

MIRADOR VIEW

Hours:
Mon-Sat
10:00 - 6:00
Sun
11:00 - 5:00
**Holiday Hours on
Back of Newsletter**

Issue 14 – Winter 2003 Edition

A mirador is “A turret, window or balcony that commands an extensive view”

ViewPoint

ViewPoint is a regular column in which we discuss Mirador’s relationship to our lives, to our community’s life and to the life of the wider community of the city, state, nation and world in which we live.

How to Save Portland’s Economy - Shop Locally!

Regular readers of this newsletter know that we are strong believers that shopping locally is good for the local economy. Two recent studies back this feeling up with some facts.

As study conducted in Austin, Texas, found that \$100 spent at a local business would generate \$45 of local economic activity, whereas \$100 spent at a chain business would generate only \$13 of local economic activity! (For details of the study see www.newrules.org/hta/hta0203.htm.)

Another study conducted in Maine determined that 44.6 percent of the revenue generated by local business was spent locally (and another 8.7 percent within the rest of the state of Maine) whereas only 14.1 percent of the revenues of major big box retailers was spent locally. (For details of this study, see <http://www.newrules.org/hta/hta0903.htm>.)

What this means is that the more money is spent at local-owned businesses, the more money is available locally to be spent – a positive feedback loop; whereas the more money is spent at non-local businesses, the less money there is available to be spent locally – a negative feedback loop.

The reasons for the positive feedback loop are 1) local businesses generally pay higher wages, so their employees have more to spend; 2) they use other local businesses for their services (such as accounting or construction) whereas non-local businesses tend to use other non-local firms; and 3) the profits of the local businesses go to the local owners who then spend a large part of that at local businesses whereas the profits of non-local businesses leave the area and are often invested rather than spent, since the “owners” of these businesses are corporations.

Whenever we read of the city fathers and mother talking about wooing major non-local businesses to come to Portland (usually with the help of our tax dollars), we think of these studies and wonder why they don’t do more to help locally-owned businesses start and to stay healthy. These studies show that our (famously) depressed economy would recover and become much stronger with the availability of more local businesses – instead, our policies favor options that actually make our economy worse. Which may be a large part of the reason that our city (and many others around the country) are in such financial trouble.

So, if you want to save Portland’s economy – shop locally!

Peace on Earth, Goodwill to All

No, you didn’t drop off our mailing list. We were just so busy this year that we did not get to any of our newsletters. Besides trying to manage a business, we found ourselves involved in many other activities, such as:

- In the spring, we helped to plan and coordinate a project to build cob benches in our parking lot as part of the Village Building Convergence (see www.cityrepair.org/vbc).
- In the late spring, we were part of a group of neighborhood and business people and state and local employees who sat down together to work on getting a grant to improve Division Street that would include not only re-paving, but some ways to do some green projects (such as permeable pavement) and to support local businesses.
- In July, the City of Portland cited us for a sign code violation because of the mural on our garage doors. Thus began a saga with newspaper, TV and radio interviews; talks with the city; and LOTS of conversations with customers about murals.

In addition to these extracurricular activities, we have been busy ordering a lot of new products. Below are some highlights of some products that would make good holiday gifts.

You Breathe What You Burn

A quiet revolution is taking place in candle manufacturing and it is to the advantage of the consumer. Candle makers are incorporating other waxes into their work instead of paraffin so you can just as easily pick up a candle made from soy, palm, or vegetable wax and of course, beeswax. Paraffin candles have been around since 1830 and were an improvement over some of the earlier candle materials (think fish and insects.) Paraffin is a petroleum-based product so there are drawbacks: it is not a renewable resource, it releases a lot of soot into the air and it burns hot and fast.

We are moving our candle offerings more and more in the direction of the alternatives so that you’ll find many options here; always either unscented or scented using pure essential oils. When you shop for candles, a little label reading for the projected burn time would be a smart consumer habit to practice. Given a soy and a paraffin candle the same size, the soy candle should last a lot longer and will probably be the best buy.

