

A NEWS-PRESS SERIES:  
**SMALL BUSINESS SANTA BARBARA**

SQNP  
6/15/19



RAFAEL MALDONADO / NEWS-PRESS

**Tim Cardy, owner of Cardigans at 3030 State St. in Santa Barbara, brought the store to town more than 10 years ago.**

## SPINNING A YARN

Cardigans only Santa Barbara store specializing in yarn

By **ELIAS ATIENZA**

NEWS-PRESS CORRESPONDENT

**R**ows of yarn, clothing, and knitting sticks dot the shelves of a small and comfortable store. For the knitting aficionado, Cardigans has everything they need.

Cardigans, 3030 State St., is situated on the route that has cars buzzing by in the morning and afternoon hours. It is owned by Tim Cardy, who previously owned a knitting store in Los Angeles before moving to Santa Barbara more than 10 years ago. He has been the owner of Cardigans for two years and taught classes at Cardigans before the previous owner asked him to buy the store.

"I teach knitting and other handcraft stuff a lot. I've been teaching here and she knew I had some experience owning a store. And she said, 'Would you be interested in buying Cardigans?'" Mr. Cardy said. "And here we are!"

The store is open Tuesday through Sunday — 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. on weekdays, noon to 5 p.m. on Saturday and noon to 4 p.m. on Sundays. It's a mostly solo operation for Mr. Cardy, though he does have an employee who works part-time.

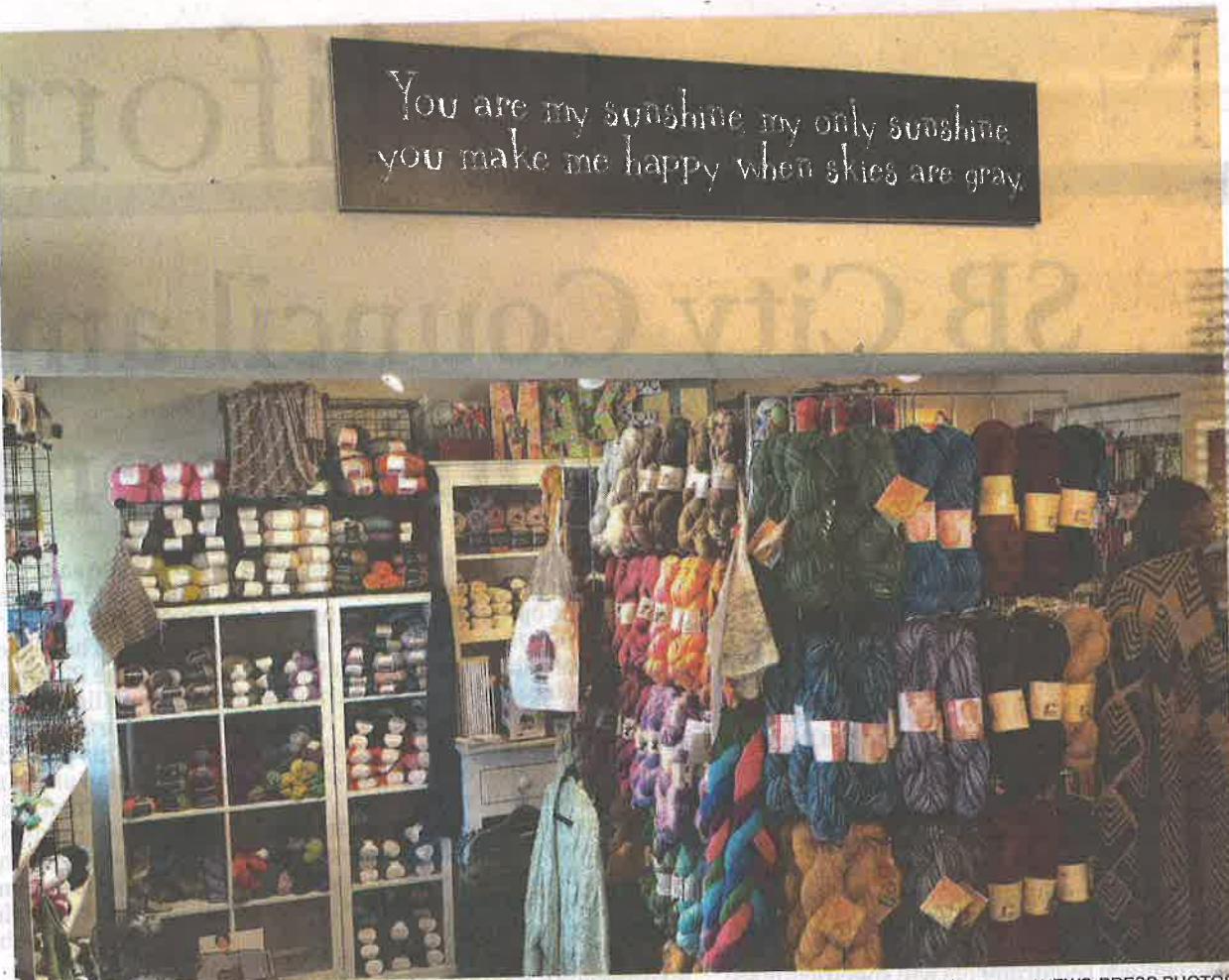
"It's an interesting, odd industry," Mr. Cardy

