so well, he opened his second store in Moraga. He must be doing something right; it's been forty-four years since that first store opened, and his retail empire has grown and prospered.

Now in his seventh decade, Mr. Caulou is still hard at work. "People ask me how come you don't play golf? I tell them I play 'store.'" When asked about possible retirement, he says, "I

have too much to do, we're always expanding or remodeling."

Now he operates 17 stores, including 9 McCaulou's outlets; in addition to the three in Lamorinda, there are stores in Napa, Sonoma, Danville, Montclair, Walnut Creek and Concord. Rounding out his retail stores are Madison in Lafayette and Montclair Village and Hollyhock in Orinda and Sonoma along with two David M. Brian stores, one in Walnut Creek and one in Greenbrae. Finally, Bancroft Clothing Co. which has internet sales as well as a large retail space is run by son David B. McCaulou, who goes by 'Dave.' Daughter Nancy is the children's buyer for all the stores. Even the grandchildren help out occasionally in the summer.

The one thing you won't

find in any of the stores is Stanford merchandise. Founder David R. McCaulou went to high school in Oakland and college at U.C. Berkeley. In most McCaulou's there's a collection of Cal wear, along with a selection of clothing for the whole family - the original intent from the very first store on.

When asked to what he attributes his success, Mr. McCaulou replies, "...a spirit of teamwork, the ability to detect what the customer wants and a level of service that people expect."

The McCaulou family is an integral part of Lamorinda. David R. McCaulou still lives in the area, his kids, who are now all grown up, went to school at Sleepy Hollow, O.I.S and Miramonte. Daughter Nancy and son David B. still live in the area.



Lafayette Entrepreneur's Club

An Alliance of Independent Business Professionals

By Sophie Braccini



Jay Lifson, Executive Director Lafayette Chamber of Commerce

In the building of the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce, at 100 Circle Dr, on every third Thursday of the month, a group of local entrepreneurs meets at 8:30 AM. Prior to the July 19th meeting of the Lafayette Entrepreneur's Club, Jay Lifson, Master of Ceremony and Lafayette Chamber's Executive Director, warned: "This is summer, we might not have as much attendance as usual." But the room filled up quickly with men and women from all types of businesses. There was such a large turnout that late comers had to go in search of extra chairs.

The meeting started with new comers introducing themselves and their businesses. Business cards began to circulate as people identified potential opportu-

nities, common interests and synergies. The entrepreneurs present were diverse, among this crowd I met Bonny Weil, General Contractor, Luanne Stevenson, Pajaro Group, Chef Dan Leff, caterer, Gregory White of Nowville, AJ Nisen Bank of America Mortgage, Deborah Hoffman, Reliv International and Jacques Bernou, acupuncturist. After Jay Lifson spoke about upcoming events, Light Energy Systems gave a presentation on why solar investment makes sense today for businesses and home owners, sparking a lively discussion amongst the participants.

The group was started in 2002 as an effort to promote home-based businesses. At that time, about 20% of the 500 members of the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce were home based businesses. For about a year, volunteers provided a good deal of the leadership and meetings were effective at keeping members "in the loop." Then, it seemed as if some of the enthusiasm and focus of the meetings dissipated. Involvement by members seemed to drop off from where it had been. When Jay Lifson began his job at the Chamber in April

of 2005, he saw the need to instill new life into the system and started a "Home Based Business Club." Soon thereafter, the club renamed itself the "Entrepreneurs Club" in order to avoid the negative connotations often associated with home-based business owners that run their business in their bathrobes. Michelle Billing and Keith Vaisnor are now the co-chairs of the Club, and have been the driving force to get the Club where it is today.

The group is funded by the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce. It is open to entrepreneurs who are not necessarily Chamber members. "After they've come to the Entrepreneur's meetings," notes Lifson, "about 50% end up becoming Chamber members." Being a member of the Club provides many benefits: participation in a business fair, learning to develop an "Elevator Speech", relevant business tips and training, and being

part of a caring business community.

The Club's best representatives are the members themselves. Karen Stein relates, "I've appreciated getting to know the folks in the E-Club because it is such a great way for those of us in service businesses who don't have the visible retail or restaurant storefronts on Mt. Diablo Blvd. to get connected to the larger Lafayette business community." Chef Dan Leff comments: "I find that the Lafayette Entrepreneur's Group is most useful because of its unique combination of being both friendly and serious. Attendees are there to learn and do business; networking occurs organically at these meetings. Some of the most productive times I've had have occurred AFTER the E-Club meeting when I'll sit down to discuss business on a one-on-one basis with another E-Club attendee."

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