

## PBA Update

**Sandi Parrish**  
Executive Director



Our scholarship fundraiser on March 8 was not only a huge success but also a great time for all in attendance. We raised more than \$8,000 for scholarships for local high school seniors. This year, our chairman, Jerry Nicklow of Huff Insurance, decided on an '80s-themed bull and oyster roast with a contest for the best '80s outfit. It was so much fun to see the different interpretations of '80s dress. We danced to the band "Forever Now," played the wheels of chance and just enjoyed the evening festivities with business associates, family and friends. If you missed the event this year, mark your calendars for March 7, 2015, and rock the night away with us.

I want to thank all our members who donated items, gave their time,

bought tickets, etc. We are lucky to have such generous members in our association. I also want to thank the community for coming out and supporting this great cause. We appreciate your dedication to the youth of Pasadena.

We are in the process of reading 70 scholarship applications, and the scholarships will be awarded at our June 4 general membership meeting. The committee has the hard job of deciding the winners, as there are so many deserving students in our area.

Remember to shop local and keep the money in our community. The local businesses support our sports teams, schools, churches, etc. They cannot continue their support if you don't support them by using their goods and services. If you are looking for a specific service or item, check the PBA website at [www.pasadenabusinessassociation.com](http://www.pasadenabusinessassociation.com) or membership directory for a member who will gladly help you with any project.

## Pasadena Floors Celebrates 20 Years Of Installing Friendships



Since 1994, the team at Pasadena Floors has remained true to their mission as a full-service retailer that provides carpet, vinyl, hardwood, laminate and ceramic flooring.

By Zach Sparks

When Pasadena Floors co-owners Marty Kinder and Steve Garvey formed their business in 1994, they were unsure where the future would lead them. By adopting a set of core values, assembling a dedicated staff and attracting loyal customers, their business not only survived but also thrives two decades later. Kinder and Garvey met as high school graduates, both seeking to learn a trade. They worked together as flooring subcontractors and learned the ins and outs of the industry before starting their own business together. Now they are commemorating Pasadena Floors' 20th anniversary with a special event on Saturday, May 17, that will treat guests to special offers, hourly drawings for door prizes and giveaways. The celebration is fitting for an organization that prides itself on customer service.

"I think our presence has grown in the community, and over the years, we serviced more and more people," Kinder observed. "We have grown up and become bigger in size but always stay with our fundamentals and take care of our customers."

To serve more individuals, Kinder and Garvey transitioned the store to a bigger location twice, but maintained a sole storefront and a small, reliable staff. The partners remained true to their mission as a full-service retailer that provides carpet, vinyl, hardwood, laminate and ceramic flooring. By giving personal attention to and sharing expertise with each customer, employees are able to help buyers make critical purchase decisions.

"It was important to us that we run a good business and

provide great service to our community," Kinder said. "We never evolved into a huge big-time business and that was by design. Steve and I wanted to remain involved on a daily basis, always having ourselves in a position where we could interact with our customers."

The communication with clients allows the co-owners to understand what services people want, and the business adapts to fit those needs. One suggestion they heeded was the inclusion of bathroom remodeling work, a new undertaking for Pasadena Floors. "It's another opportunity that we have to provide something to people who have already done business with us, know us, like us and trust us," Kinder stated.

Kinder and Garvey are able to get a feel for what people want because they have built innumerable friendships in the Pasadena community. Kinder grew up near Washington, D.C., so the rural and friendly atmosphere was an appealing aspect when choosing a location for the business.

"Pasadena gives you that small-town feel," Kinder remarked. "Everybody knows one another, and everybody somehow seems to be connected."

The most rewarding part of running the business is making friendships and meeting new people every day, Kinder said. He wants to use the anniversary and special event as a platform to give appreciation to local residents.

"We would like to give a thank-you to our customers for being a part of our dream for the last 20 years," Kinder said. Pasadena Floors is located at 2900 Mountain Road. For more information about the upcoming sale or services offered, call 410-768-2640 or visit [www.pasadenafloors.com](http://www.pasadenafloors.com).

## BUSINESS SPOTLIGHTS

### Pasadena's Coterie Boutique Offers Fashion With Passion

By Dylan Roche

Bess Clark knew for a long time that Coterie Boutique was just the sort of business Pasadena needed. When the Californian moved to Maryland for a brief while in 2007, she fell in love with the area. When opportunity brought her and her family back again several years later, she set about finding the right location for her clothing shop, where she hoped to offer local residents fashionable products at reasonable prices in a friendly atmosphere.

