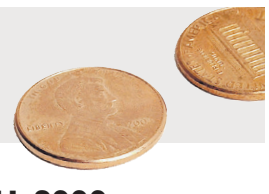




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BUSINESS

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C Section



Monday
Sweet Surprises
gets a second
home in Reading.

DESIGNING WOMAN

Marlene A. Craig creates a spring 2005 line for Izod from her city home

Her work as part of a team with the sportswear company reunites her with old friends in the business.

By **Tony Lucia**
Reading Eagle

BEHIND SHELVES holding clear glass jars filled with yarn and thread, each color in dozens of hues, hang neat pen-and-ink sketches on white paper.

On a nearby drafting table lay collages melding images of clothing clipped from magazines with vivid swatches of fabric.

A dress form patiently awaits the final disposition of the shirt taking shape on its framework.

A year from now, these materials and ideas will emerge as high-end sportswear, fused by designer Marlene A. Craig into the new Izod G — for golf — line for next spring.

Tehama, the sportswear company founded by actor-director Clint Eastwood and fashion-industry veteran Nancy Haley, is hoping lightning strikes twice: Craig, 52, owner of Reading-based M. Craig Studios, designed the phenomenally successful Izod Lacoste Golf and Tennis line during the late 1980s and early '90s.

"When we got the Izod license, she was the first person that popped into my head," said Haley, whose offices are in the Denver, Colo., area. "Who could get Izod into the No. 1 position in the industry better than Marlene Craig? I can't imagine a better team. We're going to take this a lot bigger than it was in the mid-'80s."

Craig takes on projects such as the one for Izod and for a variety of other companies.

As for Eastwood, no, Craig hasn't met him. And in any case, she's kind of busy right now.

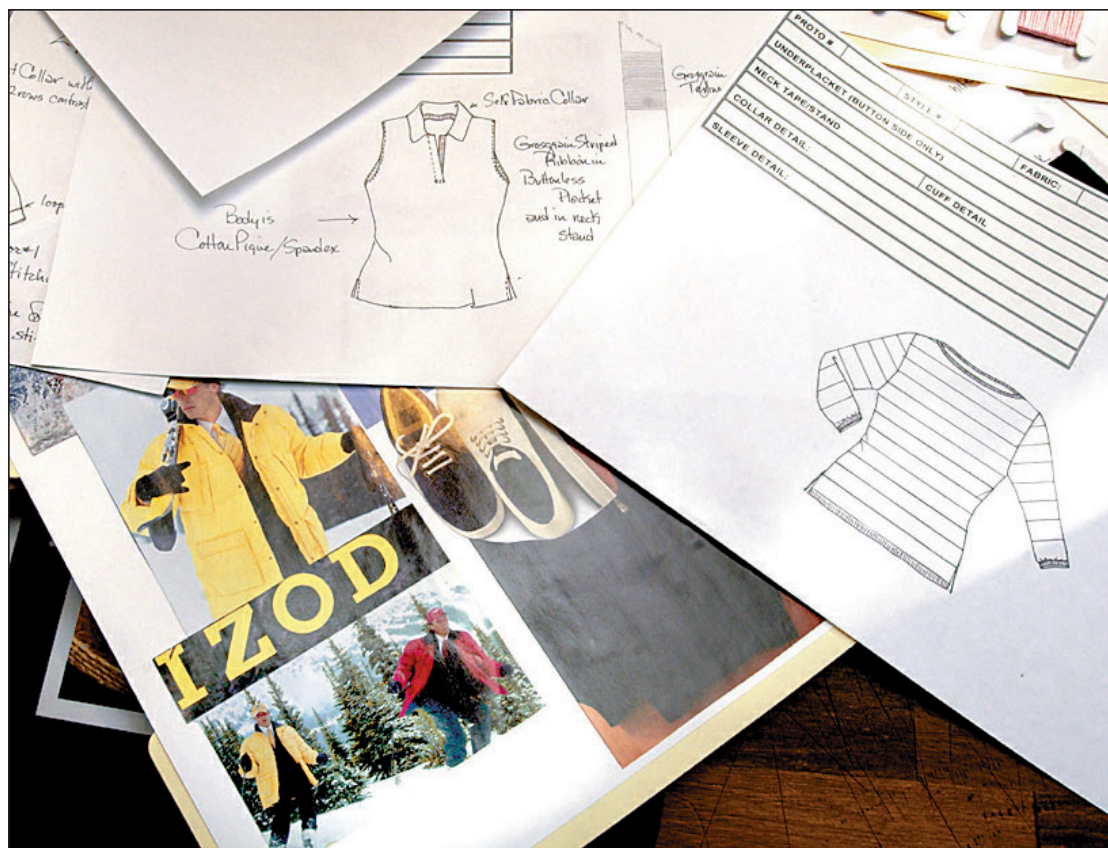
"We have to rush this because of the timing," said Craig, a slender blonde who appeared remarkably composed despite the crushing work load and the stress of moving into a new house. "Typically we have a year to a year and a half, but here we've got about 90 days to go from colored sketch to finished garment."

