

Where Carmel Business Comes First

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*‘Experience,
experience,
experience’*

After 40 years in the entertainment industry,
Deb Roccaforte is making big waves in
business-event planning and production / P2

Photo by Zach Ross

'Experience, experience, experience'

After 40 years in the entertainment industry, Deb Roccaforte is making big waves in business-event planning and production

By Christian Sorrell
Carmel Business Leader

During the past 40 years, Carmel resident and Indianapolis native Deb Roccaforte, 63, has been building leads of valuable experience that have culminated in her current Indianapolis-based business, Forté, a corporate event planning, production and management company.

Forté plans large-scale events around the world for business clients of all kinds. It has planned events for clients from Singapore, Amsterdam, Youngstown, Ohio, and everywhere in between. As the company began to gain a strong reputation, it began to take on more of the event planning and production process.

"(At Forté,) we do anything our clients want, from finding properties to designing staging and thematics. I've even written speeches for CEOs," Roccaforte said.

But what could give Forté a strong enough reputation and Roccaforte the skills necessary to plan large scale events as well as work with companies on shaping business concepts and even creating speeches? The answer lies in an entertainment career spanning the past 40 years and stretching from Indianapolis to New York to Philadelphia to Los Angeles, and now, to Carmel.

Local beginnings

Roccaforte first entered production and planning as an intern for Indianapolis' Channel 6 in 1968. As an intern, she was tasked with pushing out advertisements, manning the teleprompter and anything else that was needed of her.

A little more than a year later, Roccaforte made her way to Channel 8 where she wrote documentaries, first working on "The Roadbuilders," a piece on the construction of I-465.

"Early on, I had some good mentors that always said, 'Experience, experience, experience,'" Roccaforte said.

She has been following that advice closely ever since, having gained experience coordinating telethons, directing a dance company and producing television in three different markets across the nation, including a two-year stint at "The Tonight Show" with Johnny Carson in 1970-71.



Michael and Deb Roccaforte have been working together since 1992 and married in 1995. Forté is their main work. (Photo by Zach Ross)

From Indianapolis to New York

Initially brought to New York City by her modeling career, Roccaforte landed on "The Tonight Show" as an assistant talent coordinator, another piece of experience that would come to aid her well throughout life.

"It was our responsibility to make the guests feel comfortable and let them know that we had their back. They are the ones sitting live on a couch with Johnny Carson, who could make you or break you in a heartbeat," Roccaforte said. "It was just what God had planned for me, I think."

In 1971, Roccaforte left "The Tonight Show" for "The Mike Douglas Show" where she was quickly promoted to head talent coordinator. She was responsible for planning, booking and clearing all the guests on the show during her time in Philadelphia.

Roccaforte's prize booking was a weeklong co-hosting of the show by John Lennon and Yoko Ono. Ono had an album and a book to promote, but Roccaforte negotiated a meeting with Lennon as a part of the booking. In the end, both were brought on board to co-host in what was one of the show's most colorful weeks.

Lennon and Ono were allowed to select guests to be on the show during their week. Their selections included Bobby Seale, co-founder of the Black Panther Party, several individuals wanted by the FBI at the time and Jerry Rubin, one of the Chicago Seven.

"I couldn't get clearance from Westinghouse to book the people (Lennon) and Yoko wanted because we would have been busted," said Roccaforte, laughing.

Lessons learned

Throughout her career, Roccaforte has learned several key elements to successfully producing an event and working with her clients.

"I have always treated clients this way, and I treat them like this now: I always let them know 'I've got your back, your best foot will always be forward, and we will tell you when it's not,'" she said.

Having a client's back is not always the same as telling him or her anything and everything one wants to hear. Sometimes, according to Roccaforte, doing your job well is about knowing when to be truthful with your client.

"I'm certainly not a yes man. (In the past), I would see it with a lot of managers. It's 'yes, yes! You're the man', and that's not really doing them any favors," Roccaforte said. "If you are telling (the client) yes all the time, then I don't think you really care about them, the product or your audience."

As the director of Dance Kaleidoscope, Roccaforte was forced to take a tough and honest look at the state of running a dance company in the modern theatre environment.

"One thing I've had to learn is to not have tunnel vision about what I'm doing, to be able to see it in the broader picture and how it fits into that broader picture," Roccaforte said. "We couldn't have tunnel vision with (Dance Kaleidoscope) because you can't manage to it, you can't spend to it and you can't plan a budget around it. You have to look at it honestly."

The work continues

The future seems bright for both Roccaforte and Forté as she shows no sign of stopping anytime soon. Roccaforte, along with her husband, Michael, is continuing to produce and plan events throughout the state, the nation and the world at large.

"The best part about my life is that no two weeks are ever the same," Roccaforte said. "Sometimes they are really hard weeks, but I wouldn't trade it for anything."

For more information on Forté, visit www.resultsinhand.com.

