

Clothing store success inspires encore

Times Colonist (Victoria)

Wed Mar 25 2009

Page: B2

Section: Business

Byline: Darron Kloster

Column: On the Street

Source: Times Colonist

CORRECTION: (From Times Colonist, March 26, 2009) Grant Hughes is the new director of community relations at the University of Victoria. An incorrect title appeared in Darron Kloster's On The Street column in the business section yesterday.*****

Charlene Walker, the nurse-turned entrepreneur who opened a women's clothing store in downtown Victoria 18 months ago, is at it again.

Just nine months after having her fourth child and in the middle of a global economic downturn, Walker has produced an encore to her successful **Sweet Nancy's** Timelessly You Boutique, a store with higher-end clothing lines she named for her mother. The new store, Lil **Sweet Nancy's**, sells casual women's clothing labels and outfits and accessories for kids, including JackPot and NoaNoa lines.

The 2,000-square-foot store at 650 View St., in an old bank building that was formerly an art gallery, also has a Teddy Bear and Tea Cup Room for children's high tea parties and dress-up birthday parties.

"We decided to go forward with this in August, so the wheels were motion before the news of the [downturn] hit," said Walker, 32. "But **Sweet Nancy's** has really taken off and so we're optimistic that by moving the casual lines in with kids' clothing lines we can run both operations successfully. The landlord was helpful with improvements and everything fell into place."

The two stores employ seven people.

Walker's mother, Nancy Candelora, a homecare nurse who dedicated her life to helping the elderly, died of cancer five years ago at age 57, leaving a big hole in Walker's life. **Sweet Nancy's** was a way to channel the grief and change her own life from an emergency room nurse in Edmonton near burnout to an entrepreneur in a new city.

The original **Sweet Nancy's**, at 618 Broughton St., also distributes books, CDs, pamphlets and other information on ovarian cancer.

Doug Potentier, a Peninsula Co-op director since 2001, has been elected chairman of the Calgary region of Federated Co-operatives Ltd., which represents 34 retail co-ops in the southern half of B.C. and Alberta, including the Peninsula Co-op system. A former policeman and executive director of the Greater Victoria Chamber of Commerce, Potentier was first elected to the Federated Co-operative board in Saskatoon last year. Federated Co-op had a record year in 2008 with \$8.4 billion in sales and a net profit of \$755 million. The company also returned \$523 million in dividends to members of 268 retail co-ops.

- - -

Mark and Lois Richmond, owners of Richlock Rentals in Sidney, have acquired Western Region Rentals in Langford from Kerry Steen.

The deal takes effect April 1 and more than doubles the size of Richlock Rentals. The name will be changed to Richlock and the assets sold to the Richmonds, but Steen -- who has owned the company for 20 years -- will maintain ownership of the property at 2884 Jacklin Rd. Richlock, established in 1990, offers sales and rentals to homeowners and contractors with equipment ranging from chainsaws to large boom lifts.

- - -

Around the Ring: Grant Hughes is the new director of communications at the University of Victoria. He joins UVic from the Royal British Columbia Museum, where was director of curator services for the past 15 years ... Kim Hart-Wensley of UVic's Faculty of Law has been appointed associate vice-president of faculty relations and academic administration, responsible for recruitment and retention, negotiations of agreements and support and training of academic administrators ... Jim Dunsdon starts a new position May 18 as associate vice-president of students and will manage the division of student and ancillary services and the office of the registrar and enrolment services. He's a UVic grad from 1995 and currently holds the same post at the University of Calgary.

- - -

Award-winning journalist Anne Mullens has joined Boulevard magazine as associate editor, the latest move by new owner John Simmons to attract readers to the bi-monthly lifestyles, arts and homes publication. Earlier this year, he appointed Vivian Smith as managing editor. Mullens starts her new job immediately for the July/August issue due on newstands June 28. Her articles have appeared regularly in Reader's Digest, British Columbia Magazine, airline publications and daily newspapers in Western Canada. She has also won several writing honours over the past 15 years, including a Jack Webster Broadcast Fellowship, National Magazine Award, Edna Staebler Award and Michener Award -- as well as the Southam and Atkinson fellowships.

- - -

Advantage Signs, formerly based in Esquimalt, and Peninsula Signs have merged operations at 10-2064 Henry Ave. in Sidney. Advantage's Paul Jeune will be the new production manager at Bruce Nunn's Peninsula Signs, which has been at the same location since 1980 and recently upgraded with high speed digital printer and new cutters and laminators. Jeune can be reached at 250-656-9626..

- - -

Vancouver lawyer Steve Michoulas will represent the Canadian Bar Association on the Land Title and Survey Authority of B.C.'s stakeholder advisory committee. He practices with Lang Michener LLP with an emphasis on commercial real estate law and is chairman of the Canadian Bar Association's real property subsection. The advisory committee is made up of 13 stakeholder groups.

- - -

Kim Van Bruggen, owner of Victoria's Acumen Communications, has earned the Accredited Public Relations designation through the Canadian Public Relations Society. She launched Accumen in 1999 after a career as a journalist and holding senior PR positions at the 1993 Canada Games, 1994 Commonwealth Games and 2010 Olympic bid as well as media relations positions with the provincial government.

dkloster@tc.canwest.com

Illustration:• Photo: Darren Stone, Times Colonist / Charlene Walker with a picture of her mother, Nancy, at Sweet Nancy's boutique.

Edition: Final Story Type: Business; Column Length: 863 words Idnumber: 200903250054