Her vision became reality on March 1, when she opened the doors of Coterie Boutique inside Colonial Square in Lake Shore – and four years of searching for the perfect venue paid off. "Because I waited for the right place to set up, I'm able to keep my prices low, as I don't have extreme overhead," she explained. "I don't have to mark up my clothes to cover my cost."

The neighborhood clothing and accessory shop carries all kinds of mix-and-match



Photo by Tammy Bode

With the vision of creating an old-fashioned neighborhood dress shop, Bess Clark recently opened Coterie Boutique in Lake Shore, where women can find unique clothing and accessories at reasonable prices.

pieces that its owner personally selects herself. "I spend a lot of time at market, combing through so many lines," she described, citing a recent trip to Los Angeles when she went through 13 floors of showrooms and displays to find merchandise for Coterie.

Everything Clark carries in her store meets her standards of being stylish, high quality and reasonably

priced. The clothes and accessories are ones that stand out and catch the eye, sure to garner compliments for the women who wear them.

"There's a lot of work involved in going in to hit all these points. I'm very particular," she acknowledged, but shared that her attention to detail stems from a passion for what she does. "It's my whole

business – I pick my lines, I work the store. I'm a one-woman show."

Clark developed her strong business sense from her years as an executive director for a corporate law firm in Los Angeles for which she represented many small businesses. She combines that experience with her love of fashion in her ownership of Coterie and has received very positive feedback from her customers.

"I wanted that neighborhood dress shop feel," she stated. "Before the mall came around, people shopped at mom-and-pop stores and connected with people. It's about coming in and getting that one-on-one service ... The women who come in really get that, and I have already had customers returning, sometimes two or three times."

Knowing the importance of keeping her business in touch with the community, Clark aims to support local organizations and groups through fundraisers and sponsorships. She expressed

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### Caruso Homes Crafts Personalized Abodes For Every Buyer

By Zach Sparks

When Jeff Caruso formed Caruso Homes in 1986, he realized people wanted a higher-quality product and a superior level of service than the industry standard. For nearly 30 years, his business has filled that void in Maryland by offering personalized housing to match every buyer's desires.

"A Caruso home built a year from now will be different from a Caruso home constructed today because technology and building practices change, and we are constantly building the best product we can," acknowledged Tom Baldwin, director of sales. "Traditionally, buyers say, 'We are going to be in the residence for two years or five years,' but now they are saying, 'It is going to be a 15- to 20-year move.' They're willing to pay that premium price to get a premium product, and they are very conscious of what they want in their home. We are able to provide that."

The Crofton-based business has three divisions to help people get the most out of their buying experience. Caruso Homes offers active-



Caruso Homes provides homeowners with a personalized buying experience that fits their individual needs. One of its active-adult communities, Symphony Village, won a national award from the National Association of Home Builders.

adult living quarters and market-rate housing, which includes traditional single- and multi-family residences. The company also has an "on your lot" division, which specializes in building homes on buyer's property, saving them time and money. The builder helps the purchaser find a lot to build on, and with more than 54 plans to choose from, the homeowner does not need to consult an architect, spend \$10,000-\$15,000 and wait several months to get pricing.

Guided by six values – a "we care" attitude, a same-team concept where every voice counts, an atmosphere of urgency, facing reality

(revaluing every player's performance), thirst for change (being open to new ideas and concepts), and truth and commitment in writing – Caruso Homes is able to provide exceptional service. The company uses quality materials and exceeds what is required by the minimum building code to ensure complete customer satisfaction.

"We over-engineer our homes, our floor systems are sturdier than what is required by code, we use a better grade window, and then the big thing is we personalize," Baldwin noted. "Prospects that are eventually going to become buyers are spending a lot of money on

their home, and most builders just say, 'Here it is, if you don't like it, we can't do anything.' Our buyers say, 'I love this island, but I spend a lot of time in my kitchen. I'm a cook. I'd like to make it a couple feet bigger and put a prep sink in there.' We can do those things."

