

From the Ross Valley Reporter

doodlebug A Favorite San Anselmo Summer Tradition

There are actual shouts of joy being heard on San Anselmo Avenue these days! These are a reaction from local children upon discovering that *doodlebug* has re-opened again (in its newest, finest incarnation) following renovations necessitated by the flooding on New Year's Eve. Many locals remember that the store also was closed for the first six months of 2004 due to a serious fire. There can be no doubt that owner Marnie Delaney is dedicated to providing a great resource to Marin families. She attributes her return to a stubborn nature but also admits to feeling blessed to be part of a wonderful, supportive community.

Ross Valley parents have known about *doodlebug* for years. Many visit at least weekly to pick up birthday gifts, party favors and art supplies or to drop off their children for a party or class. Many moms and dads also like to spend some relaxing time at the studio painting pottery, wood, canvas or paper mache items; knitting; working on a mosaic project; doing collages or decoupage; or indulging some other creative urge – with or without the rest of the family! There is a general consensus that the selection of toys, games and craft supplies is strikingly unique with many options that can inspire both learning and fun at home or on vacation.

Marnie, who says she is one of the growing ranks of “corporate life refugees”, welcomes new customers who often describe themselves as “not creative”. “It’s amazing how many of us grow up thinking that – when, in fact, we just haven’t found the right outlet for our creativity. What *doodlebug* is about is providing the environment and resources, along with the ideas and encouragement which will allow each individual’s creativity to flourish”.

Regular customers agree that they are amazed to discover new inspirations with every visit. The most often heard comment is “wow, I had no idea how much was here!”

Perhaps the best kept secret is summer camp. Heather Pederson sums it up: “Last summer, my oldest daughter, Alise, participated in 6 weeks of *doodlebug*’s summer camps. She loved it! They provided a great environment for her to explore her own creativity and artistic interests, and the teachers were terrific. Alise continues to have a daily love for art projects. I attribute a lot of this to her experiences at *doodlebug*.” Camps focus on different topics each week, including wheel-throwing, mosaic and sewing.

The focus at *doodlebug* is on developing skills, building confidence and having fun. Children (and their parents) can also meet new friends, learn from each other and discover new interests. All in all, with limited space, it’s no wonder that Ross Valley parents hope word doesn’t spread too quickly!

doodlebug is located at 641 San Anselmo Avenue in downtown San Anselmo and is open 7 days a week – from 10am – 7pm Sunday – Wednesday and from 10am – 9pm Thursday – Saturday. (415) 456-5989. www.doodlebugmarin.com.