MEET DEB ROCCAFORTE

Hometown: Indianapolis

Residence: Carmel

Age: 63

Family: Husband, Michael Roccaforte; three adult children living in Indianapolis; seven grandchildren with an eighth on the way

Education: Indiana University, journalism; Butler University, radio and television

Career History: Assistant talent coordinator, "The Tonight Show" with Johnny Carson; head talent coordinator, "The Mike Douglas Show;" director, Dance Kaleidoscope; owner, Forté LLC

Hobbies: Gemology, gourmet cooking, Notre Dame football, wearable art

DEB ROCCAFORTE'S 5 TIPS FOR SUCCESS

1. Use your experience, but view each business opportunity with fresh ideas and an open mind. Avoid having a cookie-cutter mentality.
2. Always help your client be the best he or she can possibly be.
3. Be an active listener, realize there is always something to learn and value your client's time
4. Be vigilant in keeping the needs and goals of your audience in the forefront of your planning and execution
5. "The buck stops with us."

"I have always treated clients this way, and I treat them like this now: I always let them know 'I've got your back, your best foot will always be forward, and we will tell you when it's not.'"

-Deb Roccaforte

If I just had _____, everything would be fine

"All I need is more sales." This is the first cry of pain from the struggling business owner. After some thought is given, it is often followed up with, "If I just had more leads," or "If my website just had more traffic." This kind of pain-per-action thinking haunts us marketers the same way pill poppers haunt their well-meaning doctors.



Chris Hoyt

"If I wasn't sick, I'd be healthy. Give me a pill."

Well, maybe you're sick because your diet sucks. Maybe you're sick because you don't exercise. Maybe you're sick because you have a fetish for eating gum off the underside of tables. Whatever the cause, doctor's offices are full of people who "just want" something to stop the pain but don't want to actually get healthy. My office regularly sees business owners who just want me to "get sales."

There are a myriad of reasons businesses see their sales drop. The economy tanks, competition arises and

demand falls. Much like health, there are many excuses for things going bad which you have no control over. However, also like good health, there is a lot you can control that helps you stabilize your business despite circumstances.

Maybe your business slows because you have no ownership of your customer base. Is the limit of the relationship with your customer the transaction? Do you ever communicate with them outside of the moment of purchase? When they are not buying from you, is the only reminder of you they have a coupon in the last mailer? If you don't have a system for keeping in touch with customers, then your customer base is nothing more than who buys from you today.

Maybe your business slows because your products or services are out of date. I can't tell you how many times I have heard, "My business has worked for the last _____ years. I just want it to work again." Change may be hard, but it is the name of the game (hint: Capitalism). All the marketing and advertising in the world isn't going to help you if others are being more innovative and more responsive to your market.

Maybe your business slows because your reputation is bad. Great customer service is the most effective marketing strategy anyone can have. It will make or break your reputation. If your company does not have outstanding customer service it will grow a negative reputation. Even an "OK" level of customer service will foster more bad testimonials than good. Customer service has to be above and beyond what people expect.

Those are just three examples of root problems you may have in your business which will harm your sales. You won't be able to fix them by "just having more _____." After all, if I just had more money, I wouldn't be poor. If I just had more customers, I would have more sales. If I just wasn't sick, I'd be healthy. Maybe it's time to look under the pain, and start thinking about the real hard changes. In business and in health, the best things you can do for yourself are completely in your control, they are just hard and take a lot of work.

Great customer service is the most effective marketing strategy anyone can have. It will make or break your reputation. If your company does not have outstanding customer service it will grow a negative reputation.



Bringing business to Midtown

Last month, the city of Carmel announced that it had hired an a company to begin a feasibility study looking into the idea of a potential convention center in Carmel's Midtown neighborhood. The convention center would sit in the heart of the Midtown redevelopment near City Center Drive and 3rd Avenue SW and could be approximately 50,000 to 60,000 square feet.

Midtown has been an area slated for development for some time with Carmel already putting together a redevelopment plan last year, although it remains to be seen when the redevelopment actually may begin.

When this story came out last month, the biggest outcry I saw from Carmel Business Leader readers was a legitimate one. Will a convention center, specifically a city-endorsed one, encroach on the businesses currently in Carmel, places like Ritz Charles, the Fountains and the Mansion at Oak Hill? At the same time, there were those, perhaps more quietly than the others, wondering what kind of new business a larger convention center could bring to Carmel. Would we begin to see larger events normally reserved for Indianapolis? If so, what kind of business would that bring to hotels, restaurants and other businesses throughout the city?

According to Mayor Jim Brainard, all of these questions are things that the city's study will examine, but he is more interested in whether the center will bring a net gain to Carmel in terms of

business. After all, Brainard's priority on attracting business to Carmel is one of the reasons residents haven't seen their property taxes increase in 17 years.

The suburban convention center is not a new idea, nor is it a necessarily flawed one. Some centers, including some that are much larger than the one Carmel currently has in mind, have proven themselves to be quite successful while others have proven to be anything but. In some ways, the convention center idea is similar to that of the Center for the Performing Arts and the Palladium, an experiment that some are still questioning the success of today.

These types of large-scale investments (although the potential center could be entirely privately funded) seem to come down to the details. What is the specific geographic make-up of the region? What are the specific demographics? Is available lodging close enough to the center itself? Can convention goers easily get from the airport or other areas of the state to Carmel? All of these questions and more remain to be answered. Let's hope that the city's

study will provide valuable and accurate information that answers these questions. Most of all, let's hope business continues to grow throughout Carmel and Hamilton County at large.



