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business briefs



Ruby Chen during a jewelry mother-daughter party at Design 4 U. Photo provided

Design 4 U Opens Retail and Teaching Business

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Design 4 U Owner Ruby Chen knows everything about jewelry: how to make it, sell it, repair it, and even teach about it - she even offers free classes for seniors. A graduate gemologist, Chen has worked in the jewelry industry for 15 years, from manufacturing to wholesale and high-end retail (including Tiffany in Walnut Creek). She moved to Lafayette in 2009 with her four children and owned a wholesale jewelry business, but is now opening her first retail/teaching business. "Some of the pieces I sell in my store I made," she says. "Others, I buy." When she was in the wholesale industry she went all over the world and was trained to spot the nicest pieces. "Now I can design any custom piece clients might want," she says. Her brother is a goldsmith and his expertise can be used if necessary. "I can also repair any piece of jewelry, including high-end watches," she says. As for the classes, Chen says, "We have free beading and wiring classes for seniors on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., and over the summer we will have ongoing classes in the morning for children and teens." Chen also offers appraisals. "This job is so fulfilling for me because all the customers who come here are happy," she says. Chen also hosts parties such as birthdays or mother/daughters events, and plans to feature other local jewelry makers. She also donates 5 percent of her sales to the charity chosen by her clients. Design 4 U is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. The business will be closed June 14-25 to arrange a jewelry event.

Moraga Employee of the Month for May

Susan Marconi, the general manager of Moraga Hardware & Lumber and Across the Way, has been named the Moraga Employee of the Month for May. Marconi has served in various roles for the two local businesses for the past 12 years and is strongly involved with the Moraga community. A Moraga native who attended Campolindo High School, Marconi is the businesses' primary liaison with the local community. She has worked directly with the Moraga Community Faire, garden clubs, local service organizations, the MEF, the Moraga Juniors and others. "Susan is a huge part of our operation," said owner Bill Snider. "She really has a knack of bringing in new products into both stores that our customers love. The customers love her and we really value her contribution to our business." The Rotary and Chamber will present Marconi with a \$50 gift card to Safeway as well as a \$50 gift certificate to Ristorante Amoroma at the Moraga Rotary luncheon June 18.

Where's the Town?

The Moraga Chamber of Commerce put up signs during the Saint Mary's College graduation festivities to let visitors know where to go to 'find the town.' "We had a sign made, we mounted it to Bill Snider's truck, and parked it across the street from the entrance to the college," says Kathe Nelson. "There was no sign code violation!" Other signs were also posted at the corner of Saint Mary's Road and Rheem Boulevard. Non-permanent signs need a Design Review Board permit before being installed, but Nelson noted "they were up for less than 24 hours." She says the chamber will seek legal authorization from the DRB in the future to post such signs again when events attract out-of-area crowds to the campus.

News from the three Chambers of Commerce
Lafayette

Mixer at Mason McDuffie Mortgage from 5:30 to 7 p.m. Wednesday, June 12 at 999 Oak Hill Road.

Ribbon Cutting at Floral Arts from 5 to 5:30 p.m. Thursday, June 13 at 3584 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Azure Moon kicks off this year's 'Rock the Plaza' on Friday, June 14 at Lafayette's Plaza Park at the corner of Mt. Diablo Boulevard and Moraga Road. The headliners start at 6:30 p.m. and are presented free of charge. (See

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Moraga

Membership business meeting at 7:30 a.m. June 28 at the Hacienda de las Flores. Planning Director Shawna Brekke-Read will update the business community on future developments of interest.

Save the date for the Second Annual Moraga Chamber Golf Tournament and Dinner Party on Monday July 22, with a dinner only option for non-players. More information coming soon.

Orinda

Orinda Chamber members had a great time enjoying wine and appetizers at the Ribbon Cutting and Grand Opening Party for Land Home Financial Services, Inc. May 31 in Theatre Square.

Photo Susan Wood Photography



From left: Frank May, Susan Marconi, Bill Snider and Frank Melon Photo provided



Moraga Chamber promotes local businesses at SMC graduation. Photo Cathy Dausman



Photo Susan Wood Photography

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