

LAMORINDA WEEKLY

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business briefs

Sophie Braccini



Javier Galden in his Moraga UPS Store Photo Sophie Braccini

UPS Store Expands - to Barcelona, 480 Moraga Rd Ste I, Moraga, 376-4480

Javier Galdon, owner of the Moraga Center UPS Store, will move to Spain this month or next. There he will open his second UPS Store. "This kind of business is still developing over there," he noticed during his last trip there, "it's the right time for me to move back to the old country." In the meantime, his wife will stay in Moraga to manage the local store. Maybe Lamorindans will get a good price on their shipment the next time they visit Barcelona?

Take One Video Moves One Mile East, 284-3140

The Take One Video store that used to be located near Handlebar Toys moved over the holidays about 1 mile East to 3400 Mt Diablo Blvd, across from Jack in the Box. The store hours are 10 a.m. to 10 pm on Saturday, noon to 8 p.m. on Sunday and 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. during the week.

Rheem Theater Offers Great Mid-week Deal, 350 Park St, Moraga - 376-0885

You don't have to be a kid or catch a matinee to get a great bargain on new movies. Tom Peterson has announced that tickets for all shows will be discounted at \$6 each Monday-Thursday starting January 6th.

Coping Strategies in Difficult Business Times

Business owners in Lamorinda are preparing their businesses for a hibernation

period. Strategies vary, but most are centered on cost cutting, either in terms of hours (and labor) or inventory. In Lafayette, Contra Costa Stationers at 3643 Mt Diablo Blvd has been cutting back on their inventory to reduce cost. "People aren't shopping right now," says store owner Chris Lane, "and putting my money on the shelf will just put me out of business." Lane keeps the basics in his store and customers special order other items that he gets within a day or so. Lane has cut down his hours of operation a bit as well. He has been in business for sixteen years and doesn't plan to retire anytime soon.

The Rheem Valley Pet Shoppe in Moraga has applied the same strategy and cut its inventory on big items by 15%. Jorge Quintero, the owner, now closes the store on Sundays to reduce his labor cost. Quintero himself works 6 1/2 days a week. Having another store in Lafayette allows him flexibility in his cost rationalization, hopefully without losing any customers.

The owner of Moraga Hardware decided to close the store for a few days to cut costs. Owner Bill Snider had reduced staff to the minimum, working 75 hours a week himself, and he reduced his inventory some months ago. Snider may cut his early hours and further reduce staff to stay in business. All his variable expenses are being revisited and he plans to start discussions with his landlord and his suppliers.

Others are trying the same tactic, but the suppliers are hurting too: King Florist's Arlene Kohn has seen many growers going out of business and Quintero never got the rent reduction he asked from the owner of the building that harbors his Lafayette store. Susan Marconi from Across the Way believes that suppliers will have to invent new ways of doing business if they don't want to lose all of their retailers.

The Alameda Small Business Development Center offers free classes to business owners.

In Oakland:

e-commerce & Web Marketing Seminar in Oakland on Tuesday, January 27, 2009 from 2 to 5pm

Buying or Selling A/Your Business Seminar in Oakland on Thursday, January 29, 2009 from 2 to 5pm

In San Ramon:

Accessing Capital for Small Businesses and Start-up Companies in San Ramon on Wednesday, February 4, 2009 from 9am to 12pm

For a complete list of classes go to www.eastbaysbdc.org.

News from the Three Chambers of Commerce

Lafayette Chamber of Commerce

2009 Predictions by Chamber CEO Jay Lifson: "None of us are sure what 2009 will look like for our local businesses or residents, but we want you to know that the Chamber will be here for you. Be sure that you are making the most of our services. And we can promise you that we will have an aggressive Shop Lafayette program in 2009. Let's all join together and get through these rough times."

- Wednesday, January 12 at Noon, Green Committee in the Lafayette Chamber Conference Room.

- Wednesday, January 14 at 5:30 p.m. Chamber Mixer at Urban Suburban, 3328 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

- Thursday, January 15 at 8:30 a.m. Entrepreneur's Club in the Lafayette Chamber Conference Room.

Moraga Chamber of Commerce

- Chamber Mixer, Friday January 30th starting with coffee at 7:30 a.m. at the Hacienda de las Flores.

Orinda Chamber of Commerce

- Mayor's Luncheon, Wednesday, Jan. 28, 2009, Noon to 1:30 p.m. The Orinda Rotary Club and the Orinda

Chamber of Commerce will host the Mayor's Luncheon. This event will introduce our new Mayor,

Sue Severson, who will be giving the State of the City Address. The event will take place in the Orinda

Community Center, 28 Orinda Way. The cost per person is \$20.00. Purchase your admission online by

going to the Chamber's web site: orindachamber.org/events.php

Reach the reporter at: sophie@lamorindaweekly.com

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