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Maumee Uptown Business Spotlight



Friendships are rekindled over a cup of tea at Clara J's. Pictured are longtime friends (from left) Leslie Miller, Shirley Leiser and Jeanne O'Donnell.



Clara J's recently hosted a *Frozen*-themed tea party. Pictured are (from left) Princess Anna, 6-year-old Madison Thal of Maryville, 8-year-old Alison Immel of Lake Township and Princess Elsa.

MIRROR PHOTOS BY NANCY GAGNET

Clara J's Tea Room Serves Proper Tea, Gourmet Lunches

BY NANCY GAGNET
MIRROR REPORTER

For more than a decade, Clara J's Tea Room and Neapolitan Gift Shop has been a destination location for tea aficionados and fine diners both near and far.

Located in a historic

building in uptown Maumee, the restaurant serves proper tea and gourmet lunches Tuesday through Saturday.

"I like the people we meet here," said owner Rebecca Jaessing. "There isn't a week that goes by that someone

doesn't drive one to two hours to come here. They want to go somewhere different and unique, so they come here."

Now in its 11th year of business, Clara J's offers proper tea served in the British tradition. With an eclectic mix of fine china and fresh linens, the tea accompanies tasty scones, delicious sandwiches, sweets and savories, all served on a three-tiered silver tray.

Menu items change seasonally and feature a variety of delicious choices, such as chicken pot pie, pomegranate salad, homemade soups, a gourmet Surimi crab melt on an English muffin and Clara J's signature ribbon, which features layers of chicken salad, spinach and herbs, frosted with cream cheese.

Gluten-free choices are also offered as well as a children's menu, featuring tea room or grilled cheese sandwiches accompanied by a fruit kabob, fish crackers, finger Jell-O and raspberry lemonade or tea.

"We love having youngsters in our tea room and they love to have a tea party," said Rebecca.

Cheryl Fischer, of Waterville, began taking her granddaughters to Clara J's when they were 3 and 4 years old.

Both girls are much older now, but Cheryl says they continue to enjoy an afternoon lunch and have many fond memories of previous visits to the tea room.

"Rebecca and her staff have always made the kids feel very special. The atmosphere is very friendly," she said.

In addition to proper



Rebecca Jaessing

teas, the Neapolitan Gift Shop features an array of accessory items from jewelry and clothing to ornaments, bookmarkers and, of course, tea accoutrements.

Special events also take place regularly, from themed teas to private parties and business events.

Adelle Meinerich is a Matilda Jane clothing representative who has held two trunk shows at Clara J's.

"I just love it there. It is such a convenient location," said Adelle. "Rebecca is great to work with, she is very accommodating and the tea room is adorable. It fits right in with the Matilda Jane clothing style. I hope to hold many more trunk shows there in the future."

Rebecca honed her customer service skills early in life — selling eggs, milk and peaches to those stopping by her family farm in Springfield Township.

"At a very young age we had to talk to people and help our customers," she said.

For more than 20 years she worked at The Andersons, serving as a senior grain buyer and conducting daily grain reports on television and radio. She also served as a regional property manager for Lutheran

Homes Society.

In 2005, she opened Clara J's Tea Room. She credits her staff's commitment to customer service and hospitality with making it a success.

"We have the best staff, they do an absolutely wonderful job and I love the history here," she said, noting that the tea room is named after her beloved aunt, Clara Jaessing Keller, who studied culinary arts in college during a time when women didn't typically aspire to such levels.

"For my customers, this is a place to call their own, and for me, it is about the

experience — what you can learn over a cup of tea," she said.

Clara J's Tea Room and Neapolitan Gift Shop is located at 219 W. Wayne St. in Maumee.

Tea room hours are Tuesday through Saturday from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The gift shop is open Tuesday through Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

For further information or to book a special event, please call (419) 897-0219.

Information can also be found online at www.clara-jst219.com.



Wearing her princess dress, Violet Hine of Cincinnati is all smiles at a tea party.



Kristen Blodgett, of Monclova Township, brought her 3-year-old daughter Josie to the tea party.

MIRROR PHOTOS BY NANCY GAGNET

Uptown Update

THE LATEST NEWS IN UPTOWN MAUMEE

MUBA Hosts Monthly Membership Meetings
Maumee Uptown Business Association (MUBA) membership meetings are open to all MUBA members. The meetings take place on the first Tuesday of each month from 8:00 to 9:00 a.m.

The next meeting will be on Tuesday, February 2 at Calvary Assembly of God, located at 1360 Conant St., Maumee. In March, the meeting will take place at In Bloom Flowers and Gifts, located at 203 Conant St., Maumee.

MUBA Memberships Available For Purchase
Become a MUBA member today. All businesses and organizations in the Maumee uptown area are eligible to join MUBA for an annual membership fee of \$50.00. For additional information, please contact Ty Szumigala at (419) 897-8902 or Lou Mattero at (419) 705-0635.

Uptown Maumee To Host Acoustics For Autism
Acoustics for Autism will take place on Sunday, March 6 at the Village Idiot, Buster Brown's Lounge and in the West Mews parking lot, all in uptown Maumee. The ninth annual event takes place from noon to 2:00 a.m. and features live music, prizes and a silent auction.

Easter "Egg"stravaganza Offers "Egg"cellent Time
The second annual Easter "Egg"stravaganza will be held in uptown Maumee on Saturday, March 19 from 10:00 a.m. to noon. Like trick-or-treating, children ages 3-12 may visit local businesses to collect plastic Easter eggs filled with candy. Children can also visit with the Easter Bunny and make special crafts.