Christian Sorrell

Christian Sorrell is the managing editor of the Carmel Business Leader. You may e-mail him at christian@youarecurrent.com

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Times-Leader Publications, LLC,
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30 S. Rangeline Rd., Carmel, 46032

Phone: 317.489.4444

Fax: 317.489.4446

E-mail: info@businessleader.bz

Founder and Publisher Richard K. "Rick" Myers

President Brian Kelly

Managing Editor

Christian Sorrell - christian@youarecurrent.com

Advertising Sales Executive

Dennis O'Malia - dennis@currentincarmel.com, 317.370.0749

Design/Production Zachary Ross

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Cutting back on dinner out won't fix this

Well, all of the excitement of the second Obama inauguration is finished, and it is back to "normal." So, what does this mean to the small Carmel business person? Well, it means four more years of the federal government printing money and devaluating the Carmel resident's pocket book. In fact, I read an article the other day which indicated that from his first inauguration address until now, your dollar bill has devalued 20 percent as it relates to world currency.

Despite the TARP and other acronyms of last term, your local bank possibly does not want to finance your new business. They probably do not want to refinance your beautiful building to get some much needed "cash out" to better operate your business either. Your raw materials purchased on the international market are all much more expensive due to the weak dollar, and the domestic market is not aggressive enough to pay a higher price for your higher cost of goods. You tell your partners you do not know how long you can operate with these small margins, but for the next few years, there is probably more of the same.

You may be selling or manufacturing goods almost at the level you did before the stock market "crash" but with a much smaller staff. No, you are not going to hire more staff, even if it may have an opportunity cost! You are a leaner and meaner company now, and this is where you are going to stay.

You attended an all-day Obama Care seminar, and it raised more questions than it answered. They showed

you that there were new costs hidden under every crack and crevice, and many of them have nothing to do with healthcare. They were put in the "act" as a "gig" to get you financially because they can. The insurance carrier

that you have, that he told you you can keep, the specialist at the seminar tells you you actually can't. The only real "defense ball" that you can play now is to do a hiring freeze. The new reporting obligations, you found out, were unbelievable, and most of the reporting has nothing to do with healthcare, just collecting more revenue from your business. What were the famous remarks? "If you want to find out what is in it, you need to pass it." Guess what, now you are finding out.

Moving on, the President finally got his tax increase. This was to be the masterpiece legislative bill that he touted for two elections. Remember, those individuals with more \$200,000 (\$250,000 for married couples) in annual income

will have a tax increase because a group of nonpaying "tax payers" defined this as fair. Pass this, the jobs will flow like honey, the economy will rev up like an Indy car in May and the banks will be as though they were a loose woman on the prowl. Yes, much of this tax will fall on the very people that we want to shower those jobs on to the rest of us, but, no matter said Obama. Somehow, if I tax them, they will miraculously want to hire more people! Well, the Republicans decimated this bill according to the Democrats. Instead of the break point being at \$225,000, it was made at \$500,000.

Now, let's look at the reality of this "landmark" piece

of legislation. Because our multi-trillion dollar debt is so out of hand, the \$225,000 earner break point was equal to 7 percent of the national debt, since it was trimmed to \$500,000 and above earners, now it is only a savings of 4 percent of the total debt. So, this is landmark legislation is it? No matter if the savings is 7 percent or 4 percent, either one is a joke. The Greeks can do better than this! This is the key of what the small Carmel businessman has eagerly anticipated, this pitance that would keep the government going for, like 20 minutes, or a month or something like that? Here is where seasoned journalists go into the "it's like" mode. It's like a family with all of its credit cards maxed out at \$25,000, and they have not paid the mortgage on the house in six months and they spend darn near two times of what they make. Then Dad comes with an austere movement to balance the home budget; we are going to eliminate our once a week outing to Fridays Restaurant for a family dinner. Yes, we will continue to spend twice what we make, but let's try this Fridays thing first. We can buy frozen "loaded potatoes" at the store and pretend that we are at Fridays dining out on its loaded potatoes. Then, after a couple of months, we will see if we need to make any more changes.

Now, as a writer, I am just a businessman that works cheap at writing, I mean real cheap! No, I am not a consultant. I just click through the talk networks at night, from Fox to MSNBC driving my wife nuts, but sports fans: this is how I call the game for the next four years. So, now I am an "economical" specialist.

I hope I am wrong! How do you see it?

Howard Hubler is a partner with Hubler Express Collision/NAPA, and the owners of St. Augustine Toyota. He can be reached at hhubler@statoyota.com.

16 DVS ATTORNEYS HONORED AS SUPER LAWYERS AND RISING STARS

— Last month, Carmel-based Drewry Simmons Vornehm, LLP, announced that 16 of its attorneys were recently honored by being selected as "Super Lawyers" or "Rising Stars" in the 2013 "Indiana Super Lawyers" magazine. The 2013 DSV Indiana Super Lawyers are: Michael Drewry, David Simmons, David Vornehm, Thomas Grau, David Temple, Joe Leone and David Mallon. In addition to being named 2013 Indiana Super Lawyer, Michael Drewry was also named in the Top 10 Indiana Super Lawyers, based on the highest point totals in the Indiana nomination, research and blue ribbon review process. David Temple was also named in the Top 50 Indiana Super Lawyers. The 2013 DSV Indiana Rising Stars are: Sean Devenney, Patrick Drewry, Matthew Schafer, William Kelley, Daniel Drewry, Rebecca Geyer, Andy Mallon, Chris Drewry and Andrew Briscoe.

