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Putting Money in your RecycleBank

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"The way to redeem the points is two-fold," explains Bart Carr, Senior Program Manager with CCCSWA, "business partners offer rebates (see side bar for a sample list), or residents can decide to give their points to local schools, filling up the schools' bank."

For schools, the process will consist of applying for grants from RecycleBank to get specific projects financed. "The projects need to have a tie to helping the environment," adds RecycleBank publicist Melody Serafino.

"This program meets the requirement of the Board of the Authority to deliver a measurable output; an actual increase in recyclable material," says CCCSWA Board of Directors Chair, and Orinda Mayor, Victoria Smith, "Residents will receive rewards if they increase the amount of recyclables they leave out on the curb each week; our goal is to have each household increase their recycling by 200 tons annually."

"RecycleBank is well developed on the East Coast and the Mid-West," says Morsen, "they have registered remarkable success where recycling was only budding. They were looking for a west coast community to determine if the program could further improve

performance in communities already considered to have good recycling rates."

Morsen explains that Orinda and Moraga were chosen because the two communities together create the critical mass of 10,000 homes that's needed to evaluate the project, and because Orinda, with its hills and intricate topography, is one of the toughest areas to service—"If the pilot works there, I feel confident that I'll be able to go back to my Board and ask for the extension of the program to our total area of service," he states.

Morsen explains that his agency's motivation is not to break recycling records, or even to reach the 75% recycling rate claimed by San Francisco. "Our objective is to save money for our users by diverting more from landfills: we (and therefore our clients) are charged by the ton of garbage going to the landfill; the more we divert, the less you pay." Right now Lamorinda recycles the State-mandated 50% of its waste, but Morsen anticipates that the legal requirements will go up in the years to come. "We are very excited about bringing a new program into Orinda and Moraga to explore the opportunity to reduce and reuse household waste," concludes Smith.

Oyama Sushi Opens in Lafayette

By Rosylyn Aragon Stenzel



Oyama Sushi chefs Tommy Zhang and Peter Wang display the special of the day made with spicy salmon and mango. Photo R. Aragon Stenzel

Just in time for the new year, Oyama Sushi is open for business on the corner of Mt. Diablo Boulevard and Mountain View in

the former Quizno's space in Lafayette.

The definition of Oyama is mountain which means good luck

in Japanese. The good luck seems to be working as Oyama Sushi has had a steady flow of business since opening on December 11.

Sushi chefs and co-owners Tommy Zhang and Peter Wang together bring over 15 years of sushi-making experience in the Bay Area to their new restaurant. Both from China, they are good friends who have a passion for making sushi. "Making sushi is an expression of ourselves as artists," says Zhang.

They describe their expansive menu as Japanese fusion; offering daily specials, appetizers and over 40 different types of Maki Sushi Rolls and Nigiri, as well as serving traditional dishes including Udon, Tempura, and Teriyaki.

Zhang and Wang want their customers to enjoy the dining experience by offering food with the best quality and freshness in a

beautiful atmosphere where customers feel comfortable, relaxed and at home. Speaking of high quality and freshness, Zhang orders the fish each night, and it is delivered every day from local Japanese fish companies.

They say the welcoming response from the community has been phenomenal. During construction, many stopped by to check on the opening; so much so that they decided to open earlier than expected.

Oyama Sushi is located at 3651 Mt. Diablo Boulevard in Lafayette. They're open seven days a week; Monday - Saturday, 11:30 - 2:30 p.m. for lunch and 4:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. for dinner, and Sunday 4:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. For more information call (925) 283-6888 or visit www.oyama-sushi.com.

Reinventing Yourself in Retirement

By Sophie Braccini



Roberta Dillon (pink sweater) with her class Photo courtesy R. Dillon

Roberta Dillon does not believe anyone should drift lazily and aimlessly toward retirement; to take full advantage of this potentially rewarding time of life one must make a plan - she firmly believes that some serious soul searching is in order. That conviction sent her on an exploration of her own when she found herself prematurely retired from corporate America. Her quest led her to create a class, first taught at the College of Marin, which is coming to Saint Mary's College as part of the Lifelong Learning program. It is called "Celebrate Retirement - The freedom and the frustration," and is scheduled to begin on February 22, meeting for seven Tuesday evenings.

"When my job was eliminated, I fought it for a while," said Peter Boam, who took Dillon's class, "the class was a way to accept retirement, confirm what I wanted to do, and make a plan to get there." Boam added that the phrase "freedom and frustration" embodies what he felt when his position, as Director for Communication and Compliance with Harley Davidson in Los Angeles, was eliminated.

"How Peter (Boam) felt, the 'what now?' is what many people experience, once the newness of the situation wears off," says Dillon, "men who were powerful suffer the most. They've lost a large part of their identity and their 'work-family.' They have to rein-

vent themselves and discover how to manifest their dreams."

Dillon learned these lessons the hard way, through imposed experience. She didn't think that she was anywhere close to retirement when she was unexpectedly retired from her vice president position in the financial industry a few years ago. "I knew I would get another job," she said, "but then, I didn't!" She remembers that the frustration and fear sent her into a tailspin. She traveled all over the country in an effort to retool herself and ended on a journey of self-discovery. In Atlanta, she took a class called "Celebrate Retirement" and gained so much from the experience that, after discussing the possibilities with the instructors, she decided to teach her own version at the College of Marin.

Dillon finds that each participant comes to the class at a different stage in life and from a variety of circumstances. Some have yet to retire and want to more effectively plan for it, while others have been retired for years and want to expand their horizons; still others have been thrust into this stage of life. Some people are so bitter about what has happened to them that they can't share anything at the beginning of the class, they just listen and take notes. "Sharing is optional," she says, "but by the end of the class most everyone opens up and contributes to the group."

"I was totally unfocused when I got my severance package and I was not the only one," says Boam, "one person in the class decided that she wanted to live in Thailand, another was a financial adviser who wanted to do more with food preparation." Boam added that both the group setting and the methodology used by Dillon were huge time-savers in getting the next phase of his life on track.

"I see myself as a facilitator," says Dillon, "we work with a manual that includes exercises, but each group has a different personality and each class has a life of its own. I am just there to steer the boat."

According to Dillon, "Celebrate Retirement" is a class that offers the tools to take the fear out of retiring and starting a new life. Boam, who was a radio broadcaster earlier in his career, is now a high school sports announcer for both football and basketball. He also launched his own web site and does voice-over gigs. "We had a lot of fun," said Boam, "I would recommend it for anyone in transition, at whatever stage of their lives."

Registration for the class ends on February 11. Contact Grete Stenersen, Lifelong Learning Director, by calling 631-4162 or emailing gsteners@stmarys-ca.edu.

RecycleBank's Participating Businesses

"While Recyclebank has national chain stores in place with whom they partner, the Orinda and Moraga CCCSWA representatives, Vice Chair Mendonca, Board Members Trotter and Glazer, and myself, worked hard to include local Orinda and Moraga businesses and restaurants in the mix of vendors who will offer rewards in our communities; we see this as a win-win for our residents and for our local businesses." says Orinda Mayor Victoria Smith.

Initially, RecycleBank points may be used at Lava Pit, Diablo Foods, Lindsay Wildlife Museum, California Shakespeare Theater, Curves, Lamorinda Pizza, Loard's Ice Cream, Mountain Mike's Pizza, Orchard Supply Hardware, Ristorante Amoroma, Terzetto Cuisine, Chillers, Geppetto's Caffe, Orinda Books, Shelby's, Casa Orinda, and McDonnell Nursery. Check the RecycleBank website, www.recyclebank.com, for updates on participating businesses.

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