

Business

New Options for Health

By Sophie Braccini



Raphael Rettner in his Lafayette office.

Photos Sophie Braccini

Set in a charming cottage on Mt. View Drive across from Trader Joe's in Lafayette, Raphael Rettner has opened a weight loss and wellness center. Dr. Rettner combines his chiropractic training with his studies in nutrition, Ayurvedic and Chinese medicine and yoga. Over his 30 years of practice, he has worked to uncover the underlying causes of individual's excess weight and to address it accordingly.

Rettner envisioned a wellness clinic a few years ago. He had a chiropractic office in Berkeley, but Lafayette's semi-rural atmosphere felt right to him. "I'm committed to treating the underlying causes (of weight gain)," affirms Rettner. "Most people think that in order to lose weight you cut calories, eat less and exercise more. It does not always work like that. You could have an imbalance in your endocrine system, you can have a neurotransmitter deficiency or food allergies. You can also have energy imbalances, emotional blocks causing you unconsciously to not want to lose weight even if you consciously want to lose it."

Rettner uses different tests and exams to identify whether the issues

are hormonal, emotional, linked to food cravings and brain chemistry, allergies or an acidic body. Malcolm Quint was his patient four years ago and lost 35 pounds when he removed dairy, gluten and nightshade vegetables from his diet. "We did extensive testing and I completely changed the way I eat," says the 62-year-old man.

Rettner also consults as a chiropractor for musculoskeletal issues, something of high interest to Moraga resident Amy Smith. A nurse by training, she studied with Palo Alto's Esther Gokhale, who the New York Times calls the 'Posture Guru of Silicon Valley.' Smith is conducting a series of presentations and classes in Lamorinda.

After suffering an accident that required spinal surgery, Smith decided to look for the best way to prevent future problems. "I found information about non-surgical approaches and the Gokhale Method," she says. She took the six-week training course and became so enthusiastic about it that she decided to further her training with Gokhale and become a teacher herself. "Esther has worked extensively on what she calls the pri-

mal posture," says Smith. "She's observed the natural posture of children, and of (people in) cultures where back pain virtually does not exist, and designed a method to teach people how to restore it for themselves."

Back pain is ubiquitous. It comes and goes and can degenerate into a serious handicap. When Smith offered a free session at the Moraga Country Club in January, word spread and the large conference room was filled in no time. Smith showed a simple shoulder-roll movement to reposition the shoulders, open the chest and improve neck posture. She had the group practice a different walk, adjusting the hips, legs and feet.

"The method shows how to change your posture and movements in everyday life," says Smith. "It is like learning a foreign language; it is a journey and with practice it becomes second nature." Smith explains that we change our skeleton completely every 10 years, and that by changing the way we impact our joints and bones we can change ourselves. "Bad backs run in my family,"



Amy Smith teaches people how to walk with better posture at the Moraga Country Club.

she says, "but I can change my predisposition. We are not stuck with how we are."

Smith teaches small group classes in Moraga and Lafayette. Her next free presentation will be at the Lafayette Physical Therapy office on March 4. For information, contact Smith at amy@gokhalemethod.com or visit www.gokhalemethod.com/bi-

ography/Amy_Smith.

For information about Advanced Weight Loss and Wellness at 959 Mt. View Drive in Lafayette, call (925) 962-9160 or visit advancedweightlossandwellness.com.

Lamorinda Weekly business articles are intended to inform the community about local business activities, not to endorse a particular company, product or service.

business briefs

Novina is Closing

3559 Mt Diablo Blvd., Lafayette - (925) 283-1800



Voytek Konopka

Photo Sophie Braccini

Voytek Konopka says that it is time for him to retire. The 67-year-old jewelry designer and watchmaker's retirement marks the end of a local craft that is very hard to find in this part of the world. Konopka was trained as a watchmaker in his original Poland and it is his craft that landed him his first job in New York where he had come for just a visit. The talented artisan had also learned jewelry making because he loved the artistry of that part of the business. After leaving New York he worked for Taylor & Jacobson of Walnut Creek as a designer and creator of unique jewelry pieces. Finally, 20 years ago he opened his own business in Lafayette, Novina. There he created custom jewelry, brooches, pendants, rings, and boxes for patrons. Clients from all over the country sent him their high-end mechanical watches for service. "I want to do other things now," says the friendly jeweler and watchmaker. "I want to travel back to Europe and visit my family, and enjoy life." Konopka plans to sell his inventory before closing the store on the evening of Feb. 14. Everything in the store is on sale. Konopka is conscious of the fact that this country does not have any school to teach watchmaking and that his skill is in very short supply. "I will continue to service my clients' watches," he says. He will keep his phone number active so they can continue to reach him, after he is back from Europe.

