FROM THE REGIONAL SELF-ADVOCACY PROJECT

Watch Out!

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THIS NEWSLETTER IS WRITTEN, BY AND FOR CONSUMERS, WITH A GRANT FROM FAR NORTHERN REGIONAL CENTER. WE HOPE YOU ENJOY IT.

A Message from the Editors

One year ago, *Watch Out!* ran stories about new businesses owned by self-advocates in our area. FNRC Director Laura Larson was on the front page, and she talked about honoring our "heart dreams." We decided to find out how those new businesses were doing, *one year later*.

Some of the people we talked to are in the process of getting their businesses up and running. Others have already reached their goals. But, overall, everyone thinks it's very cool to be your own boss. We had a lot of news to report in this issue but we decided instead, to make the whole newsletter about Adventures in Business.

The theme of the next issue is CLIENT COUNCILS. Does your day program have a client council? We'd love to hear about it! The June issue of *Watch Out!* will feature your stories about the client councils in our area: What are your goals? What issues are important to you? Does your program listen to you? Write a story about your client council. We'll put the best story on the front page of the June issue of *Watch Out!* ***—The Editors***

Adventures in Business: One Year Later

Perez Art **By Daniel Perez**

Daniel Perez

I'm **Daniel Perez.** My business, Perez Art, will make and sell unique art works that reflect my American Indian heritage. My work will sell well because I create my own unique style of art. I base my technique on Native American tradition, but then I use my personal creativity to invent a new version of that tradition. I take pride that I do not make exact copies of someone else's work.

Each piece is different from the last. This is not a factory produced product. Each has its own individual personality. Each is one of a kind. I make each one with my own two hands. I work very carefully to do this slow work. I think that handcrafted work is something different and more valuable than a machine produced product. Each of my works is individually blessed with sage smoke.

I want to make money. You know, "Money makes the world go around." But, I also want to show people that I can do something different…something more.

Adventures in Busin

Danette Schons

"I've been cleaning offices for 15 to 20 years now, and I thought it was time for me to work for myself."

TJ Bryant

"I want to teach people about cacti, succulent, and carnivorous plants. I want to make these plants more popular."

Dyvonne Washington

"I've wanted to start my own business because I love flowers, I love my work, and I like making people happy."

Forest Hibbard

I'm thankful for my own business which will allow me to be self-sufficient & productive & to contribute to my community."

Marie Blair

"I create paintings to make people feel good. I want people to enjoy my paintings as much as I do."

Valerie Tracy

I want a business because I can handle it. Hopefully, having more exposure will help sell my artwork.

Aaron Simons

"It's fun to build models for money, to generate extra income, and to get a reputation going."

Andy Halbert

"I grow worms to make compost good for gardens and for people that fish."

Susan Rose

"I'm doing a lot of artwork now. I work with watercolor and acrylic. I really enjoy it."

ess: One Year Later

Eco-photography **By Coby Walters-Fournier**

My name is **Coby Walters-Fournier**. I am an eco-photographer, which means I take photos of nature. I have been doing it for about two years now. I enjoy being in nature; it is a quieter and slower pace. It also lets me help the environment by helping to protect endangered plants and animals.

Coby Walter-Fournier

I have taken photos for the Butte County Environmental Protection Agency to show that a new gravel pit by Durham can hurt a bird sanctuary that is nearby. I also take photos for people of their horses or other animals and also just because I like it and want to share nature with everyone.

My grandfather studied photography with Ansel Adams. He wanted to teach me what he learned, but he died before he could. My mother took me to see an Ansel Adams museum and I really liked what I saw. She brought a single use camera with us, and I decided to take a picture. I went outside and saw a squirrel. I got down on the ground to take a picture of it, and it came all the way up to me and put its nose right against the lens. That is when I decided I wanted to take eco-photographs. I entered a picture of a raccoon in the county fair and won first place. It took me an hour to get just the right picture, but it was worth it. Since then, I have entered many competitions and have even had my own shows.