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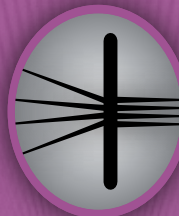
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Now Open



Owner Shelly Petrowski showing a local customer what is new in the store. (Photo by Maddie Scott)

Green Apple takes bite out of boutique market

By Maddie Scott
Carmel Business Leader

Green Apple Active Lifestyle Boutique opened last November and is striving to be the community's premier "sporty boutique," hoping to be unlike any other boutique in the Midwest. Green Apple not only sells apparel, but provides informative classes.

Having no partner or employees, the store's owner, operator and buyer, Shelly Petrowski, has had to find a balance between home and family life, but with the help of her family and friends, she has been able to build her store from the ground up along with meeting all her monthly goals.

Petrowski hopes to make Green Apple the gathering spot for those who are on a journey to evolve in body, mind and spirit.

"I'm all about living comfortably, happy and healthy," Petrowski said.

Green Apple Active Lifestyle Boutique features a selection of the top names in active lifestyle clothing and loungewear, transitional pieces, jackets, boots and bags. It also carries clothing made in the U.S. along with organic apparel. Petrowski tries to stray away from selling things available in a department store and

instead is bringing clothing in from the West coast.

"I love being able to share my passion for fashion with others," Petrowski said.

Petrowski is trying to get the community involved whenever possible. In the back of the boutique, Petrowski has set up a studio where she hosts a series of related classes and events every month that are free to the public.

"The classes are both fun and informative," Petrowski said.

Last month, she brought in yoga instructors from local yoga studios to teach a class every Saturday.

Along with classes on the weekends, Petrowski also has started a book club and created a membership called Green Apple Active Ladies. Members receive a free pedometer and take part in a pedometer challenge created by Petrowski. After walking 300,000 steps, members earn a 30-percent discount on an item at Green Apple that month.

This summer, Petrowski hopes to get a group together to meet at the boutique and walk once or twice a week as a community. Petrowski has dreams of one day opening Green Apple cafes and spas, but for now is perfectly content with her boutique for the active and stylish on-the-go woman.

What: Green Apple Active Lifestyle Boutique
Where: 4335 W. 106th St., Suite 1200
More info: Call 802-9920 or visit www.greenappleboutique.com



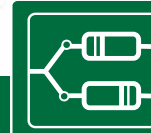
The 106th Street location is now the fourth Stacked Pickle in central Indiana. (Photo by Julie Osborne)

STACKED PICKLE OPENS SECOND CARMEL LOCATION – Stacked Pickle opened its second location in Carmel last month at 4335 W. 106th St. Originating in Carmel with its first location on Old Meridian Street, Stacked Pickle has expanded across central Indiana, adding locations in Fishers and downtown Indianapolis. The restaurant is a neighborhood restaurant and bar focusing on wings, burgers, tenderloins and fish tacos. Live music is featured several times a month. For more information, including a list of upcoming events, visit www.stackedpickle.com.

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Meet Our Team (from left)

Kirk Reis
VP, Commercial Officer
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Brad Grabow
VP, Commercial Officer
317-706-9063

Rachel Villavicencio
AVP, Business Officer
317-706-9060

Clint Pletcher
Commercial Regional Manager
317-706-9061

Tim Schlichte
VP, Commercial Officer
317-706-9062

Ryan Hart
Assistant Vice President
317-706-9065

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One person makes a huge difference

Among other things, I always emphasize the importance of corporate culture, as well as the power of one during my Customer Service Training programs or Keynote speeches. Here's an illustration of these two concepts from my former grocery career.



Danny O'Malia

Joe O'Malia always emphasized the concept of "giving back to the community". One of the ways this was accomplished back then was through our United Way Campaign, which garnered many awards from United Way. Not only did the company donate, we asked our employees to participate as well—and they responded—in spades.

The campaign also embodies another important concept—teamwork. The company and the employees working together to help the community!

Last week, while visiting my friend Larry Schultz, manage of the Lockerbie O'Malia/ Marsh store. He was very excited to tell me that store finished # 1 in the entire Marsh change for the 10th straight year in total dollars raised through its United Way campaign (\$7661). No surprise there. The Lockerbie crew has always been generous during the campaign.

But what made Larry even prouder was the success his longtime former Service Manager, Pam Breedlove, brought to her new store at 62nd& Keystone since her transfer there.

Last year, that store finished # 88 in total dollars—not very impressive for such a large store (\$408). But, with Pam in charge of the program since being sent there 6 months ago, the Keystone store pledged \$4120 for 2013, approximately a 1000 % increase over last year and good for 4th place in the entire chain!

Even though I haven't been involved with this company for 6 ½ years, I'm still proud of the former O'Malia people especially Larry Schultz and Pam Breedlove. Way to go, guys!

