

Published January 8th, 2020

Community shows it cares after burglary at Lafayette business

By Jennifer Wake



Minoo Montlagh in her Lafayette cleaners. Photo J. Wake

Having a business next to Johnny's Donuts has its perks. On the Saturday before Christmas, Lafayette Vogue Cleaners and Alterations owner Minoo Montlagh grabbed her reusable coffee cup (since she's environmentally conscience) and headed next door to grab a coffee. Unfortunately, she left the store unlocked and while she was gone, someone came into the store and stole all the money from her cash drawer.

"I never thought in the five minutes I was gone there would be a problem," said Montlagh, who has owned the cleaners for 15 years. "I'm glad I didn't come back early."

After hearing about the burglary, Venture Quality Goods owners Tom and Rosylyn Stenzel went into action, sending an email plea for help to all of their Venture customers.

"If you have ever had your pants hemmed or a shirt tailored at Venture, Minoo . is the person who did it. She is a magician with the needle . and has worked on well over a 1,000 garments for us," the Stenzels wrote, explaining about the burglary. "So in the spirit of the Season, we have decided to help Minoo out and also collect any donations that our Venture contacts would want to give to Minoo. An event like this, especially for a small business, can shake your confidence in society. We want to give our community an opportunity to shine some light on Minoo!"

Calls began to come in from customers to Montlagh's shop on Monday, Dec. 23, with people asking how she was doing. "This just made me so happy because customers care for me," Montlagh said. On the following Friday, the Stenzels came to Montlagh's shop with a box filled with notes and donations. "I just cried because at this time of year things are so hard and with the very bad news, especially after Halloween and the burglary in Springhill, it's so nice to know we live in a community that everyone cares about each other."

The notes of encouragement from customers and from some people Montlagh didn't even know filled her heart. "One lady wrote a check and lives in Rossmoor," Montlagh said. "She was so sweet and kind. It said in the memo, 'Hope this helps' It is wonderful we live in such a caring community. I think 2020 will be the best year ever."

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