### A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

We celebrated National Small Business Week ... for two weeks, and we don't want the momentum to stop. Today, we introduce a regular feature that you can expect to see every Wednesday, Friday and Sunday, where we highlight local businesses in our community.

Have a suggestion? Email us at news@newspress.com!

Please see **CARDIGANS** on A4



RAFAEL MALDONADO / NEWS-PRESS PHOTOS

A look inside Cardigans, located at 3030 State St. in Santa Barbara.

# Cardigans only Santa Barbara store specializing in yarn, related products

## CARDIGANS

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said.

There used to be three dedicated yarn stores in Santa Barbara, but Cardigans is the only one left. Mr. Cardy explained that it was personal reasons, not a lack of business, that led to the other stores closing down.

"We're the only dedicated yarn and fiber store within about 60 miles. Michael's sells yarn, there's other shops that sell yarn, but we're the only dedicated store that sells just yarn," Mr. Cardy said.

He estimates that about 6,000 to 7,000 people come through his shop every year. Cardigans offers all sorts of knitting and yarn-related products, such as balls of small and large yarn used to make everything from blankets to dresses. Cardigans also sells clothing designed by Mr. Cardy himself, and items such as ceramic mugs made by Charan Sachar, a Seattle-based artist, and looms made by Ashford Looms, a New Zealand-based company.

"It's a surprisingly fashion forward, fashion trending industry," Mr. Cardy explained. "It's not old grandmother sweaters anymore."

Cardigans does sell baby blankets and other baby-related yarn products, with Mr. Cardy commenting that "We're always having babies."

But that is not all Cardigans offers. It acts as a home base for the knitting community, offering classes and shows that bring people together.



"We try to do an event once a month. Some of them are classes and others are knit-alongs ... we have an amazing fiber and knitting community here in Santa Barbara. It's a pretty massive community," Mr. Cardy said.

The most recent event was a May 17 "Trunk Show" centered on the Los Angeles yarn company, Trend-setter Yarn Group. The show was at Venable Studio, owned by artist Susan Venable and one of the pattern designers for Cardigans.

"It's just interesting things to keep people involved and to build the fiber art community more than anything else," Mr. Cardy said.

It's not just events or shows that

can draw people to the shop. People often gather at a table in Cardigans to spend time getting to know each other, with as many as 15 people at a time knitting.

Mr. Cardy says he still receives some astonishment and pushback because he is a man who knits.

"I still get, 'Oh my God, I've never seen a man knit before.' That's the funniest one," Mr. Cardy said.

"A large percentage of designers are men," he said. "A large percentage of our manufacturers are men. There are very few women-owned businesses out there manufacturing yarn, manufacturing for our business. It's interesting to see this allegedly women's craft actually got so many men involved in the business."

He is limited by the size of the shop, and said that if the industry gets bigger, that would be the "motivating" factor for him to move.

"Craft is a very cyclical industry ... it's a very fluid industry," Mr. Cardy said.

But Mr. Cardy has no plans to move Cardigans unless he has to.

"I love this business and I plan to stay indefinitely," he said.

"I'm settled here in Santa Barbara. I love living in Santa Barbara. The best move we could have done was moving to Santa Bárbara. I'm really happy with the shop."

"I love the people here. It's a real sense of community ... that's the other reason I'm here ... it's amazing how large this community is."

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