Reducing their carbon footprint is another big focus. "We redesigned our homes, and started using 2-by-6 walls with more insulation because energy efficiency is extremely important to homeowners," Baldwin highlighted. "Caruso Homes has an energy guarantee, so we can calculate the home's energy usage

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### Broadstripe Works To Provide Fair Rates

Broadstripe's contract with Viacom, the parent company of MTV, Nickelodeon, Comedy Central and others, expired on March 31. Normally, these contract renewals go unnoticed; however, Viacom seeks to substantially increase the costs of these channels. While Broadstripe is restricted from talking about specific rates, Viacom demanded a rate increase that's 40 times the rate of inflation\*. Imagine pulling up to the gas pump and finding that gas has gone from \$3.50 a gallon to \$6.00 — overnight. That's the scale of some of these large increases. Broadstripe is currently negotiating a fair price with Viacom, but until such a time, Viacom may require us to remove all of their channels until a new agreement is secured.

Broadstripe is the only local cable company located in Northern Anne Arundel County offering programming and broadband services. It

employs 67 people and has a full-service local call center in Millersville.

While it is working to establish fair rates for a new contract, its customers can keep up to date on what's happening at [www.broadstripe.com/viacom](http://www.broadstripe.com/viacom).

"We want to give our subscribers as many details as possible on how we are working to fight this substantial rate increase," explained Broadstripe CEO John Bjorn. "Across the country, networks are increasing their fees to cable companies, which directly affects what our customers pay for cable TV."

Programming fees from these networks account for the bulk of a customer's monthly cable bill. Today's entertainment marketplace is changing rapidly, and there has been consolidation among major media companies. These mergers allow larger companies significant leverage over independent cable companies

such as Broadstripe.

"Our goal," said Bjorn, "is to work on behalf of our customers and to protect them from significant programming fee increases. We pay programmers such as Viacom a monthly fee for channels per customer. However, when a multibillion-dollar company such as Viacom demands an unprecedented increase in

its monthly fees, we believe it's our responsibility to take a stand."

Broadstripe urges its customers to get the facts and be informed by visiting [www.broadstripe.com/viacom](http://www.broadstripe.com/viacom) for more information.

\* Source: 12-month period from January 2013 to January 2014, Bureau of Labor Statistics, released February 20, 2014.

### Pamela Dement-Carpenter To Offer Self-Help Clinics

Beginning this month, local attorney Pamela Dement-Carpenter will offer weekly family law self-help clinics in Severna Park. Clinics will cover a variety of family law issues, including divorce and child custody, domestic violence, premarital agreements. These clinics are designed to provide basic information on and understanding of the

legal process pertaining to family law issues. Upcoming clinic topics include domestic violence on Wednesday, April 23, and premarital agreements on Wednesday, April 30. The cost per session is \$50. Prepayment is required, and materials will be provided. To register or for more information, call 443-388-2459 or email [pdclaw@verizon.net](mailto:pdclaw@verizon.net).

## Tutti Frutti Frozen Yogurt To Open May 3



Just in time for summer, Tutti Frutti Frozen Yogurt will welcome customers on May 3 for the grand opening of its location at 25 Magothy Bridge Road in Magothy Beach Plaza of Pasadena. From 2:00pm to 7:00pm, guests can enjoy a special offer of buy one, get one free (equal or lesser value) when they check out all the cool deliciousness the new shop has to offer.

## Caruso Homes Crafts

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... and if the [proprietor] goes over that, we will pay the difference in their utility bill.”

The local business has a good reputation, garnering national awards such as America’s Best Builder in 2006. One of its large active-adult communities, Symphony Village, was named by the National Association of Home Builders 50+ Housing Council as the Best 50+ Clubhouse Over 6,000 Square Feet. The company also has an A+ rating with the Better Business Bureau. April and May are ideal months for people to check out Caruso Homes because they are having a red-tag sales event

through May.

“Buyers are able to take advantage of the year’s best savings on quick-delivery homes, which are homes we already have existing that they can build and move in a relatively short amount of time,” Baldwin said. “We can help the prospect finance the home through one of the preferred lenders that we have. It’s a great time of year for people to buy.”

Decorated models are on display in the 17 Caruso Homes communities. For more information about locations, the sale, or the business, call 301-261-0277, go to [www.carusohomes.com](http://www.carusohomes.com) or visit the Facebook page.

