



Doylestown Bookshop to celebrate local authors
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SECTION D

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Yard sales go digital

Chalfont-based Delvage finds its niche



Delvage manager Donna Tomlinson prepares to load items into her car during a pickup this past weekend.

David Campbell

Call Delvage an eYardSale site.

"We come to your home and we take everything that is shippable and in great shape away, and you never have to see it again," said Dawn Fournier, the chief marketing officer of Delvage, which is based in Chalfont.

Delvage is an online yard sale and consignment store, which, according to Fournier, has seen steady growth since launching more than two years ago.

"January started to spike," Fournier said, "and then in March, it just J-curved up."

An appearance on the "Today Show" in early March brought Delvage's server to its knees.

The response has been overwhelmingly positive, Fournier said.

"We're not a passive site," she said. "We're not just hoping someone finds us. We're always promoting all of our inventory through various social media channels."

Delvage's inventory is enormous – and very affordable, Fournier said.

Delvage sells artwork, clothing, collectibles, electronics, home décor, jewelry, purses and sporting goods, among many other things.

"Every client dictates the prices that they want," Fournier said.

"Every price you see on that site (delvage.com) is from our clients, so they're totally in control of what they'd like to

receive."

Items are initially listed for six months, starting with a figure the seller hopes to receive and ending with a price the seller is willing to take. After six months, sellers can opt to relist an item, have it returned (for a small fee) or donate it to charity.

Delvage and the seller split the profit right down the middle (50/50).

Fournier said Delvage doesn't charge to send someone out to pick up items, and it travels from parts of Connecticut to parts of Virginia to haul the items away and upload pictures of them to its website.

In addition, Fournier noted, Delvage has "a significant number of clients outside of our current pickup area who send us their items for us to market and sell."

The company accepts only items in great resale condition.

"A lot of our clients are moving," Fournier said. "Do you want to have to deal with it? Do you want to have to pack it? Do you want to have to post it on different resale sites and take care of it? Absolutely not."

"So typically when we're working with someone who's downsizing, we take anywhere from 100 to 200 items from them and put them on the site."

For buyers, Delvage has a one-week return policy. "If you're not pleased with something," Fournier said.

The cheapest items on the site start at \$15. On Delvage's "Bargain Table," buyers can search through a variety of finds,

all for \$15. And the more items you buy on the Bargain Table, Fournier said, the more you save.

For example, Fournier said, buy five items and the fee for each drops to \$10 per and so forth.

Registered customers, Fournier said, can see additional savings.

"Our registered buyers have great benefits," she said, "such as product requests, wishlists to receive notification when that special something has been discounted and an 'early bird pass' to see discounts a day before they are visible to the general public."

Delvage's Charity Partner Program continues to grow, Fournier added. Right now, the business is working with four charities, including Last Chance Ranch and the Ark Wildlife Rehabilitation and Education Center, and has plans to develop relationships with at least three more.

Delvage, Fournier said, intends to give back locally while thinking nationally.

The company employs a couple full-timers and six part-time employees and is right now exploring adding two locations, one in New Jersey, another in Maryland, to keep up with demand.

"Our plan is obviously to take this on a national level," Fournier said.

The traditional yard sale may be dying – or simply moving online.

"[Delvage]," Fournier said, "is a positive experience for buyers and sellers."

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Noteworthy

Discover Doylestown, previously the DBCA, elected a new president and vice president this past March.

Former President and board member **Rich Slabinski** was elected to the position of president. **Krisy Paredes**, who has been on the board for three years, was elected as vice president.

Paredes is the marketing and events manager at The Doylestown Bookshop and has volunteered on many events and committees since 2002. She was a founding member of First Friday Doylestown and co-chairs townwide events such as Where's Waldo in Doylestown every July and The Lego building contest which will enter its second year this fall. Slabinski is a commercial lender with Quaint Oak Bank and has been a DBCA/Discover Doylestown member for 16 years.

It was recently decided that the organization would once again hold open membership meetings for business and community members at Doylestown Borough Hall, 57 W. Court St., Doylestown. Meetings will be held from 8 to 9 a.m. on Sept. 21 and Oct. 19.

Rosemary Caliguri, managing director of the Langhorne-based Harvest Group, a division of United Capital Financial Advisers, LLC, completed her two-day biannual training from "America's IRA Experts," Ed Slott and Company, LLC in Atlanta, Ga., on May 12 to 14.

The workshop, which was attended by members of Ed Slott's Master Elite IRA Advisor Group, provided an in-depth technical training on advanced retirement account planning strategies, estate planning techniques and new tax laws, as well as insight on rules and regulations pertaining to the Department of Labor's new Fiduciary Rule.

Huntingdon Valley Bank announced that **Chris Jacobsen** has joined the bank as executive vice president and chief operating officer.

Jacobsen joins the bank following a successful track record of leading Philadelphia-based community banks for much of his career, but is excited to finally be serving the community in which he has lived for more than 30 years. Jacobsen is active in the community, including serving on various committees for the Central Bucks Family YMCA and a leader in local youth sports organizations.

Travis J. Thompson, president and CEO, commented, "Chris' experience with and fundamental belief in the importance of small locally-owned banking is unmatched and frankly refreshing. We are pleased to have Chris Jacobsen join our growing team at Huntingdon Valley Bank."



