

Business news

If you have business news, fax items to 840-1802 or e-mail to business@thehour.com. Personnel items appear on Wednesdays and Fridays.

Business

The Hour

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IN BRIEF**Jobs eliminated****at state company**

EAST HARTFORD — State officials have been notified by Qualex Inc. that it will be shutting down East Hartford operations and eliminating 81 jobs.

Qualex is a North Carolina-based company that provides wholesale photofinishing services for retail businesses.

In a notice to the state Department of Labor, the company said the employees would be out of work Sept. 28 or afterward. Employees have been notified of the layoffs.

Qualex calls itself the largest wholesale and onsite photofinishing company in the world.

Chamber sets date**for Summer Cruise**

NORWALK — The Greater Norwalk Chamber of Commerce will hold its Summer Cruise, sponsored by Skyline Cruises Catering and Events, at 5:15 p.m. on Wednesday, Aug. 29. Attendees will meet at the visitors' dock at Veterans Park in Norwalk. Cost is \$80 for members and reservations are required. Space is limited.

Boarding begins at 5:15 p.m. and will depart at 5:45 p.m., returning at 8 p.m.

For more information or to make reservations, call (203) 866-2521 or e-mail info@norwalkchamberofcommerce.com

Cablevision reports higher 2Q income

NEW YORK — Cablevision Systems Corp., a New York-area cable TV provider, reported higher profits Wednesday following an asset sale, but lowered its full-year revenue and profit estimates.

The company, which has 3 million cable subscribers in the New York area and owns Radio City Music Hall and Madison Square Garden, earned \$317.4 million in the three months ending in June, compared with \$14.6 million a year ago. Per-share earnings rose to \$1.08 from 5 cents.

Cablevision's stock rose 14 cents to \$33.86 on Wednesday.

Doing her life's work

Norwalk woman puts series of therapeutic yoga programs on DVD set

By **CHRIS BOSAK**
Hour Staff Writer

NORWALK — When Shirlee Sapione survived a horrific car accident 40 years ago, she faced tremendous physical and mental challenges.

"I was pronounced dead on arrival," the Norwalk resident recalls. "I went down this tunnel of bright light and there was a beautiful man. He held my hand and told me that I still had work to do. He sent me back."

While trying to heal her considerable physical injuries, Sapione also felt an overwhelming pressure to figure out what work she had left to do. It was a burden she carried around for nearly four decades.

Five years after the accident she came to the East Coast "to find my life's work." Over the next 35 years she went on a "journey of healing," opened a health spa, worked with patients at a psychiatric hospital, helped people heal themselves through yoga, and devoted considerable time to understanding how different areas of the body impacted each other, mentally and physically.

This collective body of work and experience all led to what Sapione feels is her "life's work." Sapione, with help from her husband Rob, founded besmart Yoga, a business that has produced therapeutic yoga programs on DVDs. The DVDs, available at www.besmart yoga.com and select local stores, feature Sapione doing yoga and exercise programs.



Hour photo/ERIK TRAUTMANN

Norwalk's Shirlee Sapione poses with some of her therapeutic yoga DVDs she sells through her Web site www.besmart yoga.com

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A business can't survive without new customers

A business cannot survive and prosper without attracting new customers. Any business — no matter how well-run — loses customers every year. Not only must these customers be replaced, but if the firm is to grow, additional new customers are essential.

Poor service, unsatisfactory merchandise, price and relocation are all reasons why customers no longer frequent your business. Some of these factors you can control and some you can't. It is always in the best interest of your business to continuously plan on how to attract new customers.

Plan to attract new business

before you find that your sale numbers have dropped. Here are some steps to take to build your business:

Determine the demographics and buying patterns of customers. Determine the age, income level and tastes of retail customers. Discover business trends, buying patterns and public contracts among your commercial accounts.

Determine how many accounts you want to add in the upcoming quarter. Your starting point for customer additions is based upon the percent of customers you lose annually. After accounting for annual

COMMENTARY: SCORE

sales lost, add the percent of sales gain you hope to achieve in the year ahead. Budget your sales goals quarterly.

Identify prospects for the upcoming quarter. Methodically identify potential customers. Commercial customers can be easily identified by trade groups, through notices of public contracts and in local business journals that often list the top firms in a given industry. Retail customers are a bit more difficult to identify. However,

you can access Census Bureau data on the Internet and select parameters for your city and state to narrow the customer focus for your market. Visit <http://www.census.gov>.

If you would like to discuss marketing, prospecting or customer retention, contact the SCORE Association, "Counselors to America's Small Business." The Fairfield County Chapter is honored to have been recently named "National Chapter of the Year" by SCORE.

Elliot Baritz is Chairman of the Fairfield County Chapter of SCORE, a nationwide organiza-

tion formed in 1964 as a non-profit association dedicated to entrepreneur education and the formation, growth and success of small business. The chapter has more than 45 counselors — men and women with successful business or professional backgrounds — who volunteer their time to help small businesses with free, confidential one-on-one counseling, mentoring and email consultation. For information about starting or operating a small business, contact the SCORE Chapter at 24 Belden Avenue, 5th Floor, in Norwalk. Phone: 203-847-7348. Fax: 203-849-9308. Email: SCORE41@aol.com.

WaMu Small Business Banking

Can we interest you in an unfair advantage?

Open a Free Business Checking account with \$5,000 or more and you'll not only receive great benefits like free unlimited check transactions, free checks and free money orders, but you'll also become eligible for a 6-month rate bonus on a WaMu® Business Money Market account. About time the system worked in your favor. To learn more, talk to one of our Small Business Specialists at a WaMu near you or call 1-800-374-4646.



Business Money Market

5.15%

Interest Rate with
6-Month Rate Bonus

For balances of \$50,000 and above
See details below

Check offer for new accounts only and limited to one free WaMu check order per account anniversary year. Style restrictions apply. Visit a financial center or call 1-800-352-3414 and mention promo code: promo/wamufreechecks. 1.50% rate bonus will be added to the Business Money Market base interest rate for 180 days when you open the account with \$25,000 in new money. Minimum daily balance to get rate bonus is \$25,000. As of 07/09/2007, the base interest rate for balances of \$50,000 and above is 3.65% without rate bonus. The base interest rate for all balance tiers is subject to change without notice during the 180-day rate bonus period. Ask a financial center or call 1-800-788-7000 for current tiers/base rates. Certain restrictions apply. Offer available for a limited time at our financial centers (not over the telephone or Internet). Deposits at Washington Mutual are FDIC Insured.