## Alexander Animal Hospital Holds Open House



On April 12, Dr. Eric Alexander and the staff at Alexander Animal Hospital welcomed clients and friends to an open house event, which included a meet and greet, refreshments, raffles and family entertainment.

## RPS Speaks To County School Employees About Retirement



Photo by Cathy Ford

On April 5, all Anne Arundel County Public School employees were invited to the 2014 Spring Pre-Retirement Planning Seminar at Severna Park High School, where Mike Steranka of Millersville-based Retirement Planning Services spoke to attendees and educated them on financial planning and how to transition into retirement.

## Ribbon Cuttings



## Bleue’s Bistro Brings French Fine Dining To North County



Photo by Zach Sparks

Owner Tom Stuehler joined community leaders in celebrating the ribbon cutting ceremony of Bleue’s Bistro, located at 7514 Ritchie Highway in Glen Burnie. Stuehler also owns La Fontaine Bleue, a special-events venue and catering company that has served Marylanders since 1968.

## Gene Lilly Pools And Spas Celebrates 45th Anniversary



Gene Lilly Pools and Spas recently hosted a ribbon cutting ceremony to mark their 45th year in business. Owners Gene and Brenda Lilly were joined by family, their staff and area business leaders as they did the honors of cutting the ribbon.

## Coterie Boutique Offers Fashion

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a desire to help school groups at Chesapeake High, noting projects with the band and with the girls’ softball and field hockey teams. She hopes in the future to organize fashion shows as fundraisers. “Those are just fun for everyone,” she added.

Although she never wants the business to become huge, Clark does hope to see Coterie Boutique open other locations. “I always want to maintain that off-the-beaten path feel, where you’re with people and share a common interest – that’s what it’s all about,” she expressed.

Coterie Boutique is located at 4513 Mountain Road and is open Wednesdays from 11:00am to 5:00pm, Fridays and Saturdays from noon to 7:00pm and Sunday from 10:00am to 5:00pm. For more information, call 310-780-8127 or email [coterieboutique@outlook.com](mailto:coterieboutique@outlook.com).



### GOING OUT TONIGHT? Not sure where to eat?

**Let the Voice help!**

Coming in June, the Pasadena Voice will publish a special Dining Guide, featuring stories and information on all your favorite restaurants in Anne Arundel County. There will also be plenty of discounts, deals and coupons included as well.

If you'd like to have your business featured in this exclusive publication, call 410-255-5888.

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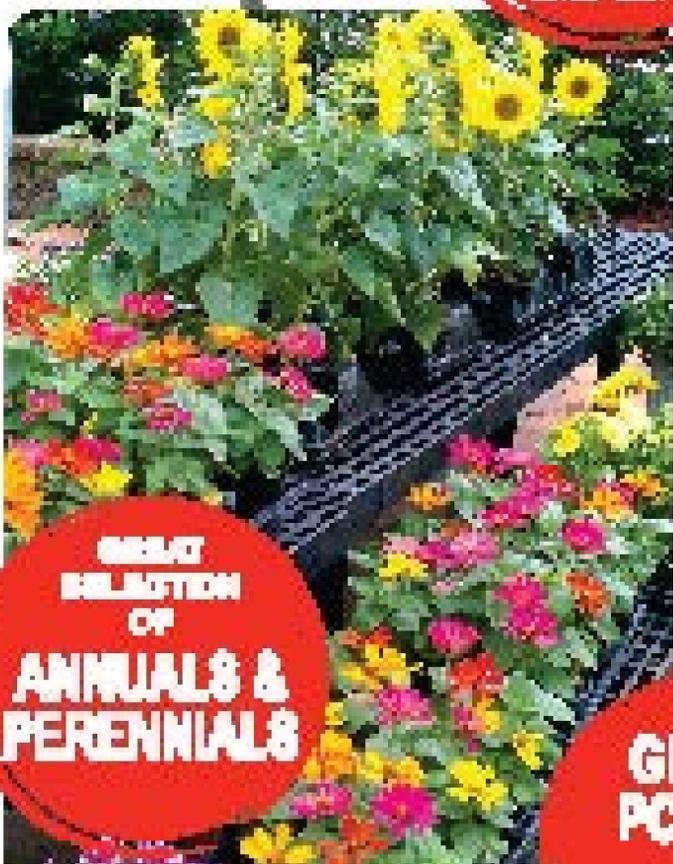


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