

When Small Wins Big

By **Sophie Braccini**

The Contra Costa Council's Small Business Task Force honored fourteen small businesses on Friday the 9th as part of the Small Business Administration's (SBA) Small Business Week. Awardees were elected by their local Chamber of Commerce. Lamorinda winners were Clocks, etc. in Lafayette, Moraga's Terzetto Cuisine and Orinda Motors.

St Mary's MBA Professor David Gill gave the keynote address at the awards luncheon. Gill discussed the mutually sustaining relationship between ethics and business. A passionate advocate of small businesses, Gill described how distinctive small businesses are important to the uniqueness of a community and how they create connections among its members. It was a message that was honey to the ears of every Chamber of Commerce member in attendance, including Chamber President Keith Miller from Orinda, Vice-President Larry Tessler from Moraga and Vice-President Steve Cortese from Lafayette. "Build an ethical culture in your company, hire people of character and your business will thrive," said Gill.

Following the inspiring address, Chamber officials introduced each winning business owner. Speaking on behalf of the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce, Cortese said of Clocks, etc., "Scott Hampton and Wendy Tamis are celebrating this year the 32nd anniversary of their store. They are an uncommon team; Scott is a Master Clockmaker and Wendy is a renowned harpist who has played all over the Bay Area, including with the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra." Cortese talked about the 500 clocks of all styles that can be found in the store as well as the many interesting curiosities. He highlighted the



Lamorinda Small Business Award recipients (left to right): Scott Hampton and Wendy Tamis, Clocks ,etc.; Roos Pal, Terzetto Cuisine; John Vanek, Orinda Motors
Photo Sophie Braccini

fact that the two are not only very successful business owners, but also fervent community volunteers to whom Lafayette owes the organization of the Arts and Wine Festival, among many other service activities. He reminded the audience of their campaign against ovarian cancer that brought other businesses and many members of the community together. Hampton took the microphone to thank the community for their support.

It was the same sense of service and community support that Tessler, of the Moraga Chamber, highlighted when he presented Terzetto Cuisine's Roos Pal. "Roos was born and raised in India and she came to this country in the 90's," said Tessler, "she bought Terzetto in Moraga in 2002 and since then has worked tirelessly at improving her offering to the community." Tessler explained that Pal believes supporting local groups is an integral part of her mission and she has given back very generously by providing hospitality to many town events and creating space in her restaurants for local groups to meet in a warm atmosphere. "I want to thank all of my customers

from Lamorinda and the whole county," said Pal. "Being a business owner can be tough and when it's time to pay the bills, there is nobody you can turn to. I couldn't have done it without the support of the community."

Keith Miller was up next to introduce Orinda's Small Business of the year, Orinda Motors. He too highlighted how Allen Pennebaker and his wife Terry have been serving the community of Orinda for years. "They give back to the community in many ways," said Miller, "they give financially to many institutions, and they have run a beautiful antique car show every year for our 4th of July parade; they let the local schools hold 'car washes' on weekends." John Vanek, Orinda Motors service manager, received the award for Allen and Terry. "Don't worry about them," said the cheerful manager, "they couldn't be here today because they are on vacation in Europe." Vanek stated that he was particularly happy to receive the award for the Pennebakers because Orinda Motors is like a family, a team where the clients are friends.