The culture of your company makes a difference. So can each individual employee. Never forget that!

Danny O'Malia is Indy's Trusted Servant. You may reach him at editorial@youarecurrent.com



Dr. Barbara Kolm led the salon-style conversation on the EU, centralized banking and other free-market topics. (Photos by Karl Ahlrichs)

Austrian economist speaks in Carmel

Last month, Austrian economist Dr. Barbara Kolm, director of Vienna's Austrian Economics Center, spoke to several of Carmel's business and civic leaders. The Austrian Economic Center works to continue and advance the work of Nobel Lauriat F. A. Hayek and others representing the free market economic thinking known as the Austrian School. Kolm has worked throughout Europe as part of the Free Market Road Show 2012, an event that examined austerity programs throughout the region. Kolm led a "salon-style" conversation about the European Union, centralized banking and other economic and free market topics. The event was held at the Anker home in Carmel.



From left, Congressman Todd Rokita, Chris Litzinger, Corby Thompson, Don Woodley



From left, Terry Anker, Dr. Barbara Kolm, Matt Frey



From left, Carolyn Anker, Julie Thompson, Lou Daugherty

Carmel Rotary Business Calendar

- **March 1**, noon to 1:30 p.m., Mansion at Oak Hill, 5801 E. 116th St., Carmel. Program: Dr. Edy Stoughton, head of School of Midwest Academy. Cost for lunch is \$12.00. Contact: Wendy Phillips, 501-4955.
- **March 8**, noon to 1:30 p.m., Mansion at Oak Hill, 5801 E. 116th St., Carmel. Program: Thaddeus Rex, on Sell It Like a Rock Star. Cost for lunch is \$12.00. Contact: Wendy Phillips, 501-4955.
- **March 15**, noon to 1:30 p.m., Mansion at Oak Hill, 5801 E. 116th St., Carmel. Program: Chris Lewis from Michael Feinstein Great American Songbook Initiative. Cost for lunch is \$12.00. Contact: Wendy Phillips, 501-4955.
- **March 22**, noon to 1:30 p.m., Mansion at Oak Hill, 5801 E. 116th St., Carmel. Program: Mark Baltz, National Football League official (head linesman), on Life as a Zebra. Cost for lunch is \$12.00. Contact: Wendy Phillips, 501-4955.

KEMP AND FARRER RECOGNIZED WITH WOMEN IN MANUFACTURING STEP AWARD – Tracy Kemp, Information Technology director, and Cindy Farrer, vice president of



Kemp



Farrer

operations for Carmel's Ingersoll Rand Security Technologies, were recognized by The Manufacturing Institute, Deloitte, University of Phoenix and the Society of Manufacturing Engineers with a Women in Manufacturing STEP (Science, Technology, Engineering and Production) Award for their excellence and leadership in manufacturing last month. Kemp and Farrer join 121 other woman honorees, representing all levels of manufacturing.

PUBLIC SPEAKING LESSONS FROM DANIEL DAY-LEWIS'S OSCAR SPEECH

– Very few people will ever deliver a speech to quite as large a crowd as Daniel Day-Lewis did last month when he accepted the Oscar for Best Actor, but business leaders could stand to take a few notes from the veteran actor, says Bill Connor, principal at Washington, D.C.-based Oratorio Media and Presentation Training. Here's what Connor says are three takeaways from the Best Actor's acceptance for anyone looking to make an effective speech: 1. Prepare, Prepare, Prepare, 2. Employ the Rule of Threes and 3. Start and End Strongly. - www.foxbusiness.com

Josh Kuklak feels the burn at Survival Fitness

By Lana Bandy
Carmel Business Leader

How did you get started at Survival Fitness? My background is in athletics. I ended up going into powerlifting, and I set some state records for the dead lift and bench press. I was a strength coach for awhile and would help athletes with their conditioning. In 2003, I decided I'd do what I enjoy, training, as a full-time thing.

How long has Survival Fitness been around? It originally started as a kids' fitness place in 2006. It was a franchise and the franchise flopped. But I had adults saying, "You do all this for the kids – when will you do something for us adults?" So I started doing boot camp seven years ago, before everyone else did.

What is Survival Fitness? It is a gym for people who want serious results. We do group and personal training. The boot camp classes are the most popular. They draw from 15 to 40 people, and we have several throughout the week. We also have group strength training classes. I partner people up and teach them how to use correct form and spot. We also have cardio boxing classes. It's an insane burn.

How does a membership work? I ask everybody to first come in and try a class on me. I want people to know what they're getting into. Don't buy a 10-class pass if you hate it. Most gyms try to get as much money as they can and lock you into two or three years. We're not real big, and I'm passionate about it. We're not a big corporate company. We care about people's health.

What do you like best about your job? I love to share my knowledge of fitness and help



Josh Kuklak works out at Survival Fitness.

Name: Josh Kuklak
Title: Owner/Head Trainer
Business: Survival Fitness

people achieve their goals. I can see changes in people. I've seen someone drop a whole person before. It's very rewarding to see someone go from unhealthy and miserable to healthy and happy.