Senior Helpers Announces New Lamorinda / Walnut Creek Senior Discount Card

1550 Viader Drive, Suite D, Moraga - (925) 268-8327

Senior Helpers of the East Bay announced that its new 2015-16 Lamorinda / Walnut Creek Senior Discount Card is now available to Lamorinda and Walnut Creek seniors. The current edition of the card that was first introduced in 2007 features discounts of between 10 and 20 percent at local restaurants, hardware stores, hair salons, bookstores, car washes, bakeries and more. The cards are available at the Senior Helpers office as well as local senior services departments in Lafayette and Walnut Creek. In addition, several participating businesses such as Ace Hardware on Mt. Diablo in Walnut Creek, UPS stores in Lafayette and Moraga, and many participating restaurants will also distribute the cards. "We love supporting this local discount program," said Ristorante Amoroma (Moraga) owner Hafiz Haidari. "We view it as a way to give back to our senior community and our customers and appreciate Senior Helpers' work in putting this program together."

Local Designer Receives Awards

LMK Interiors - 1009 Oak Hill Road, Suite 301, Lafayette - (925) 962-9610

The Northern California Chapter of the Kitchen and Bath



Photo provided

Association honored Leslie Kalish of LMK Interiors in Lafayette with first place for the Judges' and People's

Choice Kitchen (that project also earned second place in the Large Kitchen category). Kalish won the prize with co-designer Jennifer Hobson for their Alamo Farmhouse Kitchen design. Kalish founded LMK Interiors 12 years ago. She started her career as a buyer, moving to textile and clothing design, and as design director at Obermeyer Ski Wear in Aspen, Colo. She is certified by the State of California as an interior designer. Nine years ago Gayle Leksan, a certified Color for Your Home color consultant, joined the team. LMK specializes in remodeling, new construction, space planning and furnishings, and inside or outside color consultation.

New Contra Costa Community News Group Forms

www.lamorindaweekly.com/cccommunitynewsgroup



From left: Denise Rousset (Valley Sentinel), Elena Hutsler, Rebecca Coburn (Community Focus), Wendy Scheck (Lamorinda Weekly) and Tamara Steiner (Clayton Pioneer and Condor Pioneer)

Photo Rochelle Photography

Five local community papers are banding together to create the new Contra Costa Community News Group. Publishers from the Clayton Pioneer, Concord Pioneer, Lamorinda Weekly, Community Focus and Valley Sentinel launched the new CCNG late in 2014, mainly as an avenue to attract national and regional advertising. The combined circulation of the new enterprise is 150,000 with free delivery to homes and businesses. Wendy Scheck, associate publisher of the Lamorinda Weekly, explains: "As all of our papers are written and printed with significant costs and delivered free to all the single family homes in each of our communities, by forming this group and making it easier and more efficient for regional and national advertisers to place media buys with us, our newspapers will be stronger financially – and that means we can continue providing the local coverage our communities have grown accustomed to."

News from the Three Chambers of Commerce Lafayette

Ribbon Cutting at 5 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 12 at Bay Sotheby's International Realty's new building at 3725 Mt. Diablo Blvd. (This ribbon cutting was rescheduled from Jan. 29).

Monthly Mixer begins at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 25 at Indigo & Poppy, 1009 Oak Hill Road.

Moraga

Dinner celebration of the 2014 Business Person of the Year, Moraga Royale Dianne Wilson, on Tuesday Feb. 24 at 6 p.m. at the Moraga Country Club. Reservations required. For information, email kather@moragachamber.org.

Orinda

Chamber Luncheon starting at 11:30 a.m. on Friday, Feb. 20 at the Orinda Country Club. The Orinda Chamber of Commerce will present annual awards recognizing outstanding contributions to the Chamber and Orinda business community. For tickets, visit the chamber website: www.orindachamber.org.

Save the date for Live at the Orinda 2015 comedy night at 8 p.m. Friday, March 6, with Jimmie "JJ" Walker, Jeff Applebaum and Master of Ceremonies Anthony Hill. Advanced tickets are available at the chamber website: www.orindachamber.org.

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

Rosewood House.com
FINE FURNITURE & ASIAN ANTIQUES SINCE 1969

CONCORD 4700 CLAYTON RD (925) 827-9588
OAKLAND 2523 BROADWAY (510) 451-7373



INDIGO & POPPY
FINE CALIFORNIA LIVING

Spring is in the Air



Come take a peak at the brand new arrivals.
You'll love them as much as we do.

**Interior Design • Gifts
Rugs • Home Accents • Lighting**

—COLORS SUBJECT TO CHANGE—

Indigo & Poppy
1009 Oak Hill Road, Lafayette
925-962-9201

www.indigoandpoppy.com

Hours: 10:00am - 5:30pm Monday - Saturday, Closed Sunday