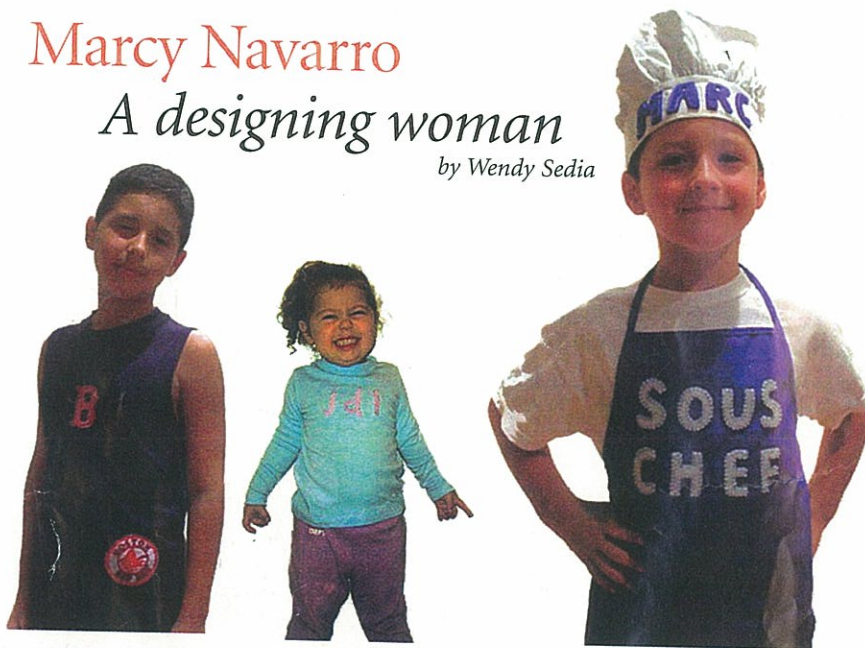


Marcy Navarro

A designing woman

by Wendy Sedia



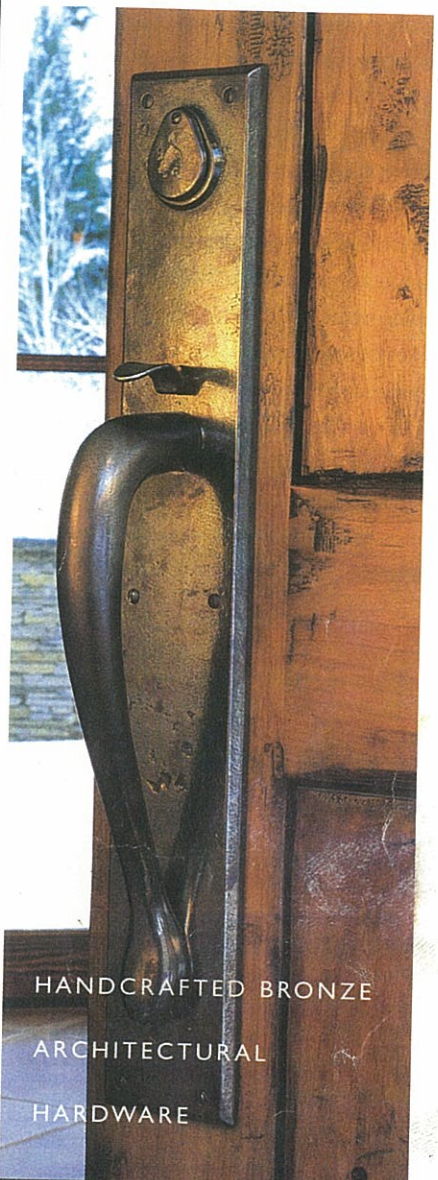
NEWTON RESIDENT MARCY NAVARRO IS ONE BUSY LADY. IN ADDITION TO CREATING HER OWN LINE OF CUSTOM-CRAFTED T-SHIRTS, SHE ALSO OFFERS CLOTHING FOR ALL AGES AS PART OF THE MARCY NAVARRO COLLECTION. IN ADDITION, SHE MANAGES MAXWELL FLEA MARKET, LLC, A MULTI-CULTURAL 10,000 SQUARE FOOT INDOOR AND OUTDOOR BAZAAR, IN DORCHESTER, EVERY SATURDAY AND SUNDAY FROM 8 A.M. TO 4 P.M.