Monument Bank recently donated \$2,500 to the **Doylestown Historical Society** to sponsor the commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the founding of the Mapewood Community of Doylestown. From left are: Ben Crowley, retail banking director of Monument Bank; Stu Abramson, president of the Doylestown Historical Society; and Tom Maclin, business development manager of Monument Bank.

The community was initiated by the VFW to provide affordable housing for returning veterans of World War II. It was reported to be the only community of its kind in the nation at the time of its founding.

Edible Arrangements, a new business, has opened in the Cross Keys Place Shopping Center, 4365 W. Swamp Road, Doylestown (between Giant and Knarr).

The store offers fresh fruit arrangements and gourmet chocolate-dipped fruit and Edible To Go products such as fresh fruit smoothies, frozen yogurt blended with fresh fruit puree and fruit salads.

The owners are local businesspeople, Dave and Karen Wurz, who have lived in the Doylestown area for almost 30 years. Both worked for many years in the barcode scanning industry.

Their first experience with Edible Arrangements happened soon after their daughter was in a car accident several years ago and a relative sent her an arrangement.

Calendar

On Tuesday, **June 28**, at 1 p.m., Jeffrey Heilakka, Univest's small business development manager, will present "Identity Theft: How to protect yourself" in conjunction with SCORE Bucks County.

"It's a great topic," SCORE Bucks County mentor and webinar organizer David Boster said. "We had a seminar a couple of months ago given by various bankers and other loan agencies. One of the things that a couple of the lenders asked, as part of their approval process, is what steps have you taken to protect your data, your identity and prevent hacking?"

Heilakka, during the telephone presentation, will discuss the difference between fraud and identity theft, share tips on how people can help prevent both, as well as common early signs that identity theft has occurred and action steps to take.

"It crosses all socioeconomic lines," Heilakka said. "You could be a CEO and a lone worker sitting next to each other and they're pretty much equal when it comes to this topic."

He will also highlight insiders who have easy access to credit cards and personal information and shed light on identity thieves and the various ways information can be misused. Identity theft can take months or years to undo and can result in damages including bankruptcy, health-care identity theft and more.

"It's a horrendous nightmare," Heilakka said, adding that the notion that senior citizens are the primary victims of identity theft is a misnomer. "This seminar really educates people around several topics of importance."

To register or for information, call 215-943-8850 or visit buckscounty.score.org.

Rick Welch: Dollars and \$ense

Multi-asset strategies

The core investing philosophy of our firm is a multi-asset approach that seeks to provide multi-level diversification and exposure to four different asset classes – cash, equities, fixed income and alternative investments.

We believe that the best way to achieve optimal investment performance outcomes is when a multi-asset approach is combined with strategic asset allocation, inquisitive security and fund selection and dynamic portfolio management. To accomplish this goal requires a comprehensive understanding of asset classes, regions, sectors, industries and alternative investments across the multi-asset investment universe.

Our selected equity assets are differentiated by size (large, mid and small cap), sector (financials, health care and technology are examples) and geography (U.S., international and emerging markets). Our selected fixed income assets (individual bonds and bond funds) provide exposure to different securities based on their duration (short, intermediate and long term), credit (investment grade, government and high yield) and geography (U.S. and international).

Within the alternative investment category, our asset allocation models provide core exposure to REITs and, then to a smaller degree, investments in MLPs, commodities and managed futures. The justification for alternative investments is that they have expected returns that have low correlation with the

expected returns of stocks and bonds and, thus, provide the potential to increase diversification within a portfolio of assets. Alternative investments comprise about 5 percent of portfolio assets, similar to our portfolio target of 5 percent in cash holdings.

Our multi-asset strategy platform has five different asset allocation models, each of which are differentiated by investor risk profile. For risk-averse investors, we employ our Conservative Asset Allocation (20/80) which means 20 percent equities and 80 percent fixed income and cash). Our three "middle" allocations include Moderate Conservative (40/60), Moderate (60/40) and Moderate Aggressive (80/20). Our Aggressive Asset Allocation (95/5) provides exposure to our broadest list of approved equity selections and the requisite 5 percent target in cash holdings.

While choosing the right strategic asset allocation plan is essential, so is the ability to make tactical investment decisions and moves dependent on market conditions.

A sound multi-asset approach allows for adjustment of the composition of the portfolio over time, increasing exposure to those assets most likely to outperform in the prevailing market conditions. This adjustment or tactical asset repositioning shifts the portfolio asset allocation and underlying equity exposure to reflect the most appropriate mix for any given point in the eco-

nomie cycle.

What most investors do not understand is how their strategic asset allocation plan impacts investment returns over the long term. It may surprise some readers to learn that a conservative portfolio may return, on average, +5.1 percent per year while the aggressive portfolio may return only slightly more at +6.8 percent per annum.

The real difference in returns (based on 40-year historical return data) is that the conservative investor may see a one-year high return of +15.8 percent and one-year low return of -4.6 percent. Alternatively, the aggressive investor may see an impressive one-year high of +39.9 percent and a disappointing, head scratching one-year low return of -36.0 percent. Thus, what a strategic asset allocation plan provides is an investor appropriate, risk-adjusted investment portfolio that is constructed to smooth out expected returns by lowering the probability of the real high peaks and low valleys experienced by the financial markets.

Our rationale here is quite simple – what may be left on the table during the strongest of bull markets is saved from destruction during the next deep correction or mean bear market.

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