If Craig hadn't followed her desires, however, she might still be a schoolteacher. The daughter of a Wilkes-Barre coal miner and his wife, Craig always was fascinated with fashion.



Marlene A. Craig, reviewing fabric swatches for an Izod line, designs sportswear in her Reading home. Craig started out as a teacher, but changed careers.

Reading Eagle: Ron Romanski



Sketches of sportswear designed by Marlene A. Craig line her work area.



A sample of Marlene A. Craig's work was part of the Ben Hogan Canada line from a golf show.

Designing continues on C2

'Big John' Ulrich plans to close his enterprises and retire

The former city councilman wants to take it easy, travel and garden.

By **Christopher Hinz**
Reading Eagle

Big John's Restaurant and Catering Service, a fixture at 1316 Schuylkill Ave. in Glenside for more than three decades, will close this summer when owner John A. "Big John" Ulrich retires.

Ulrich, 73, a former Reading councilman and two-time mayoral candidate, said he felt it was time to call it quits, citing health reasons and a desire to do some gardening and travel around the country.

"I want to smell the roses," Ulrich said. "I don't want them on top of me."

Ulrich said he opened the business Aug. 29, 1972. Its final

day will be late August or the first week of September, he said.

Also closing at that time will be Big John's Restaurant in the Leesport Farmers Market.

He said he was through seeking political office, but would continue serving on the Reading Water Authority, which he was appointed to in January 2002.

Ulrich said the Glenside building, which he owns, will be put up for sale. He said he didn't care what the property would be used for, but doubted it would remain a restaurant.

"The franchises are forcing the little ones out of business," said Ulrich, referring to his own establishments and to other long-time area restaurants that recently closed, such as Fegely's in Exeter Township.

"The catering has been subsidizing this business for



Reading Eagle: Ron Romanski

"Big John" Ulrich, 73, an institution in Reading and the surrounding area, wants to take time for himself. He will shut down his Glenside restaurant and his stand at Leesport Farmers Market at the end of the summer. He says he will keep the catering service going until he sells the Glenside property.

years," he said, adding that an increasing amount of money was being funneled from the catering service to the restaurant to keep it afloat.

He said he would try to keep the catering business operating until the building is sold.

Ulrich served as a Republican councilman from 1998 to

"I want to smell the roses. I don't want them on top of me."

"Big John" Ulrich, on his impending retirement

third-place finisher as its candidate, the Rev. Robert E. Brookins, who lost to Democrat Tom McMahon in the general election.

Ulrich threatened to quit the Republican Party over the incident, but later recanted.

"They made their choice and I wasn't it," he said recently, sounding philosophical about the incident.

A Korean War veteran and former welder for Arco Pipeline, Montello, Ulrich graduated from Reading High School in 1948.

Ulrich said he doesn't know what would happen to his six employees after the closure, but said two of them are about 80 years old.

"It's time we all slow down a bit," he said.

Contact reporter **Christopher Hinz** at 610-371-5050 or chinz@readingeagle.com.

2001. He was defeated in a close mayoral race in 1999, losing by 268 votes to Democratic Joseph D. Epphimer.
 Ulrich lost his council seat to Democrat Donna Reed in the 2001 general election.
 In 2003, he finished second in the mayoral primary, but later was passed over by the Berks County Republican Party's executive committee as a substitute candidate when primary winner Curt Van Buskirk was forced to drop out because of a residency issue.
 The committee selected the