

First Local Home Expo a Big Success

By Sophie Braccini



Vendor Bill Creasi of Sola-Brite explains his products

Photo Andy Scheck

There could not have been a better venue for the first Lamorinda Home Expo than the Lafayette Veterans Memorial Building – the large window let in plenty of light, the warmth of the wood

structure and the elegance of the modern concept of the building all contributed to create a cheery, home-like atmosphere.

Mostly local vendors from architects, builders, solar vendors, organizers, kitchen

and bath specialists, landscape designers, and interior designers displayed products and offered ideas for residents who want to embellish their environment. This first local expo took place on January 28, 2012, and was organized by Lamorinda Web, a young online group that aims at getting the community together.

"I am planning some work in my house," said visitor Denah Bookstein, "this is a very nice place, the professionals are all of very nice quality, and there is something for everybody. I met a lot of talented people here. I also like the way it is set up, it created some intimacy and a pleasant atmosphere."

Lamorinda Web's Julie Novak estimated the number of visitors at about 700. "This was our first year and we didn't know what to expect," said the Special Event Manager, "it was busy the entire day, people seemed very interested and engaged and the 42 vendors were happy with the outcome."

"This show has been fabulous," said Kari Grosz, the owner of Lamorinda Construction and Consulting, "We are seeing

a lot of people who are concerned about their old homes and the repairs that are needed. Energy concerns, repairs and updates are at the top of their priorities. It is Lamorinda families meeting Lamorinda businesses, discussing how we can work together in the community."

Canyon Construction owner Chris Avant added that he appreciated the opportunity to network with other professionals. He was also pleased with the number of contacts and the level of awareness about green building expressed by visitors.

Since the owners of Lamorinda Web are three young mothers, they included a "kid zone" where parents could safely leave their kids to play while they strolled through the Expo. Presentations were conducted during the day on topics such as build-it-green, organizing your home, the design review process, and more.

"We were exhausted at the end of the day and very pleased with the outcome," said Novak "we will definitely do it again next year. We may have to move to a bigger venue."

business briefs

Back to the Table

271 Lafayette Circle, Lafayette (next to Queen Bee)
284-1120,
backtothetablecooking.com

One of the difficulties of creating a food business is finding a professional, bonded kitchen that can be rented at a reasonable price, much less one that's in Lamorinda. This gave sisters Leslie Pease and Lisa Evaristo the idea to open Back to the Table Cooking School & Production Kitchen, a place for cooking talent to blossom. They are putting the final touches to two floors, 1250 square feet each, both equipped with new professional-grade cooking appliances. They plan to open in April.

Consignment Store or Teen Center?

ReChic Boutique 101
101 Orinda Way, Orinda
519-8050

Jennifer Vigo just opened ReChic Boutique 101 in Orinda, across from the golf course. Her concept is a new twist on a traditional style of store. "ReChic Boutique 101 is a store for teens from middle school to college where they can find clothing and objects to decorate their own space," explains Vigo, "It is a consignment store with some new things as well." Vigo, who was raised in Orinda and is the mother of three (two teens and pre-teen) wants to create a safe space where youths can express themselves and also learn fun things. From 6th grade on, the store owner believes that young people want to have a space that expresses their own personality, just as their clothes do. "They don't have

to be perfect," she says, "They just need to separate from their parents and express themselves freely." The 101 part of the name of the store not only refers to the address, but to the basic level life classes that Vigo plans to offer in her store after school. "The first one we'll have in March will be Auto Shop 101," she says, "we are also working on a photography class and financial management."

New from the three Chambers of Commerce

Lafayette
Ribbon Cuttings

Dual ribbon cutting on Thursday February 23, 5pm for European Tile & Marble and Soccer Post. Meet at 3400 Mt. Diablo Blvd., the two businesses are # 2 & # 5. Special ribbon cutting at Pedder, Hesseltine, Walker & Toth, LLP on Thursday, March 8, 5pm. This event celebrates the 50-year anniversary of this business as a Lafayette Chamber member. They are located at 3445 Golden Gate Way.

The Secrets of with High-Powered Email Marketing Campaigns

Don Wexler will present the tools to create a dynamite email campaign, March 7, 8am at the Lafayette Library & Learning Center, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd. Don Wexler of BlastMyBiz.com will cover the ingredients of a successful email campaign. Attendees will learn about the entire process-from building a list to formatting the actual email.

Moraga



Brad and Gloria Noggle in their 5A Rent-A-Space business Photo Andy Scheck

Dinner February 28, 7pm at the Moraga Country Club for the Business Person of the Year, Brad Noggle, manager of 5A-Rent-A-Space. "Brad (Noggle) has been so intricately involved in the Chamber activities for the past four years," says the Chamber's Kathe Nelson, "he has run the Community Fair Car Show single-handedly for the last two years, he consistently reaches out to other businesses and fosters business-related networking, he serves the community in many ways, with the Lions, with e-waste recycling events, with the Santa event. He was a logical choice for 2012 Business Person of the Year." "My wife Gloria and I moved to California four

years ago to get closer to our children," said Noggle, "we previously ran our own businesses and knew the value of investing in one's community." Noggle says that people like to do business with friends, and the more you do for the community, the more you get to know people and they get to know you. "Helping other businesses is so important," he adds, "joining the Chamber and networking with other people opens up doors." Serving the community is second nature to Brad and Gloria, "and everything we do, we try to do in the highest of standards," he says. For more information, contact Kathe Nelson at 323-6524.

Orinda

The Chamber's Orinda Country Club Luncheon is scheduled for Friday, February 24, noon-1:30pm at the Orinda Country Club, 315 Camino Sobrante. The cost is \$30 per person. The luncheon's speaker will be award-winning weekend anchor for NBC Bay Area News, and Orinda resident, Diane Dwyer. Reserve your seat by calling 254-3909, or e-mail the Chamber at info@orindachamber.org.

3rd Annual "Live at the Orinda" is Friday, March 2, 6:45pm at the Orinda Theatre. Tickets: Advance Open Seating: \$35 - \$40 at event. Age: 17 and older. Online tickets and more information at orindachamber.com.

If you have a business brief to share, please contact **Sophie Braccini** at sophie@lamorindaweekly.com

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