I sold my first photo to a friend of the family. It was of my cat, but she thought it looked like hers. That is how I started this business. To anyone thinking of starting their own business, I would say to watch your supplies and make sure that you get the best so you can produce the best.

Christenson's Art Studio **By BJ Christenson**

After taking an art class at Shasta College many years ago, **BJ Christenson** realized she had a talent for painting. Now, years later, she has her own art studio business.

BJ Christenson

Christenson's Art Studio is the name of her business. BJ creates and sells original paintings, prints, and cards. She is also working on a new product: light switch plates with her paintings printed on them.

According to BJ, the most difficult part of having a business is getting transportation when you need it.

Adventures in Business: One Year Later

At Your Service Ministries **By Michael Harding**

Andre Economopoulos' business is called *At Your Service Ministries*. He started his business in June 2007. Andre provides ministry services (memorial services and grief mentoring) for people with disabilities. Andre wants to provide positive and empowering services for people with disabilities. He says that he got the idea for his business from Laura Larson.

Andre Economopoulos

Andre's business is currently located in Yreka, where Andre lives. He wants to continue living in Yreka; however, Andre wants to expand his business out of the area. Andre wants to travel out of the area when his ministry services are requested.

Andre says the reason he loves owning his own business is because he loves being his own boss. He says, "The only people who can fire me are my customers, and they are important to me."

Andre advises, "analyze what you really need versus what you want." And he adds, "Really talk to other business owners who are in a similar business as yours to see if you want to do that business as much as you think you do." Ask them, "What do I need to know about starting my business?"

Peggy's Things **By Peggy Englert**

Peggy Englert

My name is **Peggy Englert**, and I am the owner of *Peggy's Things*. I make blankets, wreaths, ornaments, and lots of other "crafty" things. I also plan to teach craft-making to other people. I have been in business for about a year. I started out in Yreka, but I recently moved to the Redding area. What do I like most about owning my own business? I like meeting new people and going out with my mentor to buy supplies. We like to bargain for stuff!

The hardest part about owning my own business is figuring out new things to do and making more modern crafts. But you have to try new ideas if you want to stay in business! My best advice for anyone wanting to go into business for themselves is to make sure that you really want to do your business. Take the time to do it right. Don't rush through making your things.

Max's Barkery **By Michael Harding**

Max's Barkery, owned by **Max Frick**, sells two flavors of gourmet dog treats, Peanut Butter Apple and Carrot Oat. *Max's Barkery* is based in Yreka. The business has had a license for a month and a half.

Max is no stranger to pets. He was raised with them, and his family is getting a new Boxer this summer. With encouragement from their dogs and family, *Max's Barkery* makes tasty dog treats for everyone who owns a loveable dog or puppy.

Laura Larson, FNRC Executive Director, reports that her dogs, Arwin (a Scotty) and Bear (a Schnauzer), LOVE Max's biscuits!

Max's mom, Merry Ann, does all the baking. Max laughs when imagining his dad, Brian, in the kitchen.

Although, owning your own business is great, the crew at the Barkery say that dealing with all the regulations and permits is the hardest part of being in business. They do offer some advice to future business owners saying, "Get some good help!" And it looks like that is exactly what Max has done!

Nature Photography **By Jim Beals**

My name is **Jim Beals**, and my business is a photography studio specializing in wildlife and nature photos. I have been in business for about four months and I must say things are going good. In January, I'm going to have a gallery opening at the High Chaparral Gallery in Redding, along with Coby Walters-Fournier (see page 3).

I got my first camera, a Brownie, when I was just ten years old and continued taking pictures through high school and college. There is nothing special I like to take pictures of, just whatever catches my eye. I take pictures of what I think is interesting, not necessarily what other people think is interesting.

I really enjoy owning my own business. The best part is being able to make my own schedule. I like being able to go out when I want, and if I don't feel like going out, I can stay home. My advice for anyone wanting to start their own business is to find something you really enjoy doing.

Adventures in Business:

C&S Cars and Collectibles By Charles Wade and Samantha Cameron

Charles Wade and Samantha Cameron

If you were wondering what the C&S stands for, in *C&S Cards and Collectibles*, it stands for Charles and Samantha, the owners of C&S Cards and Collectibles. **Charles Wade and Samantha Cameron** are partners in a business that sells sports cards and collectibles. We have been in business since April.

