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WINTER 2010

VOLUME 6



## Squash Center Offers 24/7 Availability

Although it's the Dayton Squash Center, area enthusiasts are glad it is at 3200 West Tech Blvd., just off Ohio 741 on Springboro's northern border.

"The owner, Dr. Tom Olsen, is an avid squash player and there were no squash courts in Dayton. He'd been driving to Cincinnati and was tired of that and thought Dayton deserved a first-class squash facility, so he built one," says Charlie Johnson, who has managed the center since it opened 10 years ago. The name reflects the desire to "reach out to the entire Miami Valley area."

The outreach also involves participation in the Dayton Challenge Middle School Squash Program that introduced squash to more than 70 area middle school students who practice once a week and play matches against each other for their school on the weekends. Charlie will accompany the 14-member Miami Valley School high school team to tournaments in other cities. DSC will host the Midwest Junior Championship Tournament in February, along with a \$20,000 Women's professional event—the EBS Dayton Open—which will attract some of the world's top players.

Charlie also recently finalized an employee discount program for nearby Dayton Children's Hospital and LexisNexis, and offers corporate initiatives and junior memberships to encourage participation in the sport. "We promote fitness, fun and friendship and think that squash is the best 45-minute work-out in sport," says Johnson. DSC operates with two full-time and one part-time employee.

Pilates classes are now available, in addition to spinning, Zumba, personal trainers, massage therapy, and numerous clinics. Squash instruction is



offered at all levels of play and the DSC is a popular spot for Round Robin play, where players of all levels can 'mix it up.'

"Our Busy nights are Tuesday and Thursday starting at 8 p.m. I invite non-members to drop by and try the game."

The facility offers five international courts. The fitness area includes a

Precor treadmill, two Precor elliptical machines, free-weights, Universal machines and 10 Revmaster 'LeMond' spinning bikes. With key-card entry, members use the facility 24/7 and use the robust website [www.daytonsquash.com](http://www.daytonsquash.com) to reserve courts and learn about tournaments, classes, clinics, and other events. Charlie also sends a weekly e-mail to members, keeping them well informed.

In mid-November, more than 250 enthusiasts watched matches played by the top two United States squash pros. For more information, call (937) 885-9701, or e-mail [Charlie@cjsquash.com](mailto:Charlie@cjsquash.com). Access the website at



[www.daytonsquash.com](http://www.daytonsquash.com).

## CITY OF SPRINGBORO NAMED 2009 CHAMBER MEMBER OF THE YEAR BY SPRINGBORO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

On Monday, October 26, while attending the Springboro Chamber of Commerce Annual Dinner, Springboro elected officials Jim Chmiel, Sheila Lairson, Marie Belpulsi, Scott Anderson and Tom LaDu were excited to learn that the City of Springboro had been awarded the "2009 Chamber Member of the Year" award.

Deputy Mayor Jim Chmiel, who accepted the award on the City's behalf from State Senator Shannon Jones, credited the residents and businesses of the community for the award—"You cannot have good City Government without the support of the residents and businesses of a community," said Chmiel. "You are only as good as your constituents, and ours are second to none."

Springboro Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Anne Stremanos was happy to see the results of the vote. "We were so pleased when the votes started coming in and it became clear that our 2009 Chamber Member of the Year would be the City of Springboro. Working closely with both administrative and elected officials, we know how dedicated they are to the well-being of our City and its citizens. We are proud to live in the 41st Best Small City in America, and happy to honor those who contribute so much to its success."

Springboro Chamber President Michael Sandner echoed Stremanos's comments. "As a Chamber, we were fortunate to have several outstanding nominees for our Chamber Member of the Year. The fact that our City was among those nominees is a testament to our City leaders. Being recognized as our Chamber Member of the Year simply validates Money Magazine's ranking of Springboro as the 41st best City and underscores the values in our community, and our appreciation to the City as it tries to serve those values."

All Springboro elected officials and administrative staff are very proud of the award and will strive to continue to serve the City in the most efficient and cost-effective way possible.

## Wild Birds Unlimited Nests in Springboro

If Monica Brubaker becomes known as 'the bird lady,' the name will 'fly' with her. Just a year ago, Monica opened Wild Birds Unlimited at 734 N. Main St., in Settlers Walk just south of Dorothy Lane Market. The 15-year Springboro resident knew it was the perfect location for the franchise. "Like Dorothy Lane Market and the other retailers here, we are very service oriented, so this is a good fit." The 300-store franchise also was a good fit. "They provide great products and excellent support, while still giving me the freedom I want."

Monica employed her graphic arts experience in designing the store's interior. She and store associates also completed training to become Certified Bird Feeding Specialists. "I had a graphic arts studio in my home and created a wild bird habitat. I'm passionate about birds so opening WBU was a leap of faith for me."

She shares that passion and knowledge with customers who want to create similar habitats or learn how to landscape their property to attract certain birds. "Many people don't realize they should design their bird habitat before their landscaper begins work." Like people, birds have food preferences, and birdseed used makes a difference in the types of birds a feeder or habitat will attract. WBU offers a graphic display of the benefits of its feed vs. lower-priced products. "With quality feed, better varieties of birds will come to a feeder. WBU feed has no fillers. I believe we have the best prices in this area, based on quality." WBU also stocks feeders, houses, accessories, books, and gift or decorative items.

Monica provides talks to schools, corporations, civic and church and groups, discussing local birds, habitats, feeders, seed, and more. The store has met her first year expectations and she has become active in the Springboro Chamber of Commerce. Her first year has been a learning experience, pulling together the disparate pieces of operating a retail business. She looks forward to the completion of the Austin Road interchange, which will make for faster, easier access to the bustling retail complex at Settlers Walk.

