

The new young faces of Winthrop retailing

Twentysomethings acquire two popular Riverside shops

BY RALPH SCHWARTZ

It's not as if the recent Liberty Bell High School graduates conspired to make it happen. Nevertheless, thanks to Lily Szafas and Rachel Layne, the community of Winthrop shop owners got a lot younger this summer.

Szafas, 22, purchased Rascal's, a women's clothing store, with her mother Jenny Darwood. Layne, 24, acquired The Courtyard Quail, a home and gift shop, with her parents Angela and Eddie

Layne. Both young women took over in July, after working for a time in their respective stores.

Both will inject fresh ideas into their shops without messing too much with the success wrought by their predecessors.

While these two women tell quite different stories about how they came to own a business in Winthrop, they share the same arc: Both left the Methow Valley after high school and are happy to be back.

Well-traveled

Szafas graduated a year early from Liberty Bell, in 2014.

After school, Szafas moved to Hawaii to attend a Youth With A Mission school. During the six-

month program, she spent three months in Kailua-Kona, Hawaii, then three months doing mission work in the Amazon.

Having made her peace with the Methow Valley's rattlesnakes, Szafas got to know a whole other world in the rain-forest. She learned how to catch a tarantula and had to contend with "the seventh most poisonous snake in the world," she said, which happened to take up residence in her backyard.

"It was in our lawn – way too close for comfort," Szafas said.

Later, Szafas worked as a teacher at Pullman Christian Childcare Center while her husband, Logan Szafas, attended Washington State University. She returned to the valley a year ago, providing in-home day care, until the opportunity to purchase Rascal's presented itself.

Raquel Rhinehart, former owner of Rascal's, is a close friend of Szafas' mother.

"I've known her all my life," Szafas said. "She's awesome. Big shoes to fill, for sure."

Rascal's is getting a makeover in the Darwood mold. The hood from a 1962 Ford Falcon serves as a display table, and the trunk of a 1963 Chevrolet Impala is mounted over the cash register. Szafas' father, Dallas Darwood, ran an auto body shop in Twisp for 12 years.

The classic car parts already have helped boost the clothing store's clout with male customers. Szafas plans to offer more items for men and children, so everyone can be happy to shop there.

Rascal's is also getting a new name. The sign for "Diamond Patina" is under Westernization review with the Town of Winthrop.

A lot of changes are coming to the shop, but Szafas intends to keep at least one important feature from Rhinehart's tenure: the customer service. Locals and visitors alike would come into the store just to see Rhinehart.

"She remembers every single one," Szafas said. "I've learned to care for every single person who walks in the door."

"She's passing the torch to me, a little bit."

Rhinehart said she "could not be happier for Lily."

"She is full of life, excited and has so many big changes and ideas ahead for her new store," Rhinehart said.

"Once upon a time, I was Lily and Rachel's ages when I started Rascal's," Rhinehart added, referring also to Layne at The Courtyard Quail.

"I had the best costumers year after year, tourists and locals who along the way have become friends," Rhinehart said. "I wish both Lily and Rachel the best of luck."

Her happy place

Layne moved to the valley 13 years ago with her parents. Eddie Layne had opened a skateboard and T-shirt shop in West Virginia when he was 28. Angela Layne managed the store. After arriving here, they became part-owners of Windy Valley Landscaping.

"Both my parents had a background in retail," Rachel Layne said. "I got a lot of guidance from them." Also, Layne had worked at The Courtyard Quail for four years under longtime manager Sharon Warden before acquiring the store.

Heading the advice of people in the business community, Layne said she will not change the store's name. "It's been an institution," she said.

Layne purchased The Courtyard Quail from Cynthia Fisher, who still owns The French Quail boutique across the street.

Layne studied fiber arts at Western Washington University after graduating from Liberty Bell in 2013. She plans to bring her artistic specialty into the store, in the form of a big floor loom.



Rachel Layne, 24, runs The Courtyard Quail in Winthrop. "The happiest I've been in my life is in the valley," Layne said. "I wanted to go and put down roots here."



Photos by Ralph Schwartz

Lily Szafas, 22, purchased Rascal's in Winthrop with her mother, Jenny Darwood. "I left and came back five years later," Szafas said. "I appreciate it so much more here than I used to."

"There will be a warp on the loom. People can come by and weave as they see fit," Layne said. "It will create more of a connection to the store."

The Courtyard Quail is one of the winter stalwarts in Winthrop. The store is open every day of the year, except for Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day. Layne doesn't plan to change that.

