

Couple's new business helps seniors pack up possessions

By MICHAEL LYLE

VIEW STAFF WRITER

When Stephen and Francine Fields help seniors make a change in living arrangements, they like to do it as smoothly as possible.

Stephen has had experience managing moves and estate sales. When he and his wife decided they wanted to transition into a career that used their strengths, senior move management was the first thing that came to mind.

"I went on the Internet looking," Francine said. "I combined his skills with my experience in property management and real estate and came up with senior move management."

To them, this seemed like a smart decision. Francine said she read an article that named Las Vegas as one of the top destinations to which baby boomers retire. With the amenities of Sun City Anthem for senior populations, adopting a business that catered to the community seemed smart.

The Fieldses then discovered Smooth Transitions and became a licensee.

"We are not a franchise," Francine said. "We are independently owned and operated. We were incorporated in October and began business in January."

Stephen knew that he and Francine could operate a business such as Smooth Transitions on their own but decided he would rather be part of a larger organization.

"Why reinvent the wheel?" Stephen asked. "As a licensee, we gain a national network."

Smooth Transitions helps seniors make moving arrangements, pack their possessions, unpack, decorate, set up estate sales, haul trash, find a business to clean their home if they moved, change utilities, ship items to family members, orchestrate the moving day and organize their house.

"We do as much or as little as people want us to do," Francine said.

Karen Andrews was referred to Smooth Transitions when her mother



MICHAEL LYLE/VIEW

Smooth Transitions co-owner Francine Fields loads a customer's clothing onto hangers in preparation for a move to an assisted living facility.

had to transition from independent living at Las Ventanas, a retirement community, to assisted living.

"They helped take care of a lot of the details," Andrews said. "The complicated part (of the move) is her stuff is going so many different places. Some of the stuff is going to my mother's new apartment. Some of the stuff is going to my house, and some is going to my son's house. To have a company to take care of all the details is wonderful."

For Andrews, Smooth Transitions is orchestrating all aspects of the move.

The Fieldses knew they would have a thriving business; however, they were pleasantly surprised at the amount of work they have received.

"We expected to do a move a week," Francine said, "maybe four or five moves a month. Now, sometimes we do six or seven a week. Our business is operating as though we have been around for years, not months."

Francine said they have never had to turn a client down, and they are able to be both efficient and successful with all moves.

Even though the ideal time frame for the Fieldses to work is about a week, there have been times when they were asked to help on short notice. One time, Francine received only 45 minutes notice that a client

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Joys of June include Cher, Frank Marino and more

The noted poet E.E. Cummings wrote that "the most wasted of all days is one without laughter." French writer Françoise Sagan claimed that "there can never be enough said of the virtues, dangers or the power of a shared laugh."

SUMMER COMEDY SERIES

If you're looking for a good laugh this summer, join comedian Tom Papa when he hosts The Orleans Summer Comedy Series at The Orleans, 4500 W. Tropicana Ave., June 25 and 26. Guest comedians will be joining him throughout the series that continues July 31 and Aug. 1 and Aug. 27 and 28. Showtime is at 8 p.m. For the past eight years, Papa has been touring with Jerry Seinfeld, who selected him to be the host of the television show "The Marriage Ref." Tickets begin at \$19.95. Call 365-7075 or visit www.orleanscasino.com.



Jack Bulavsky
ENTERTAINMENT

CHER RETURNS

She's back. Cher has returned to the Colosseum at Caesars Palace with a new rock medley that is accompanied by costumes and choreography that celebrates old-time Hollywood glamour. Her 90-minute show is a nonstop concert production featuring the legendary icon's record-breaking hits from "I Got You Babe" to "If I Could Turn

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needed help.

"We were able to get a moving truck out there in 45 minutes," Francine said. "We never turn anyone down."

They have even had times when they were told the house was packed and just needed to be moved. However, upon arriving, they discovered otherwise.

"Nothing was packed," Stephen said. "So what was supposed to be a four-hour job turned into seven. But being in this industry, you have to have that type of patience. We are here to earn a living, but we are also here to bring compassion to people."

The Fieldses know they are good at what they do, but it isn't always just business.

"Sometimes you get attached to the people you are working with," Francine said. "If we go out to dinner after a move, we might take the person out with us. They become part of our family."

Stephen knows people are trusting him to take care of a lifetime's worth of memories in the form of houses, antiques and memorabilia. Knowing that, he has to have a different mindset when connecting with customers.

