

<p><b>DENIED SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY?</b></p>	<p>Many of my Clients Win <b>EASTER Without a Hearing</b> No fee until you win</p> <p><b>ZAKRE LAW OFFICE</b> 4 Park Street, Suite 405 • Concord, NH 03301</p> <p>(603) 224-4400 sheila@zlawnh.com 26+ years experience</p> 
--	---

## The Laconia Daily Sun

### Jo-Ann Fabric & Craft store at Belknap Mall adds 7,000-sq.-ft. and several new departments

By Roger Amsden  
Aug 26, 2011 12:00 am

BELMONT — Jo-Ann Fabric and Craft Store at the Belknap Mall hosted an open house Thursday to celebrate an expansion which has seen the store grow from 11,000- to 18,000-square-feet and add new products and services.

"When I walked in and saw the new store and all it has to offer I felt like I had died and gone to heaven," said State Senator Jeanie Forrester of Meredith, a loyal customer who was on hand to take part in a ceremonial ribbon-cutting which opened the store's makeover celebration.

Forrester, who honed her sewing skills to the point where she once even made wedding dresses, said that she has been a regular at the store for 10 years and that the expansion, which has added 24 jobs, about two-thirds of which are part-time instructors for the classes offered at the store, is a good thing for the local economy.

"There's good timing here. In this economy more people are making their own things and it's a good time for the store to expand," said Forrester.

The expansion provided temporary five-week jobs for 30 young people who worked to move walls and set up shelves according to Susan Murphy, store manager.

She said that in addition to the fabric, sewing, quilting and knitting and craft supplies that the store has always offered there will now be jewelry making, Wilton cake decorating and high-end custom framing at the store provided by well-known local photographer and framer Dick Shetler.

"We're very lucky to have landed him. He does outstanding work and our customers will appreciate the quality of the work he does," says Murphy.

Murphy says that the store is expanding the number of classes it offers in such areas as knitting, quilting, cake decorating, crocheting and jewelry making and has added classes for teens as well.

One popular feature will be the "Make It and Take It" sessions for young people which will enable them to make gifts and take it home with them the same day.

"We're already adding new instructors and our education specialist Claudette Menard has all of the September classes already scheduled," said Murphy.

The store also sells equipment which for printing T-shirts, decorating cakes and tie-dying, which is making a strong comeback as a popular hobby.

She said another popular feature will be a deli style system for the fabric counter in which people can take a number and shop while waiting for their number to be called for cutting the fabric to the desired length.

Customers at yesterday's open house said they were thrilled with the appearance of the store and the many new products being offered.

"This is really wonderful. It looks great in here," said Joan Connelly of Moultonborough, a retired nurse who stops by about once a month to pick up yarn for knitting and quilting material.



2010 LAND ROVER LR4  
CAPABLE. VERSATILE. ATTAINABLE.

LEASE FOR  
**\$699/month\***  
\$2995 DUE AT SIGNING. 36 MOS

BUY FOR  
**0.9% APR\*\***  
LIMITED TERM

Visit your  
**local retailer**

DISCLAIMERS

LAND-ROVER

---

Dawn Campbell of Laconia is another longtime customer, who knits, sews and makes jewelry as gifts for her family.

"There are lots of children, lots of babies, so I'm always in here buying what I need to make things for them," says Campbell.

Murphy, who grew up in Belmont and graduated from Belmont High School in 1977, says that she has always been a crafts person and that managing the store is a dream job for her.

"I was in management when I worked in manufacturing but decided to go in a new direction because there were so many layoffs. I wasn't sure that the management part would carry over into retail but a friend told me about a job at the Concord Jo-Ann store and I applied and got the job," said Murphy.

She was with the Concord store for five years before taking over as manager of the Belmont store four years ago.

"It was a big challenge. But we've put a good team in place here. They even came in on a Sunday night once to help move walls and rearrange the shelves and make the displays more orderly and appealing," said Murphy.

She said that it has been fun in recent weeks to see the reaction of the customers to the newly expanded store.

"They've been very excited about the changes and we've had a lot of good, positive comments. We have an awesome team here of very friendly people who are all about making our customers have a good time while they're here shopping," says Murphy.

Paige Quigley, general manager of the Belknap Mall, said that she was impressed with the expanded store and how good it looks.

"I couldn't be more excited about the store's expansion and what it will bring to the mall," said Quigley.

CAPTION: New Hampshire State Senator Jeanie Forrester, Jo-Ann Fabric and Craft Store Manager Susan Murphy and Ginger Dubois of the Laconia office of the New Hampshire Department of Employment Security took part in a ribbon-cutting ceremony as part of the store's makeover celebration Thursday. (Roger Amsden/for The Laconia Daily Sun)