

## BusinessSpotlight

# BarterPays! oversees business-to-business trades

BY MAUREEN ALEXANDER

Correspondent

In ancient times, bartering services, or exchanging services in lieu of money, was a way of life. Fast forward to the year 2001, where the concept of bartering has been resurrected for hundreds of Central Jersey businesses, thanks to BarterPays! on Route 9 in Howell.

Many representatives from area businesses came out July 17 to an open house that BarterPays! held.

"Businesses networking together" is how owner and president Faye Alba describes her company's goals and how more than 750 businesses from Monmouth, Ocean, Mercer, Middlesex and Union counties work.

If a business becomes a member of BarterPays!, it can purchase goods and/or services with other members of the network with "barter dollars" or credits, without spending any cash, except for the broker fee, Alba said.

For example, a plumber from Freehold recently purchased \$10,000 of patio furniture from a pool store, (also a member of BarterPays!), for a job he was working on. Instead of paying cash, he has \$10,000 worth of barter dollars he will pay back to the network in services.

For each transaction, the broker, BarterPays!, receives a 10 percent cash payment, Alba said.

Membership costs \$99 in cash, and \$99 in barter dollars.

"There are lots of benefits for the business owner," said Alba, citing an example of a catering business that moved to this area from Kansas. The owner joined BarterPays!, and every job she did came from her networking with the members of BarterPays!, and plenty of new business came



Alan Kerland (left), Marlboro College Counseling, and David L. Alba, an attorney, talk with BarterPays! President Faye Alba at a get-together for BarterPays! Clients and Prospectives at the office on Route 9 in Howell. (PHOTO: JACK HOWARD/STAFF)

from referrals from this exposure, Alba said.

All types of businesses are members, and the range of occupations run the gamut, including plumbers, doctors, retail stores, dentists and disc jockeys.

If a business member is planning a party, Alba said, he or she can find the caterer, florist, disc jockey and printer for invitations all from the business exchange.

Alba started the bartering service back in 1993 out of her home. As an owner of a small graphic arts firm, she tried to join a "network barter," but there were no local businesses involved because it was based in North Jersey. As the business began to grow, she moved into a rented building on Route 9. Three years ago, BarterPays! purchased the building at Route 9.

Alba said she no longer has the graphic arts company since the barter business has grown so much. In 1993, the barter dollars circulating in BarterPays! were less than \$50,000, while last year, the volume of barter dollars surpasses \$10 million dollars.

There are five full-time employees at BarterPays!, a member of many area chambers of commerce, Alba said.

In addition, open houses are held quarterly for the members to "meet and greet," and network among themselves. During the Christmas season, an exhibition is held in a banquet hall for a members-only shopping event, Alba said.

To become a member, call (732) 364-4614. Business hours are 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday.

Copyright © 2001, by The Asbury Park Press. Reprinted with permission.

# BarterPays!

BarterPays! Inc. • New Jersey's Leading Barter Network Since 1993  
2587 Route 9 North, Howell NJ 07731 • 732-364-4614