What other job responsibilities do you have? I

do most of the program design. People sign up before they come in to the classes. So I know how many will be here, and I can design the workout with that in mind. The workouts are different all the time, so you don't know exactly what you'll be doing every time. With personal training, I tailor it to the person I'm working with.

Do you or someone you know have an interesting job? Or is there an occupation you would like to know a little more about? Send your story ideas to lcbandym@yahoo.com and we might feature you in an upcoming issue of The Carmel Business Leader.

Have an online customer service plan

Many businesses try to use social media to increase community awareness, boost SEO and ultimately gain revenue. However, most have not stopped to consider that social media tools will likely be used for customer service, as well. A whopping 62 percent of consumers are using social media for customer service issues, and brands need to have a strategy to monitor and mitigate problems that may arise online. What happens when someone starts badmouthing you on Facebook? Even the best companies encounter an unhappy customer. What is your plan when your social media utopia turns sour because of poor customer service?

Let's back up one step. First, how are you going to know that someone has a complaint that they've shared with their social circles online? Hopefully, you have assigned someone to be monitoring your social network sites on a daily basis. This individual needs to be well versed in your mission, values and overall brand positioning. Facebook and Twitter aren't the only places customers might be venting. Have you checked your Foursquare page recently? What about Yelp? Read through the tips and look at the photos to make sure everything is in line. If they aren't, make an effort to remedy the upset customer or remove indecent

pictures.

Once all your accounts are up and running, set up alerts that notify you when your brand is mentioned. There are dozens of sites where people share their opinions, and it would be impossible to monitor all of them all the time. There are various tools you can use, such as Google Alerts, to notify you when you are mentioned online. Responding to these mentions makes your brand seem responsive and engaged.

If you receive an alert from a customer that seems unhappy, take the time to respond. Publicly apologize, and offer to fix the problem. It's amazing how far a simple apology can go. Follow up with a phone call. Find what is good for your business and stick with it.

No matter your specific policy and practices for addressing customer service online, it is important to have a plan. Understand that your company is most easily reached through your social media channels. Your brand is too valuable to ignore the importance of customer service and social media.

Abbi Achterberg is CEO of Tipping Point Marketing, a digital communications and marketing strategy company. She can be reached at abbi@findyourtippingpoint.com.



Abbi Achterberg



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Every group needs a leader

I asked, well really told, both my kids to pick up the toys in the toy room before bed. The next morning, the toys lay strewn across the floor unmoved from the previous night. I call it the group effect. When you assign a task to more than one person or a group, without very specific actionable items or a group leader, the task often languishes.

Think of a time you asked or assigned the same task to two people? It's common for it to go undone.

Ask two people to turn out the lights and the next morning the lights are still on. Ask five coworkers to consider something and it goes unconsidered. Add three people to the distribution list of a contact form, and no one answers.

It's important to assign a leader when putting multiple people on a task. It creates singular responsibility for that project or task. Void of that person, void of that responsibility, and the group affect creeps in adding to the possibility that it won't get done.

I've been readdressing the way I address tasks and projects. It's important to have a responsible person for the things you want to see through. When I send an email, I put only one person on the "to" line, and in the body of the note I mention them by name, regardless of how many people are copied. I am clear when we discuss anything as to who is responsible for the delivery of the result. And, at home, I'm more deliberate when tasks are assigned as to who is the leader and who is solely responsible. If you don't, the ultimate responsible party will be looking back at you in the mirror.



David Cain

David Cain works at Magnitude, a sales and marketing company. Contact David at David.Cain@Market-Magnitude.com.

SYNC TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION, LLC CELEBRATES ONE YEAR ANNIVERSARY

— Last month, Sync Technology Integration, an insured and 50-percent veteran-owned technology company based in Carmel, celebrated its one year anniversary. The business offers comprehensive and professional flat-panel installation, theater system design, networking and structured wiring. Sync covers all of central Indiana including Indianapolis, Lafayette, Kokomo, Anderson and Carmel. For more information, visit www.synciti.com.



From left, Chamber President Mo Merhoff; Kevin O'Connell, Financial Center manager; Nancy Huber, president and CEO of Central Indiana at Fifth Third Bank; Steve Alonso, head of Consumer Bank; Councilor Luci Snyder; Clerk Treasurer Diana Cordray; Mayor Jim Brainard; Shawn Niehaus, retail executive; Councilor Eric Seidensticker; Councilor Ron Carter. (Photos by Christian Sorrell)

Green banking facility now open

Fifth Third Bank, 205 E. Carmel Dr., held a grand opening and ribbon cutting ceremony at its new LEED-Certified Carmel facility last month. In addition to the ribbon cutting, Fifth Third Bank presented a \$500 donation to the Carmel Clay Public Library Foundation. A number of city officials attended the event, including Mayor Jim Brainard, Councilor Luci Snyder, Councilor Ron Carter, Councilor Eric Seidensticker, Clerk Treasurer Diana Cordray and Police Chief Tim Green. Mayor Brainard and Clerk Treasurer Cordray spoke before the ribbon cutting along with several key members of the Fifth Third Bank team. The new location replaced an existing location at 99 E. Carmel Dr.