Charles thinks the best thing about being in business is getting to go to different cities. Samantha really likes to get autographs and meet new people. Both of us agree that finding places to sell our stock and making enough money to go to the different cities, is the hardest part of owning our own business. But we think it's worth it!

Samantha has some great advice to those thinking of going into business for themselves: "It is a good idea if you already know what you want to sell, and how you want to sell it, before you start."

Cookie Lee Jewelry By Marie Blair

Benaye Cooke

Benaye Cooke's business, *Cookie Lee jewelry*, started about two years ago. At first the business was slow, because a lot of people don't know about Cookie Lee. Then she took some time off because she didn't have the right mentor to help her get her business started the way she wanted. But it's up and running now, and she's happy.

Benaye said, "I like having my own business. It fits in my life. I am busy with People First stuff, and I can schedule around it." She likes watching the shoppers try on all of the jewelry in her display. Benaye also likes wearing Cookie Lee jewelry herself.

I asked her if she had any advice for new business owners. She had lots to say! "Go into business with something you really like, because you will be busy with it for a long time." She also advises to "Be patient, because it takes time to get your business plan and open the account for your money."

"Be sure you have plenty of your products on hand for your customers," she advises. "If you don't, you may have to give their money back or have them come back to reorder a different item. If that happens DO NOT forget to say you're sorry." Good advice!

: One Year Later

Big Dan's **By Daniel Peterson**

My name is **Daniel Peterson**. I own *Big Dan's* in Red Bluff. I have been selling novelty items for a couple of years, but I have only been officially in business for myself for about four months. I sell things like T-shirts, hats, towels, novelty ashtrays, and body jewelry. I was buying stuff like this for a hobby and for something to do. Adventures in business helped me organize a business and start selling. I have a business mentor, Paulette, who helps me set up shows, tear down, and she also gives me pointers on different things I can do to make my business better.

Daniel Peterson

The best part about being in business is that I just like to sell stuff. The part that I don't like at all is when it is slow. The best advice for those going into business is to "NEVER GIVE UP, NO MATTER WHAT!"

Artwork by Naomi Rose **By Ella Slemp**

Recently there was a national juried art show at the Chico Art Center. This show included artists from all over the country and was not limited to people with disabilities.

The theme of the show was *Me, Myself, and Eye*. **Naomi Rose** was one of the artists, and she won the $200 Award of Merit for her drawing, "Sitting with Myself!" Naomi has an art studio business called *Artwork by Naomi Rose*.

Naomi Rose

"Sitting with Myself" by Naomi Rose won an Award of Merit

Her award is no surprise to anyone familiar with her artwork. Naomi has had her own business for about a year. Her art is her business.

"I didn't know I could draw until I was in my thirties," Naomi told Watch Out! "I feel happy when I draw." That would explain why her hobby has become a business.

Her only advice to those interested in having their own business is to contact their Service Coordinator about the Adventures in Business program. Naomi Rose's art is definitely a busi-

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Save the Date: Regional II Self-Advocacy Conference

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Region II People First Conference **By Ella Slemp**

Region II People First has been working very hard over the last 2 years to plan the upcoming 2008 Self-Advocacy Conference. All of the conference planners are people with disabilities from our area. All of the speakers at the conference are also people with disabilities. Region II People First does all of the work for the conference from deciding whom the speakers will be to walking the halls of the hotel at night in case someone needs help. They have also planned a dinner and dance for the conference which will have a 50's theme. It's going to be a lot of fun!

The conference will be May 2-4, 2008 at the Red Lion Hotel in Redding. The theme of the conference is "Together We Stand Strong!" The cost for the conference is $250 if you're staying at the hotel with one roommate. It costs less if you don't stay at the hotel or you only attend part of the conference. Scholarships will be available on a first come, first serve basis. Watch your mail for all the details in January. Everyone is invited so please join us for this exciting event!