He also knows that his clients often are dealing with a rough transition.



MICHAEL LYLE/VIEW

Smooth Transitions co-owner Francine Fields and her employee Vell Johnson prepare a customer's belongings for a move to an assisted living facility.

"Seniors have a lot of apprehension and fear when moving," Stephen said. "The first stage of the move is addressing the fear."

Once the fear is addressed and trust is secured, the Fieldses help their clients rearrange their lives.

The standard rate for their services is \$50 an hour per person. The Fieldses usually charge for only two people even though they often use three or four to help in the moving process.

"Some people can't afford everything," Stephen added.

For information about Smooth Transitions, call 656-2007 or visit movingforseniors.com.

Contact Henderson and Anthem View reporter Michael Lyle at mlyle@viewnews.com or 387-5201.

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Back Time." Showtime is 7:30 p.m. June 15, 16, 19, 20, 22, 23, 26, 27, 29 and 30. Tickets start at \$95. To purchase tickets, call (866) 510-2437.

ROCKIN' DINNER SHOW

Remember those wonderful dinner shows at the Sahara, Stardust, Sands and Tropicana? "Only You Starring Derek David" is a true dinner show that features some of the biggest hits produced in the '50s and '60s. It is being performed downtown on Fremont Street at Hennessey's Tavern.

"This is a resurrection of soulful music from some of the best singers in the city," said David, a 40-year member of The Platters. "It fuses Motown, '50s and '60s music and personal memories to form a collaboration of good feelings."

A three-course dinner is served nightly (the show is dark Tuesdays) at 6:30 p.m., and the show is scheduled to begin at 8 p.m. Tickets begin at \$59.95. To purchase, call 204-5686.

FRANK MARINO AND FRIENDS

Frank Marino is gathering some of his friends for an afternoon of entertainment at the Clark County Library, 1401 E. Flamingo Road, at 3 p.m. June 26. Enjoy a bit of comedy, dance and female impersonators. Adults only. For details, call 507-3459.

ROLLER COASTER RIDING

Looking for a cheap thrill? Primm Valley Casino Resorts is celebrating summer with free attraction passes Monday through Thursday throughout June for Nevada residents. My suggestion is The Desperado so you can experience an exhilarating view of the valley from 209 feet before plunging at tremendous speed into a succession of twists, turns and unexpected surprises. This giant coaster is 2.43 minutes of pure heart-pounding fun. For more information, call 679-7433.

FREE COURTHOUSE CONCERT

The Backward Glance Band is set to perform bluegrass, old-time country, folk and gospel music in

the jury assembly room of the Lloyd D. George Federal Courthouse, 333 Las Vegas Blvd. South, at noon June 18. The concert is free.

SPEND FATHER'S DAY WITH MERMAIDS

Father's Day is June 20. What to do? Take him to the Silverton, 3333 Blue Diamond Road, and enjoy the popular aquarium that features mermaids and interactive fish feeding shows. The 117,000-gallon reef aquarium has more than 4,000 tropical fish and three species each of stingrays and sharks.

Feeding shows are scheduled daily at 1:30, 4:30 and 7:30 p.m. Mermaid shows begin at 11:30 a.m. Sunday. Later, walk a few feet into the Bass Pro Shop, and prepare for sensory overload. This colossal superstore spans two levels offering just about anything to do with any kind of recreation. There's even a gun range and archery range on the premises. For details, call 263-7777.

END ON A LAUGH

Back to comedy, where I quote Milton Berle, who said, "Laughter is an instant vacation." So take this short trip of some '60s rock-n-roll songs renamed for folks such as you and me:

Herman's Hermits: Mrs. Brown, You've Got a Lovely Walker.

The Bee Gees: How Can You Mend a Broken Hip.

Bobby Darin: Splish Splash, I Was Havin' a Flash.

Roberta Flack: The First Time Ever I Forgot Your Face.

The Commodores: Once, Twice, Three Times to the Bathroom.

Marvin Gaye: Heard It Through the Grape Nuts.

Leo Sayer: You Make Me Feel Like Napping.

The Temptations: Papa's Got a Kidney Stone.

Abba: Denture Queen.

Helen Reddy: I Am Woman, Hear Me Snore.

Lesley Gore: It's My Procedure and I'll Cry If I Want To.

Jack Bulavsky is a 35-year Nevadan and has covered the entertainment, dining and gaming industries for local and national publications. Contact him at bula53@earthlink.net.

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