Financial Center Manager Kevin O'Connell presented a \$500 donation to Wendy Phillips, Carmel Clay Public Library director and Ruth Nisenshal, director of the Carmel Clay Public Library Foundation



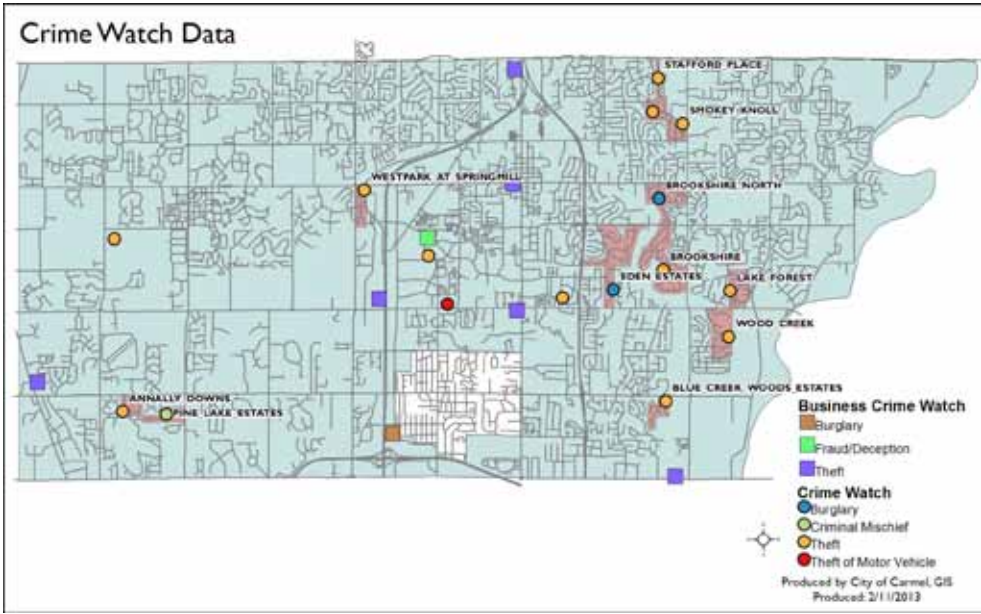
Retail Executive Shawn Niehaus



Mayor Jim Brainard spoke to the crowd at last month's ribbon cutting and open house event.



Clerk Treasurer Diana Cordray was invited to say a few words.



Business Crime Watch – February 2013

Date	Business	Address	Description
1/22	Victoria's Secret	14390 CLAY TERRACE BLVD	Theft
1/23	Omalia Food Market	4755 E 126TH ST	Theft
1/25	Main Street Barber Shop	41 W MAIN ST	Fraud/Deception
1/26	College Park Baptist Church	2606 W 96TH ST	Theft
1/29	Excellent Nails	1156 KEYSTONE WAY	Burglary
1/30	A and W Engineering	4105 W 99TH ST	Theft
1/31	Marsh	10679 N MICHIGAN RD	Theft
2/1	Shiel Sexton	11596 WESTFIELD BLVD	Theft
2/1	Tom Wood Lexus	4610 E 96TH ST	Theft
2/4	Gibraltar Properties	10291 N MERIDIAN ST	Burglary
2/5	Mary & Martha's Botique	111 W MAIN ST	Theft
2/7	Marsh Supermarket	10679 N MICHIGAN RD	Theft
2/8	Hamilton Title Security LLC	865 W CARMEL DR	Fraud/Deception
2/8	Snapperz	14455 CLAY TERRACE BLVD	Theft
2/8	IU Health North	11700 N MERIDIAN ST	Theft
2/11	Pearson Ford	10650 N MICHIGAN RD	Fraud/Deception
2/12	Target	10401 N MICHIGAN RD	Theft
2/15	J.C. Sipe Jewelers	3000 E 96TH ST	Theft
2/15	Target	10401 N MICHIGAN RD	Theft
2/15	Kohls	9895 N MICHIGAN RD	Theft
2/16	Severns Associates	10293 N MERIDIAN ST	Burglary
2/17	Stake 'n Shake	635 E CARMEL DR	Theft
2/17	Aldebaran Capital LLC	10293 N MERIDIAN ST	Burglary
2/17	Aldebaran Capital LLC	10293 N MERIDIAN ST	Burglary
2/17	Steak 'n Shake	635 E CARMEL DR	Theft
2/18	Freedom Auto Finance	9680 N MICHIGAN RD	Theft
2/18	Bill Estes Chevrolet	4310 W 96TH ST	Theft
2/19	Victoria's Secret	14390 CLAY TERRACE BLVD	Theft
2/22	Marsh	10679 N MICHIGAN RD	Theft
2/22	Whisper Hearing Center	11700 N MERIDIAN ST	Theft
2/24	Nat'l Construction Wrkfr	3610 W 96TH ST	Burglary
2/24	Marsh Supermarkets	10679 N MICHIGAN RD	Theft

PAUL RETZLAFF NAMED INDIANA FARM BUREAU'S INTERIM HEAD OF LIFE DIVISION



Retzlaff – Last month, Paul Retzlaff, Indiana Farm Bureau's director and chief actuary, was named interim head of Life Division while a national search is conducted for a successor to the COO and senior vice president of the division. Retzlaff, a graduate of the University of Illinois, lives in Carmel with his wife, Pam, and twin daughters, Lauren and Nicole. In his free time, he enjoys bicycling, golf and photography.