Keep the wicks trimmed, and burn for a couple of hours for best results.

Spirit of the Senses

Continuing on from candles, we have other possibilities for enhancing a living space. We are stocked with ideas for giving the gift of scent with a large selection of incense. From Japanese, Chinese, Tibetan, Indian and Native American and many different

burners, there is something here for someone new to incense as well as the person who loves to add to their already broad collection.

Another scent experience can be delivered via an aromatherapy burner and a choice of an organic essential oil. Some of our favorites are the soapstone burners from India with their intricate carvings. We also have a new electric burner called an Aromashell that does not use water or pads.

In the Kitchen

As usual, we have a large collection of kitchen gadgets and cookware at reasonable prices. We have increased the selection this year (where do we find the room for all this?). These would make good gifts for those who like to cook. Here are some highlights:

- Ceramic cook- and bakeware from Italy. This ceramic ware can be used on the stove, microwave or oven and it comes in a beautiful antiqued terra cotta finish.
- Two lines of Italian cookware from Bialetti (who makes the espresso makers we carry). This cookware is made from anodized aluminum (so it will not leach), has a Teflon Platinum finish (which is okay to use metal utensils on) and comes with glass lids.
- Electric hot water kettles from Bodum (famous for their French presses) in two sizes. The small size is perfect for traveling – make tea or coffee in your hotel room! Also, a stainless steel kettle from Breville, an Australian manufacturer of kitchen appliances.
- Electric coffee burr mills and grinders. The burr mills are like the ones you use at the grocery store to grind your own beans and give a more even grind than the normal grinders.
- A stainless steel blender with a glass container from Breville
- The famous Vita-Mix powerful, high-speed blender.
- Salad bowls and server sets made from beautiful tropical Acacia and Kamani woods.

Food Preserving & Juicing

We carry a full line of food preserving items including food dryers, canning equipment and jars, crocks (including the Harsch crock from Germany, specifically designed for making sauerkraut) and pressure canners. For juicing we carry the new Omega 8002 (an improved 2-stage design), the standard Champion and now the Greenstar. The Greenstar is a deluxe juicer with twin metal gears that juices fibrous herbs, grasses (such as wheatgrass) and greens as well as fruit and

see *Holidays* on page 2

Holidays, from page 1
other vegetables.

Recycled Materials

It is inspiring to watch artists find new ways to use reclaimed materials. We get a fair number of them through our door and we have much in this way to offer for holiday shopping. As always, we have the industrial inner tube/hemp bag line from Think Again by Portlander John Slate and the recycled CD & LP clocks by Ben Mann. New in this arena are some great recycled glass work such as goblets and drinking glasses by GreenGlass. These are frosted, etched and beautiful. From Bedrock in Seattle, we have beer bottle drinking glasses, candle plates, sun catchers and some holiday pieces. There is a wide array of journals from recycled paper (as well as hemp & kenaf), aprons and oven mitts from reclaimed fabrics, picture frames from scrap molding and colorful wall pockets from tin barns and pails. Sprinkled throughout the store there are other products from sustainable materials such as organic cotton towels, hemp oven mitts beautiful baskets.

Body/Mind Connection

If only we could get some in a box to go! More realistic would be something from our Yoga/Pilates/BalanceBall section that might help someone get a practice going at home. And how about a more peaceful way to wake up? We now have something known as the Zen Alarm Clock that will not only gently chime you awake but allow you to set it for ending meetings or meditations with a chime. There are quite a few bodywork tools that can be used either on oneself or another as well as an assortment of hull filled pillows for pain relief that can be used warm or cold.

