

Way Side Inn Thrift Shop Celebrates 30 Years with Pearls

By Sophie Braccini



Louise Ferdun at the Way Side Inn Photo Sophie Braccini

The building now called the Way Side Inn Thrift Shop was a hotel and a tavern at the turn of the century, in a time where Mt Diablo Blvd was a stagecoach road between Oakland and Walnut Creek. For the last 30 years it has been the home of the Assistance League of Diablo Valley thrift shop, a non profit group serving those in need in Contra Costa. The Lafayette store celebrates its 30th anniversary on Monday, August 11, with a “Pearl Extravaganza” from 3 to 7 p.m. at 3521 Golden Gate Way. The event will include refreshments, door prizes, information about the chapter’s programs and merchandise for sale featuring pearl jewelry and accessories.

The store is stocked with high quality clothing and accessories that have been given to the League after being gently used. All personnel working there are volunteers and they strive to keep the place attractive to shoppers.

“This is one of my secret places,” says a shopper who didn’t care to be identified, “It’s like going to a candy store, the prices are

so low, the clothes are so diverse, I can try on 20 items I wouldn’t have thought of for myself and come out with three or four great looking pieces of clothing for about \$20.”

“The Way Side Inn Thrift Shop provides most of our funding,” explains Louise Ferdun, the Diablo Valley League’s President and an Orinda resident, “Corporate and individual sponsors have sent financial contributions to our programs... As a team, we distributed \$500,000 through our philanthropic programs this year and have touched the lives of more than 13,000 local people.” Ferdun is particularly proud to report that the Chapter was able to supply new clothes for 3000 children in central Contra Costa County through “Operation School Bell,” a national program that provides clothing, shoes, backpacks, literacy programs, as well as health and hygiene kits to disadvantaged school children.

Merchandise is donated by many residents of the Lamorinda area, as well Walnut Creek, Alamo, and Danville. Donations are welcomed at the Way Side Inn Thrift Shop which is open from 10:00 to 4:00 Tuesday through Saturday. They accept gently used clothing (men’s, women’s children’s), décor items, house wares, small furniture, books, toys, collectables and art.

The League always needs new members. Leadership is encouraged and service to the community is the focus. To find out more about the programs, come to the August 11th party or go to the League’s web site: diablovalley.assistanceleague.org.