

BUSINESS

Small Business Forum

By: Maria Karamelas

Small business is big business. Small business is made up of people offering their own unique traits to the community and beyond. This mix means the small business owner has to work hard to establish themselves and rise above the competition but it is a way of life for people who start up their own business. Whether you have a store or home based office, you want your name to get across to the public, network yourself and rise above the competition.

Several business people gathered at the Atrium of the Palm Restaurant in Port Hope on May 10, in an event to help small or home based businesses showcase

greet. The three hour event was the first of its kind, said Wendy Giroux Manager of the Port Hope and District Chamber of Commerce. She indicated they plan to organize more networking events such as this more often. Sixteen tables were set up, some tables holding displays of up to three companies. The Chamber encourages its members to consult and do business together. Mrs. Giroux indicated the event was meeting ground for anyone to come in and see some of the other services offered in the district.

Several artisans displayed their goods and services, including jewelry, aroma

forum was a helpful way of networking. Having recently moved to the area, he took the opportunity to showcase his home based business which he provides design work for websites, marketing and logos.

Valerie Smith, owner and operator of "Peaceful Arts- For Your Mind Body and Spirit", located on Shooter Street, Port Hope, took advantage of the opportunity and provided a sample of the gems and services she has to offer at her shop. Ms. Smith owns a healing shop that offers gifts and resources to enhance the mind body and spirit.

Dressler House at 212 King Street West, Cobourg was on hand to display his services of support for new businesses in the area as well as business name registration, a resource library as well as other networking opportunities.

"It's great to see businesses get out and promoting themselves," he said, indicating he welcomes any business people to come by Dressler House to find resources available. Community outreach Coordinator of the Port Hope Public Library, other Alexandra Mahabir, brought a display of services the library offers to help encourage small business and home business growth,



Photos (from left to right): Arnold McCurdy of McCurdy Financial Services, Dave Watson- of Northumberland Enterprises, Valerie Smith of Peaceful Arts, Alexandra Mahabir- Community Outreach Coordinator of Port Hope Public Library

the services they offer. The event was focused on those who are located out of the mainstream of the easier to reach downtown businesses in the area. The event, was open to the public was organized by the Port Hope and District Chamber of Commerce and the Heritage Business Improvement Association. Small business owners with no little or no store front, who were interested in promoting themselves to the public purchased booths and provided information about their businesses and services.

The sunshine casting in the glass structure of the Atrium allowed for the perfect atmosphere for the social meet and

therapy, Pottery, and head clown Brenda Smith otherwise known as Wangle the Clown.

Registered Massage, Reiki Master and Certified Hypnotherapist Therapist Marilyn Dunne shared a table with her daughter Lynn McNeil, a hairstylist/colour specialist, who has just relocated her salon to her home on Spencer Street in Cobourg. Other entrepreneurs present, show cased technology solutions by Steven Smiley, graphic designer. Mr. Smiley, Creative Director of Quench Design and Communications, said he has been self employed for ten years. He indicated the

"It's my first experience, I found it helpful because I'm not on the main street so it's a way of letting people know I'm here," Ms Smith said.

Business card swaps, breakfast meetings, and being involved in service groups is a way of getting groups of people together to promote themselves and network for future possibilities.

Mrs. Giroux said she hopes to have more events of like this to allow these businesses to network themselves more easily in the community.

Bob Day, Business Consultant of the Business Advisory Center, located in

including an updated business collection of books, CDs, DVDs, newspapers, and databases with thousands of articles, magazines and journals.

Although difficult at times, having your own business can be rewarding because control of the company is in your hands. The bottom line is yours and the harder you work the better the bottom line will be. The Membership Directory of all registered businesses provided in the area is available at Chamber of Commerce Buildings, located at 58 Queen Street, in Port Hope and at Northumberland Mall's lower level in Cobourg.

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