

Design Week Plans Coalesce

■ Santa Fe event highlights everything from fashion to architecture to urban planning

By KIERA HAY
Journal Staff Writer

Planning for the second annual Santa Fe Design Week — which city officials are calling one of the City Different's leading economic initiatives — is picking up steam as event producers enter the final phase of organizing for the Oct. 22-29 event.

Design Week will spotlight local innovators in industries such as architecture, graphic design, urban planning, green and interior design plus landscaping and fashion, with an array of events, including speakers, panels, competitions and classes, taking place at various venues around Santa Fe.

Sponsored by the city of Santa Fe economic development division and produced by Grace Communications, Design Week was created to foster Santa Fe's developing reputation as a center for design excellence, according to Craig Fiels, an economist with the city.

Fiels said the City Different has talented people working in several sectors of design, and Design Week should help raise their profile. Green design is expected to be one of the industries most heavily touted.

"Our (city) economic plan outlines goals for Santa Fe to become a leader in renewable energy and water conservation technology," Fiels said.

The benefits of promoting design in Santa Fe are potentially extensive, said Fiels, including creating more career opportunities for young people who might otherwise be forced to leave.

El Museo Cultural de Santa Fe, Design Week's main venue, will host a large Expo on Oct. 28 and 29. Exhibits, booths, demonstrations and lectures are planned, as well as a series of informal discussions led by local design leaders.

In addition, several films will be shown during the Expo, with short documentaries screened at El Museo and longer films shown at local theaters such as Cinemacafe and Jean Cocteau. Design Week is about helping people understand how design is applicable to their own lives, Fiels said.

He said Pueblos del Sol park in south Santa Fe is an example of design used within the context of community building. Plans for the park were created at last year's Design Week during a collaborative design effort by children, parents and artists. Pueblos del Sol is scheduled to be built by volunteer labor Sept. 13-17.

A design plan for a second

See DESIGN on PAGE S3



Shahin Medghalchi owns and runs Heriz Oriental Rug Services out of her two-story home.

EDDIE MOORE/JOURNAL

Art & living

Business owner with passions for textiles and dancing brings her work home

By KATE MCGRAW
For the Journal

For Shaheen Medghalchi, bringing her two vocations home had her life.

In March, Medghalchi moved into a residence at the southeast corner of Don Diego Avenue and Cordova Road that she had been remodeling since June 2005. She lives upstairs and operates her rug sales and services from remodeled quarters downstairs.

"Since I moved to this building, my whole life changed. I'm the best I've ever been in being able to concentrate on my life," Medghalchi said.

Upstairs is also where she tangoes. Literally. Among the amenities upstairs is a dance studio where she teaches tango privately to a group of 30 or so students.

"I do the rugs for the beauty and the artistry," said Medghalchi. "For my real heart, I do tango."

A long journey

Born in Tehran, Iran, to a family from neighboring Azerbaijan, Medghalchi began dancing at age 5 and

Heriz Oriental Rug Services, Inc.

1201 Don Diego, Santa Fe

PHONE: 983-9650

ON THE WEB:
www.herizrugs.com

said she "lives for" that art. (Medghalchi prefers not to publish her age, but she has been dancing for decades now.) She was also well-schooled in rug curating and conservation at a world-renowned carpet museum in Tehran.

For most of her adult life, she said, rug services and dancing have competed for her attention. Her family, whose adult members are scattered across the country, came to the U.S. in the '80s. For a time, Medghalchi was a competitive ballroom dancer, supplementing her income with rug cleaning and mending on the side. As she got older, she began concentrating on the tango, about which she is passionate, and now focuses

on teaching fundamentals and movements of the Argentine dance.

Meanwhile, since 1989, she had worked cooperatively with her sister Simin, who owns Quality Oriental Rugs. In 1998, Medghalchi began her own business, although, she said, "the two businesses are an extension of each other." A dispute with the landlord of her previous building left her without a location for her rug cleaning and other services, so she decided to find a large enough residence so she could bring her business home.

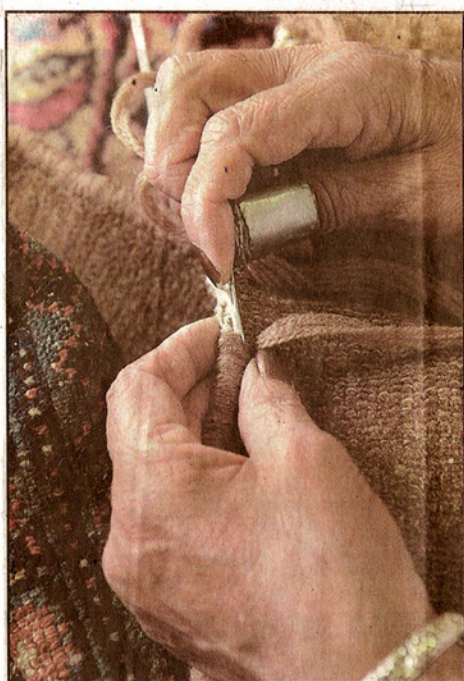
Her property, like many in the area, is zoned for "home occupation residential," Medghalchi explained.

Why Santa Fe? "I had family here, I visited, I fell in love with Santa Fe and they left," she said. "The energy of Santa Fe goes with my energy, and the beauty of New Mexico always intrigues me. This is like home."

Rug services

Medghalchi does not waste time on false modesty when

See OWNER on PAGE S3



Master repair person Pac Beltran works on a 120-year-old Persian rug.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 22, 2006 S3

Owner Brings Work Home

from PAGE S1

it comes to her rug business.

"I am the best," she declared. "I have four subcontractors who work full time and have all been trained by me. I was born an artist, and any artistry is in my nature. I love the textiles, living with them, loving them, bringing them back to life.

"Behind every textile in the world there is a story. It carries the energy of the person or people who wove that rug or tapestry," she said. "It takes respect and love to cherish the history behind any old pieces."

She has a two-week waiting list for appointments to bring in rugs.

The most important challenge for cleaning hand-woven rugs is protecting the colors, Medghalchi said. For cleaning, she said, she uses natural substances "that you could eat in your salad — that's enough of a hint," and biodegradable soaps.

As for restoring rugs, she and her subcontractors have rewoven rugs with eight- to 12-inch moth holes, she said. "If you have a rug of enormous value — or even of enormous sentimental value — you want to restore it to its finest glory," she said. She also sells rugs, mostly what she calls "Persian" rugs from Iran. "I like the word Persian," she



EDDIE MOORE/JOURNAL

Pac Beltran, the master repair person at Heriz Oriental Rug Services, repairs a 120-year-old Persian rug.

said. "It goes back to the Persian Empire, and has to do with nobility and the essence of that."

People need to learn the differences between Persian rugs and cheaper copies being made in India, China and even Afghanistan, Medghalchi noted. "Some of them are very attractive, but the appreciation (in value) will not be the same on your money."

She recommends "The Macmillan Atlas of Rugs and Carpets" by David Black (1985) as a good reference source.

Business at home

Medghalchi said the decision

to bring her work home has made her happier than she has ever been.

There are challenges, she says. "It challenges one's discipline of controlling the hours of work, when you can work anytime you want to. It is a growth to learn where to draw the line.

"When you have a business somewhere and a house somewhere, there is a separation," she said. "Most of us are married to our business, so it is — I don't know — cozier, to have your business at home where your life is. Here on Don Diego, I live above the store and I dance above the store. It is a good life."