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business briefs



Tom Courtright at his nursery. Photo Andy Scheck

Orchard Nursery Wins National Award

4010 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette
 (925) 284-4474, www.orchardnursery.com

Lafayette's Orchard Nursery recently won the Dick Morey Retailer of the Year award, given each year by Nursery Retailer magazine in honor of the magazine's founder. Tom Courtright and Jacquie Williams-Courtright traveled to Chicago to receive the honor.

Union Bank

140 Brookwood Road, #101, Orinda
 (925) 253-8980, www.unionbank.com

MUFG Union Bank, N.A., announced that Maria Cristales has joined the community banking team as manager of the Orinda branch. Cristales is responsible for supporting the bank's existing customer base and developing new relationships with consumers and small businesses.

Business Anniversaries

GNU Group Celebrates 40 Years
 3445 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Lafayette
 (925) 444-2020, www.gnugroup.com

The GNU Group marks its 40th year of practice in 2014. The venerable environmental graphics and architectural signage design firm celebrated the occasion with a festive open house for over 300 clients, employees and friends. "Our birthday party was a wonderful opportunity to observe the legacy of four decades, reminisce about our history and acknowledge our clients and collaborators who have contributed so much to our success," said Martin Kindred, GNU's director of business development. The informal gathering was punctuated by a heartfelt presentation by CEO Phil Murphy, who described his path to leading GNU through the past 20 years while expressing his appreciation to Richard Burns, the firm's founder and president through its first two decades. The GNU group's story is linked to that of three men - Richard Burns, who founded it and led it for 20 years; Philip Murphy, who bought it 20 years ago and now serves as president/CEO; and Tom Donnelly, who started his career as a graphic designer at GNU before leading his own firm, Donnelly Design, which he later merged with GNU where he now works as principal and is heavily engaged in signage and way-finding projects for airports such as Miami International, New York's JFK International and Los Angeles International. GNU's culture is client-centric; Dickson Keyser, director of design, says, "Believe it or not, the greatest design tools we use at the GNU Group are not our computers, it's our ears."

News from the Chambers of Commerce Lafayette

Trick or Treat Street will be from 4 to 6 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 24 in downtown Lafayette along Mt. Diablo Boulevard from Dewing Avenue to First Street, Lafayette Circle and La Fiesta Square - participating merchants will greet young visitors with candies and treats to celebrate Halloween. Bring a treat-or-treat bag! Go to www.lafayettechamber.org the day of the event for a list of participating merchants.

Orinda

"Fall into OctoberFest" chamber mixer from 5:30 to 7 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 23 hosted by Land Home Financial at 2 Theatre Square, Suite 146.



Photo provided

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