GREGORY DAVIS JOINS ANSON GROUP

– Anson Group, 9001 Wesleyan Rd., Indianapolis, has added Gregory Davis, Ph.D., as a principal regulatory consultant. Davis has more than 30 years of experience in global regulatory compliance, drug development and quality assurance in the pharmaceutical and biotech spaces. He will assist Anson clients with all manner of issues related to them, including regulatory compliance, development, and quality assurance. Before joining Anson, Davis held numerous executive leadership positions at a major U.S. pharmaceutical company. His doctorate is in analytical chemistry from Purdue University.

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Success from a penny

Last time, I wrote about how being a polio victim led to a positive transformation of my life. If you missed it, check the February issue at www.businessleader.bz.

I had such a great reaction, I'm continuing on a similar theme.

Many successes are based on being different and by people who just never gave up. It's sad how many have given up in life or business. Who knows what remarkable things we – and they – may have missed.

In fact, it's much easier to just give up. Instead people often believe in those negative people all around us who say, "It can't be done." One of my next columns is going to be on how negative people can poison us, featuring some true life experiences.

You might go out and hire a personal coach or business consultant to help you through all of this.

I have. My friends Carol the Coach and CJ McClanahan (fellow columnist for this publisher) are two of the best. No disrespect, but what they tell you is nothing new. Most of their advice is really age-old wisdom but told in a truly motivational way.

There is also someone else I go to often. See some of the things he's told me and my notes below:

Give me six hours to chop down a tree, and I will spend the first four sharpening the axe.

NOTES: No success can come unless you are fully prepared.

Determine that the thing can and

shall be done, and then we shall find the way.

NOTES: Believe and persist and you shall find the road to success. As Whitney Houston sings, "Never, never give up / Hold your head to the sky, look them right in the eyes / Tell them you will never quit until the day you get it right."

The best thing about the future is that it comes one day at a time.

NOTES: Have a plan, but don't dwell and worry about it so much that you let the riches of daily life pass you by.

In the end, it's not the years in your life that count. It's the life in your years.

NOTES: Strive for success, but keep it in perspective. Nothing new here, either. Be good. Be kind. Smile and say hello to a stranger. Never pass

by a Salvation Army bucket. These things are some of the key ingredients for the true definition of success in life. Morgan Freeman as Carter Chambers in "The Bucket List" said it: "You measure yourself by the people who measure themselves by you."

You can learn all of what I've noted above from one person in particular. He doesn't cost much. You can see him for as little as a penny. Take a look when you take that spare change out of your pocket. He's recently been featured in a must-see movie. By the time you read this, he may have even won an Academy Award. Honest.

Jon Quick is the president of Carmel-based marketing firm absolutemax! He can be reached at jon@absolutemaxpr.com.



Jon Quick

Carmel Chamber Calendar

- **March Joint Network Breakfast with Westfield Chamber** - Network your way to new business contacts from the Carmel and Westfield chambers. Come prepared with a two-minute elevator speech, and bring your business cards and brochures to distribute as you rotate from table to table. The breakfast will be March 7 from 7:30 to 9 a.m. at Hilton Garden Inn, 13090 Pennsylvania St., Carmel. Prepayment is required to confirm your reservation: \$10 for members and \$20 for guests.
- **March Legislative breakfast** - Join the Carmel Chamber for a discussion with legislators about the Hamilton County Business Issues Committee agenda and issues important to the business community. Find out what's going on at the Statehouse during the current legislative session. The breakfast will be March 8 from 7:30 to 9 a.m. at the Mansion at Oak Hill, 5801 E. 116th St., Carmel. Cost is \$15 for members of any Chamber in Hamilton County and \$20 for non-members.
- **March luncheon** - Join the Carmel Chamber for an informative speaker and networking. The luncheon will be March 13 from noon to 1:30 p.m. at the Monon Community Center, 1235 Central Park Dr., Carmel. The event is \$20 for prepaid members and \$25 for guests and walk-ins. Reservations are required by noon on March 11.
- **MacKenzie River Pizza, Grill & Pub ribbon cutting** - Join the Carmel Chamber and other community leaders for a ribbon cutting of new member MacKenzie River Pizza, Grill & Pub, 11596 Westfield Blvd., on March 18 at 9:30 a.m.
- **Business After Hours** - Take a break after your work day and join a fun evening of networking with both the Carmel and Fishers chambers. Don't miss this opportunity to enjoy appetizers and drinks while exploring Indy's newest entertainment destination, Latitude 39. The event will be March 20 from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. at Latitude 39, 4016 E. 82nd St., Indianapolis. Business After Hours is free for members and \$10 for non-members.
- **Arrows YP After Hours Networking** - Expand your networking opportunities and have some fun as you meet new people from the Carmel, Noblesville and Westfield chambers. Enjoy snacks and drinks while networking at Hare Chevrolet, 2001 Stoney Creek Rd., Noblesville, from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. on March 27. This is a free event for young professionals under 40.

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