Kids, Cats and Dogs

We didn't forget about those that are smaller than us. We have items that would be ideal for infants as well as children up to pre-teen. We focused on some sets for cooking and baking, trying to encourage that idea of being in the kitchen. We have some adorable bears from felted wool by Cheryl Newhouse, handmade bibs, recycled crayons, drawing pads, and much more. For our furry friends you'll find Sweet Potato Chews, very popular with the canine crowd, catnip toys for the fe-

lines and sets for both that help you make treats at home.

Alternative Energy Products

- We are really excited to finally have solar and handcranked radios for sale. These radios contain rechargeable batteries that can be charged with the built-in solar panel or the built-in crank. Besides AM/FM, two of the models have short-wave bands so you can tune in to radio broadcasts from around the world!
- The Freeplay Plus (AM/FM/SW) has a carrying handle and a built-in LED flashlight. The Freeplay Summit (AM/FM/SW) is a compact version with electronic controls. The Dynamo is a hand-held version that also has a flashlight. Take these radios to the beach or camping and never worry about the batteries running low! There is also a solar-powered AM/FM headset – wear it on your walks or runs and the sun will keep the battery charged!
- We are now carrying a battery charger and a new line of rechargeable Nickel Metal Hydride and Nickel Cadmium (NiCad) batteries. The charger is designed to know how best to recharge your batteries.. This is especially important with NiCad batteries as they require proper initialization, discharge and recharge strategies.
- ForeverBright LED light strings are the ecological way to light up your house. These lights will last up to 200,000 hours and use 80 - 90% less electricity than the twinkle lights we are used to and can be used indoors or out.
- The Forever Flashlight is a great stocking stuffer. This handcranked flashlight was used by the Russian army! We've had one since before we opened Mirador and use it a lot in the summer to go up and down our porch stairs at night.
- The Vortex hand-cranked blender is just the thing for home or for camping / boating. It has two speeds and is powerful enough to crush ice – perfect for making those frozen margaritas!

Handcrafted Specials

Scheumack Brooms of Eugene hand-

crafts brooms with 100% natural fiber broomcorn and handles and dustpans made from sassafras and bass. The wood is locally & sustainably harvested; each piece is made using traditional broom-making and wood-carving tools and techniques.

We were sorry to lose our Endura cutting boards when Endura decided to discontinue them. But, luckily, Jeff Bengstom has taken up the slack, making beautiful boards out of wood that he buys from Endura (so you know that it is sustainably produced). There are two types – madrone and mixed hardwoods – and two sizes. These are great boards to prepare food on.

Carol Davis is a polymer clay artist who had the inspiration to put her work onto kitchen utensils. So we now have salad sets, spatulas, serving spoons and more with intricate polymer clay designs on the handle.

Roasting Chestnuts Over an Open Fire

We have chestnut roasting pans! Buy some chestnuts at People's Food Co-op (for one), light a fire and roast away!

The Trimmings

We as a society have a tradition of wrapping gifts that is a big part of the fun but at the same time generates a lot of disposables. We have two more sustainable options: attractive fabric gift bags that are sure to get reused, (in fact they have a serial number that allows the receiver to follow it along online) and wrapping paper from Germany and India from recycled fibers.

You'll find individual holiday cards as well as boxed sets and again, we have focused on lines that are from alternative papers and/or recycled. All of these products are colorful, add to the festivities but lessen the impact. We also have a wide variety of desk and wall calendars, many of them printed on recycled paper.

To Our Readers

If you do not wish to receive this newsletter, please let us know. You can also subscribe to our online mailing list and get occasional updates from Mirador as well as the electronic form of the newsletter; email us or visit our website for instructions.

We do not sell or share our mailing list with any other company or organization.

MIRADOR COMMUNITY STORE

AT SEVEN CORNERS
2106 SE DIVISION STREET
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Return Service Requested

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Holiday Hours:

December 1 – December 23
Monday – Friday 10:00 - 7:00
Saturday 10:00 - 6:00
Sunday 11:00 - 5:00

Closing December 24 at 4:00
Closed Christmas Day and New Year's Day