



Chris LeGate tends the bar at Nic's.  
PHOTOS BY ASHIAH SCHARAGA

the bar. The businesses are connected by a pane-glass door. That day, customers went in and out, grabbing a sandwich at Nic's after shopping, or vice versa.

It's convenient for Jones, too. She rarely sits still and, that afternoon, flitted between both locations, problem-solving, attending to customers and checking in with her employees.

At the bar, Charlie Cruz visited with his family. He told the CN&R there's a tangible positivity at Nic's that is wonderful. Though his home in Butte Valley survived the blaze, Cruz's entire community of friends scattered overnight. Because of that, his family relocated to Oroville. Nic's is one of the places where they often get together with friends, to stay connected and lift each other up.

His sister-in-law Patrice Paradela had only good things to say about Nic's, too. A few months ago, she walked into the restaurant after a planned surprise party for her son fell through, desperate to make something else work in a few days. Not only did Nic's get her a reservation, but the employees helped her decorate as well.

As the day wound down, a couple of employees clocked out, taking off their aprons and sidling up to the bar, where they enjoyed happy hour glasses of char-donnay. Jones came over and they shared smiles. It was a good, busy day, they agreed—the kind of day that makes up for the slow ones.

**Overall, business is going well. In fact,** Bobbi's made a better profit last April, May and June than that same time period in the previous two years, before the fire,

Jones shared. And Nic's had a full house for its Valentine's Day dinner.

"Thanks to the support of the community and outlying areas, we're doing very well," Jones said. "It's going to take a while because it is a new business and it is a restaurant, but we have a good reputation, and I think we have really good food."

Jones added that she's relieved things are going well—she knew the risk she was taking. When Nic's opened, debris still was being hauled off the Ridge. Town officials estimate the population is a scant 3,000 to 5,000, compared to 26,000 pre-fire.

In an ideal future, Jones' goal is for her businesses to grow alongside the town. But as for what that'll look like, she has no clue.

"The excitement is to see what happens," she said. "It's exciting to be part of ... something good coming out of what was a tragedy."

As Jones told one customer that afternoon, she could ultimately end up breaking even on both businesses, and that would be OK by her.

"I feel very fortunate to be able to do this," she told the CN&R. "Mostly I'm pleased because my overriding goal was to have a gathering place for people that's comfortable, [where] people laugh and talk with their friends. And I observe this all the time. And that makes my heart happy."

—ASHIAH SCHARAGA

MORE **RIDGE BUSINESS** CONTINUED ON PAGE 24

42  
YEARS IN  
BUSINESS

LOCALLY  
MADE

## Carol Munson OWNER

It all started in the Fall of 1978 on the corner of 5th and Salem, that Carol Lynn Rhoades open her doors for the first time. Little did she know she would become a Chico landmark.

Since then, her business has grown, made a lasting impression at the Fashion Market and has become a premier retailer of Eileen Fisher on the west coast.

Carol's passion and style has drawn and entertained lifelong customers. "I love my customers and I love what I do! It's all by GOD'S wonderful Grace I am able to do what I do. Hey that rhymes! I am very grateful."

Carol's influence extends into the next generation through her daughter Jennie. Who has the same passion for the business as her mother, she has become the ideal partner to continue the 5th Street Clothing legacy. Their partnership will ensure this local landmark will continue dressing women and changing lives for years to come.



With style, quality and customer service, 5th Street Clothing has the perfect selection to making your wardrobe just right.

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27  
YEARS IN  
BUSINESS

LOCALLY  
MADE

## Teresa Larson REALTOR

It is a great time to buy a home! Teresa Larson is hands-on Realtor. For sellers, she advertises extensively in local papers, on the web and on Facebook. For buyers, she finds out their wants and needs and tries to locate the perfect home for them.

The prices in Chico's real estate market have ebbed and flowed this year with many changes. There have been highs, as well as price adjustments. Teresa suggests always consulting with a professional Realtor if you are considering selling your home. The market changes quickly and a professional will be able to provide you with the current market value of your property.

Teresa has been a full-time Realtor for over 25 years. Her passion for helping others makes real estate a wonderful career for her. She has built her business on being honest, friendly, helpful, considerate, knowledgeable, and organized.



"I am grateful each and every day for all those that I have been able to meet and help! I'm very grateful for the continued support that I receive from past clients, friends and family."

Teresa is a true Chico native with four generations of family who call Chico their hometown.

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