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Spotlight on New Business

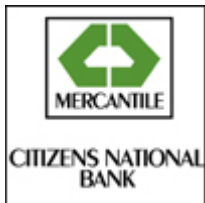
Explorers' Den Offers Showcase for Native Crafts and Artwork

After careers in the retail industry, Paul and Betty Jones have opened Explorers' Den in Savage Mill. The new gift boutique showcases the treasures the couple found in Ecuador and has grown to include jewelry and unique crafts from around the world.

The Joneses work through local brokers and distributors who pay the local artisans a living wage and benefits. "We liked the fact that we could sell a good product, and the native people were taken care of," said Paul Jones.

Each item is handmade and many pieces are signed. Because the artwork is not mass produced, each piece is unique. Organic ivory carvings - made from Ecuadorian palm trees - have been very popular, as well as colorful birds made from balsa wood found in the rainforest. Explorers' Den also carries Brazilian blown glass, soapstone from Indonesia and Bali, and beautiful handmade jewelry from many different countries.

The store is located in the New Weave Building at the Mill and is open Monday-Wednesday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Thursday- Saturday until 9 p.m.; and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. The phone number is 301-317-4054.



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BizWeekly
Business News Update

The Yuppy Puppy Opens in Downtown Ellicott City

A new pet boutique, the Yuppy Puppy, has opened at 8120 Main Street in Historic Ellicott City. Founded by President Holly Hoenes, the store offers upscale pet apparel for dogs and cats, innovative gifts for pet owners, unique toys, carriers, gourmet treats, dining supplies, pet beds and grooming products to satisfy many tastes.

"I'm very excited about the merchandise," said Hoenes. "You will find fabulous pet fashions, including a line of companion wear, dog shoes, eyewear, collars, leashes, and charms. For the party animal, you will find scarves, party collars and bow ties. There's a unique and fun home décor selection, including hand painted bone and paw print margarita and martini glasswear sets, needlepoint pillows, golf umbrellas, clocks, ceramics, placemats and picture frames."

Hoenes said it "wasn't until after [she] decided to open the store" that she learned of the market opportunity. The pet industry is a major segment of the U.S. economy, as Americans spent \$32.4 billion on their four-legged companions in 2003, which means pet-related spending in the U.S. has nearly doubled during the last 10 years.

This figure is expected to approach \$34 billion by 2005, putting the pet industry well ahead of other traditionally popular consumer sectors such as the toy industry (\$20 billion) and the candy industry (\$24 billion). Also, there's been a significant increase in the popularity of owning a pet. More than half of all U.S. households (62%) include at least one pet, up from 56% in 1988.

Ex-Broadcaster Bassett Renames

Video Production Service

Steve Bassett, former sports announcer at WJLA-TV 7 in Washington, WBAL-TV 11 in Baltimore and president of The Communications Workshop, has announced the unveiling of Streamline Video Creations, which will serve as his company's video production component.

Bassett, a one-time play-by-play announcer for University of Maryland football and basketball, George Washington University basketball and college basketball for NBC Sports, said, "We wanted to separate our video production work from the other services offered by The Communications Workshop and give it its own marketing

identity."

Bassett's company has been producing award-winning videos for marketing, sales, training and advocacy since opening The Communications Workshop in 1990 following a stint in association management. Streamline Video Creations specializes in producing video communications products with an emphasis on the utilization of DVD and the Internet as delivery platforms. "TV on the Internet. That's really what it is. Companies and prospects can see new products, services or programs simply by going to a web site and watching the promotional piece as streaming video," he said.

For more information or for a sample DVD of the company's work, call 410-340-2787 or go to www.thecommunicationsworkshop.com.