"We rely on local business. You see people you have known forever come in the shop," she said.

Layne said she is interested in working with other business owners to come up with new events that would lengthen the tourist season. "once I get my sea legs here a little more."

Owning The Courtyard Quail fits nicely with Layne's life goals

at this point. "I really wanted to get back to the valley," she said. "The happiest I've been in my life is in the valley. I wanted to go and put down roots here, hopefully have a family here, and benefit from that same wonderful environment that I got to grow up in."

UNDER NEW OWNERSHIP

The Courtyard Quail
"Gifts, Garden, Antiques"
173 Riverside Ave., Winthrop
Open 10-6, 7 days a week
Owner: Rachel Layne

Rascal's
Women's Clothing
229 Riverside Ave., Winthrop
Open 10-6, Mon-Sat
Owner: Lily Szafas

Tate-Libby is new programs director for TwispWorks

Julie Tate-Libby has been hired as director of programs at TwispWorks. She will work with local government, businesses, nonprofit organizations, concerned citizens and economic development authorities to identify opportunities for TwispWorks to provide programming to support and improve the health of the local economy.

Tate-Libby, a longtime Methow Valley resident, teaches anthropology and sociology at

Wenatchee Valley College and has conducted research on rural communities whose economies rely on tourism, including the Methow Valley. After receiving her PhD in tourism from the University of Otago in 2010, she returned to the Methow Valley to raise her family and teach. Tate-Libby has served on the board of Okanogan Family Health Centers, the Merc Playhouse and the North Central Washington Community Foundation.



Julie Tate-Libby

Candidates' forum at Grange on Oct. 2

The Twisp Valley Grange will host a candidates' forum on Oct. 2 for all local offices that are being contested in the November general election.



Doors will open at 5:45 p.m. and the forum will begin at 6:15 p.m., continuing until 8:15 p.m. All candidates will answer written questions collected from the audience.

Ballots for the Nov. 5 general election will be mailed to voters on Oct. 17.

Here's a roundup of candidates who are in contested races:

- Town of Twisp – Mayor, four-year term, incumbent Soo Ing-Moody, Vern Nations; Position No. 3, four-year term, incumbent Alan

Caswell, Leone C. Edson; Position No. 4, four-year short and full term, incumbent Mark Easton, Kevin K. Hickman.

- Methow Valley School District – District 5 at large, four-year term, incumbent Frank Kline, Leverett Hubbard.

- Okanogan County Fire District No. 6 – Commissioner, Position No. 2, six-year term, incumbent Darold Brandenburg, Ken Doran.

For more information, call (206) 999-1898.

PUBLISHER'S NOTICE: All real estate advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Fair Housing Act which makes it illegal to advertise "any preference, limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status or national origin, or an intention, to make any such preference, limitation or discrimination." Familial status includes children under the age of 18 living with parents or legal custodians, pregnant women and people securing custody of children under 18.

This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate which is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain of discrimination call HUD toll-free at 1-800-669-9777. The toll-free telephone number for the hearing impaired is 1-800-927-9275.

With over 30 years of earned trust for all your real estate needs

pipestonecanyonrealestate.com

George Hoksbergen
Owner/Broker

Pipestone Canyon Real Estate, LLC
448 Bally Hill Rd
Twisp, WA 98856
509-341-9394

The sweet smell of success.
Advertising works.

509.997.7011
advertising@methowvalleynews.com

Mazama Riverfront Land
\$245,000

Ina Clark & Brian Colin, Owners
Ski Zbyszewski, Carol K. Johnson, Susie Gardner, Bob Winchell, Gary Storrs, Micki Thomas, Didi Burrington
Next to the Rocking Horse Bakery

509-996-3700
WWW.MOUNTAIN2RIVER.COM

blue sky real estate

10.5 acres with Methow River frontage!
\$297,000

A refreshing approach to real estate services

www.MethowBlueSky.com
(509) 996-8084

Blue Sky REAL ESTATE

Northwest

Anne Eckmann & Heather Marrone, Owners
Callie Fink, Kathy Goldberg, Valerie Kardonsky, Leverett Hubbard, Michael Notaro, Sherry Malotte

CB Winthrop Realty

REDUCED PRICE!

ARTISAN HOME w/CHEWUCH RIVER VIEWS!

2 BR 1 BA
All Furnishings Incl!
\$390,000
509-996-2121

COLDWELL BANKER
WINTHROP REALTY