WBU is open Monday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sunday, noon to 4 p.m. For more information, call (937) 748-8979. The web address is [www.wbu.com/springboro](http://www.wbu.com/springboro).



## 'Sweet Smell of Success'— Bakery hopes to expand in 2010

The cozy, white clapboard house and sweet aroma when the door opens advertise the business at 310 S. Main St.

"The Cake Ladies" is aptly named, even though co-owner Maura Levitt recently chose to retire to spend more time with her grandchildren. Now, cake lady Julianna Schaeffer is training others in the small bakery. Cake Ladies moved to Main Street in late 2005.

This year's Christmas In Springboro festival brought an early Christmas present and potential disaster for the bakery.

"On Friday night this year, we sold as much as we had throughout two previous festivals," she says. By Saturday morning, she and her husband David were sleep-deprived, but ready for festival-goers.

The front counter displays baked goods, but glass jars of penny candy line the countertop. "Those candy jars are our marketing secret. The kids go home and tell their parents about us," she says. The candy is so popular that Saturday hours are only for customers picking up orders.

Julianna's road to the bakery and entrepreneurship started in Snowflake AZ., a small town with lots of children, and little else. She needed money for college and earned it by baking cakes and cookies, mostly for children's birthday parties. "It just took off from there," she recalls. Today, she still uses some old family recipes in the bakery.

She did make it to college, studied sociology, married, and adopted four children: siblings, then ages 2, 4, 6, and 8. David's job brought them to Ohio in 1991. She and Maura began Cake Ladies and baked in their homes until they opened the storefront.

Wedding, birthday, and other special occasion cakes top the menu. Cookies, fruit pies, yeast, rolls, and quick breads also fly out the door. Cake Ladies supplies baked products for local business, church, and school events. She is anxious to expand that aspect of the business.

Cake Ladies is poised to go to the next level, she says. Early in 2010, she will meet with a retired executive with SCORE to explore ways to 'grow' the business.

For more information, call (937) 748-9299 or visit [www.thecakeladies.net](http://www.thecakeladies.net), the website recently redesigned by Springboro High School senior Karah Albert.



## Just Jewelry Shines in Down Economy

Almost eight years ago, two young Springboro moms decided, "We wanted something that would bring in a little money, let us have fun and get out of the house maybe one night a week," recalls Just Jewelry co-founder Virginia Depp.

Just Jewelry direct markets a line of low-cost, high fashion, trendy jewelry, and boasts:

- A new, 9,000-square-foot, upscale headquarters at 38 N. Pioneer Boulevard. Just Jewelry moved in August after several years in a small building on East Market Street.
- A 500% growth in all facets of the business in 2009.
- A network of 1,500 independent consultants in all 50 states, Canada and Puerto Rico.

Virginia and co-founder Nicole Nelson started the business in their basements. "We were busy moms, busy wives, active in our church," says Virginia. She has three children; Nicole has four. Today, they range from 8-years-old to college age.

With supportive husbands, the two began making buying trips, searching out unique, reasonably priced jewelry and re-selling their finds. "We named it Just Jewelry because we focus on people, camaraderie with other women. Who you are is more important than what you wear—hence, it's Just Jewelry."

They also took a no-pressure approach to direct marketing. "We hate feeling pressured to buy items, so we didn't want to go that route with our consultants. There is no presentation." Flat product pricing also is unique. All necklaces are the same price. The same concept applies to earrings, bracelets, watches, and rings. Consultants earn 50 percent of sales and have marketing and tax services, sales training, and incentives.

Today, they design much of the jewelry themselves and overseas manufacturers trek to Springboro to solicit their business. They also designed the interior of the new building, creating offices with a sleek, chic contemporary, but comfortable look.

The 500 percent growth in a down economy astounds even the co-founders. "Last year, our staff included me and Nicole and a few other people." Today, there are 18 employees—mostly full time—and Just Jewelry was still hiring tech staff at year's end.

For more information, check out the website at [www.itsjustjewelry.com](http://www.itsjustjewelry.com).



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## Balloon Business Takes Off!

Getting a small business off the ground—difficult, time-consuming, costly. Setting it up in a circa 1935 historic house—even more so. Ronda Hammermeister succeeded at both in just one year.

Her Balloon Haus opened at Christmas time 2008 in the white brick building at 55 S. Main St. She had thousands of helium-filled reasons to enjoy Christmas 2009. The 'wow' factor of large-scale balloon creations, word of mouth, and high visibility in public spaces, all helped Balloon Haus to sail through its first year in fine form.

The opportunity to locate downtown and own a piece of history prompted the building purchase, but it needed attention. Some walls had to be removed; others had to be repaired, as did ceilings. Floors needed work, and heating, electrical, and plumbing work was done.

She had a small balloon and cake business in her home and decided to open the shop to focus on balloon creations and event planning. "I've always enjoyed crafts. The main reason I enjoy this so much is that I get to be a part of someone's special occasion

and help make it special and memorable. It's a great feeling knowing I have a hand in that."

Some of her most visible creations in the last year include:

- An eight-foot balloon Springboro High School 'graduate' at the annual Business Expo
- A giant tarantula
- 200 three-foot balloons for the opening of the movie "Up"
- A large balloon release for Four Bridges country club
- Three balloon-decorated ballrooms at Great Wolf Lodge's New Year's Eve bash. The event included a 1,200-balloon drop



Photos of those and other creations, including gifts inside balloons, abound in her sample book and on-line. Check out the website at [www.balloonhaus.com](http://www.balloonhaus.com) or call (937) 550-9357. Balloon Haus also stocks a large array of party supplies. Balloon Haus is open 1 to 6 p.m., Tuesday through Friday and Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.