

# Local Florist Grows 'The Bungalow Rose'

Business stems from personal hobby

BY KATHERINE BLACKMORE  
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

As an avid gardener with a green thumb, Debbie Mannings has always had a love for plants and flowers; their soft smells, their vivid colors and their effect on people as a whole brings her joy and satisfaction.

Noting a study from Rutgers University that showed flowers were scientifically proven to brighten moods, Mannings decided it was her turn to help lift spirits as well. After working in customer service and banking jobs that all eventually downsized, she decided to do what she really loved and "go for broke," starting up her own floral business called The Bungalow Rose.

Mannings already had a life-long hobby of arranging bouquets for her family and friends, so to learn about the aspects of business, she dipped her fingers into the floral industry for a year. She sought advice from a few local small business organizations, bringing detailed plans to meetings.

For other aspiring entrepreneurs Mannings suggested to "just go out and get as much information as you can. There's a lot of stuff online. Get a mentor. What I did was just follow my heart and soul."

Initially, her house was the hub of The Bungalow Rose. But in August, Mannings was

able to rent a little shop she'd had her eye on for years at North Prescott between 78<sup>th</sup> and 79<sup>th</sup> Streets, being drawn to the building's antique, welcoming style. Luckily, the owners were also gardeners who shared her artistic flair and vision of turning a historic barbershop into a hub of bouquets and gifts.

"They were very thrilled with the idea," she said.

The shop's popularity is slowly growing via local advertisements and word of mouth, sending out complimentary bouquets to show potential clients her beautiful work.

"You just take each day at a time if it's something that feels right. Everything has come to me by trials and tribulations or has been handed to me, so I know I'm on the right track," she said.

One thing that helped her get on her feet, she said, was having inspiration from her brothers and a close friend, Terri Wickliff - all business owners. Although Wickliff passed away recently, Mannings carried on with her encouraging messages.

"She would always say, 'Go for it! You can do it!'" Mannings said.

She sits well with her role in customer service. Flowers have a universal appeal for a variety of life events, so it allows her to play not just the role of a florist, but of an understanding friend. "This is about people and

Debbie Mannings, owner of The Bungalow Rose on 7817 N. Prescott St., opened her neighborhood shop in August out of a passion for flower arranging.

PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/  
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER



the things they go through - their happy times, their sad times. I want to share that with them, be there for them, and bring comfort and happiness," she said.

Like many new business owners, she hopes to expand The Bungalow Rose eventually.

"Even though I absolutely love this place, I would love to outgrow it," she said. "I do wish to stay in the area. I've been here a long time and I like the people. I really like the neighborhood feel."

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## Finding Success in Construction



Tracy Onchi has run her own company, T.A. Onchi LLC, for more than seven years.

### 'Door Lady' hired for PCC expansion

Tracy Onchi literally opens the door for thousands and thousands of people.

"Some people call me the door lady," she said. "That's okay. I like to make people happy."

Her northwest Portland door supply business, T.A. Onchi LLC, is the supplier of the 60 to 80 wood doors for the Daniel F. Moriarty Arts and Humanities building on the Cascade Campus of Portland Community College in north Portland.

The \$7.5 million, 42,200-square-foot facility is scheduled for a grand opening from 3 to 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Oct. 12. The two-story building will house the professional music, multimedia, distance education and arts programs.

Onchi has also supplied hun-

dreds of doors for other Cascade projects like Jackson Hall, the Public Services Education Building, the Physical Education Building and the Technology Education Building. She is also responsible for the doors for Building 9 at Rock Creek and the Technology Classroom Building at Sylvania.

A former PCC student herself, Onchi has been in the door business for 12 years and has run her own company for more than seven. The Korean-born owner began in the construction industry working for Acme Industries in southeast Portland before heading out on her own.

Her company designs the doors and ensures that the fabrication meets the specifications that the customer needs (i.e. height, width,

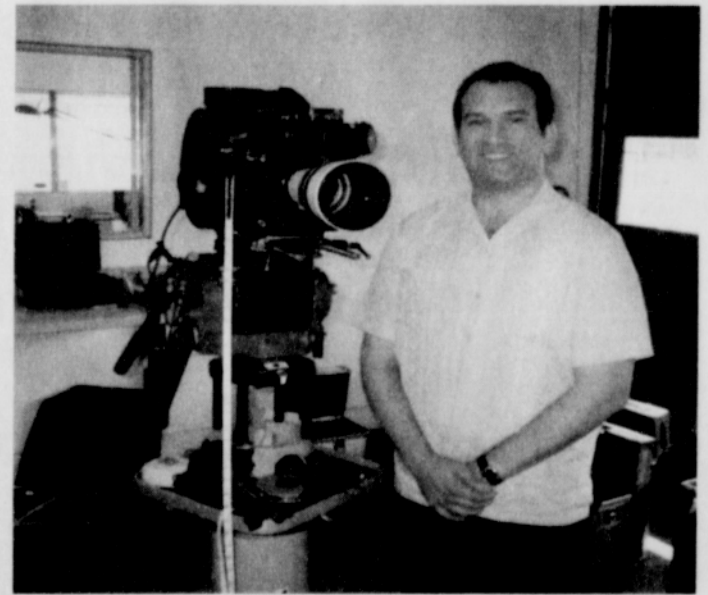
skin, locks, hinges and the way it swings). She also makes sure they are delivered on time and are in-

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