

NEWS RELEASE

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Small Business Owners Ban Together In Tough Economic Times

Albany's First Art Walk, Friday, March 6, 2009

Albany, CA – Small business owners have banded together to bring a bit of cheer, art and hopefully sales to Solano Avenue. The first Friday of each month will be known as Art Attack, an art & food walk. The monthly tradition will start on March 6, 2009.

Participating businesses will stay open until at least 9 PM and host individual events featuring live music and art. The group of mostly women business owners had met to share ideas on how to thrive in a challenging economy and share lighthearted moments. A few cocktails later, the idea of an artwalk was born.

Participating businesses include A Different Day Gallery, Albany Arts Gallery, Casa Oaxaca, 6 Degrees on Solano, Gathering Tribes, and Fisher's Jewelry.

Attendees will easily find participating businesses by the red colored lights in their windows.

“In the East Bay alone, 10,000 people are employed in the arts, and a great many arts businesses and organizations are run by women. Support the arts in Albany and women in the arts business by coming to the first Albany ArtWalk!” says Karin Nelson, Albany resident and District 5 Representative to the Alameda County Arts Commission. “A world without art is like a home without light.”

The group was called together by Serena Leung Baker, owner of A Different Day Gallery and an event planner. “We just need a little bit of positive energy. The group took on a life of its own and we hope to spread some positive energy to the rest of the community,” says Serena. Located at 1233 Solano Avenue, A Different Day gallery a host wine and chocolate reception from 6 PM – 9 PM. While the art is always changing at her gallery, they always focus on local artists this month, painter and mixed media artist Jennifer Z. Roszell.

Native American flute player, Walter Ogi Johnson, will perform at Gathering Tribes gallery from

6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. "Native American people, generally speaking, are very community oriented, so it seemed natural to me for the women to meet, look at how we can put our minds together to help one another and create win-win situations for our businesses", says Pennie Opal Plant, owner of Gathering Tribes gallery at 1412 Solano Avenue. Gathering Tribes has been in business on Solano Avenue since 1991 and features art, jewelry and fine crafts made by Indigenous artists of the Americas.

Owners of Albany Art Gallery have been on Solano Avenue for many years. "Michael and I have been selling our own pottery and photography as well as the creations of 15 - 20 other artisans since 1990 and are grateful to our loyal customers who value locally made works of art," says Susan Williams. Susan and Michael Williams, are the owners of Albany Arts Gallery which has been on Solano Avenue since 1990. Potter, Susan Paul-Williams and her husband, photographer, Michael T. Williams have owned and operated Albany Arts Gallery at 1251 Solano Ave. since 1990. Albany Arts Gallery will be featuring the new works of Michael Kahn, "From Clay to Paper." "Michael and I are grateful to our many loyal customers who value locally made works of art

At Casa Oaxaca, located at 1286 Solano Avenue, resident-artist Laila Espinoza, will be exhibiting her work and painting. A young emerging artist, Espinoza also works at Casa Oaxaca. Casa Oaxaca features arts, crafts and jewelry from Mexico.

Bebe Bertolet, owner and chef of 6 degrees on solano, lives to revive the appetite and feed the soul. Combined with her art education, love of painting and music - she opened the doors of 6 degrees -- with partner Massimo Broffario, 3 years ago to the local music scene and flamenco. At the art walk she will feature live guitarist Jean Paul Buongiorno - who strums both gypsy flamenco and brazillian. 6 Degrees will also have a special surprise of new paintings, winetasting as well as happy hour specials.

Also participating is Fishers Jewelry, a woman owned business for over 30 years. Sitting pretty at 1488 Solano Avenue, Fisher's features hand crafted jewelry by Bay Area artists with distinctive jewelry and custom designs.

"There are many benefits to buying local. It keeps more of the money in our own communities," says Plant. "And, when people spend their dollars in their own communities, it ensures that sales tax are reinvested where belong, right at home in their own city."

For more information about Art Attack on Solano Avenue, call Serena Leung Baker at A Different Day Gallery (510) 868-4904.

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