That enterprise, located in what she describes as "a smurf-blue colored building," caters primarily to an international community, and houses a mix of 35 colorful and varied vendors from Haiti, Puerto Rico, South America, the Dominican Republic and Vietnam. There, shoppers can merrily dig for treasures through mounds of assorted merchandise, and unearth anything from upscale second-hand clothing to incense, used electronics, mangoes and yucca, unusual toys and antiques and delicious homemade cakes. What



fun! Navarro, who is Jewish, has run that business, with her Puerto Rican husband Jose, for the past 10 years.

And, as if that were not enough, Navarro, 38, is the mother of four children, two grown stepchildren from her husband's previous marriage and two young sons, ages five and eight. When she is not involved in either of these pursuits, she can be found overseeing children's birthday parties or making favors for social gatherings and corporate events. And, during the school year, Navarro displays her wares at



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college fairs and craft shows. The energetic designer is now in the process of building her own website, www.fashionsbymarcy.com.

Cheerful and outgoing, Navarro, who is also fluent in Spanish, is full of creative ideas when it comes to her fledgling T-shirt business. Inspiration for her original designs comes from literally everywhere, she says. Marcy incorporates words and humorous expressions she likes into her garments. And, she gets help from her young nieces, friends and other family members taking their suggestions into consideration as she sets about inventing her newest products. Cutting letters and shapes from fabric is her specialty, she says. Her hand-crafted clothing, which is also sold in a Stoughton boutique, comes in a wide array of colors and a large range of sizes from infant size 0-months to adult 4X.

Apart from doing her creative work, Navarro still manages to make time to volunteer with children at both the Countryside Elementary School and the Preschool Experience in Newton and at Camp Gan Israel of

the Shaloh House in Brighton.

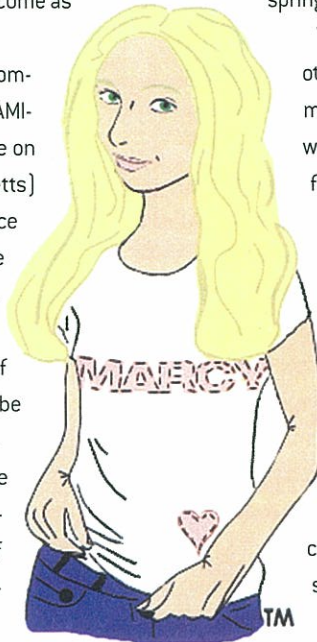
"Whatever you give, you get back a thousand fold," she says with a smile, explaining that many of her orders have come as a result of her doing service.

In September, Marcy was nominated for, and won, the NAMI-Mass award (National Alliance on Mental Illness of Massachusetts) for her leadership ability, service and dedication to help those less fortunate than she. Navarro is preparing fundraising t-shirts for "NAMI Walks," of which half the profits will be donated to that organization.

Describing herself as, "the fashion consultant of the family," Navarro, the eldest of three daughters, a 1986 Newton South High School cum laude graduate, says she was always interested in clothing and style since she was a child. After

high school, she went on to attend Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia as a political science major and was graduated Phi Beta Kappa in the spring of 1990.

What differentiates Navarro from other small business owners, she maintains, is her willingness to work closely with her clientele to fulfill their requests and meet their needs. That can include such intricate details as using variegated (three color) thread instead of solid color thread on her garments. And she will customize her creations with symbols, words, graphics and color combinations according to her whim or her client's specifications. Navarro says she enjoys collaborating with those who buy her products and treats each order the same, no matter what the size or the dollar amount of the sale.



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Navarro hires two women from the Dorchester flea market area and a third from Randolph to sew the garments, and help her fill the orders she receives, all on 100 percent pre-shrunk cotton fabric. She makes a wide variety of ethnic and religious themed t-shirts, many with a Spanish motif, as well as creates kipote (caps worn by Jewish men and boys during religious services) and t-shirts with simple Hebrew lettering.

There are roughly 150 stock designs in all, she says. In addition to her t-shirts, Marcy embellishes baseball caps, hats, tank tops, aprons, long and short sleeved shirts, sweatshirts and maternity-ware. The heart motif is extremely popular with her clients, explains Navarro, and has become her signature logo.

Her father's influence

NAVARRO ATTRIBUTES HER STRONG work ethic and business sense to her father. His successful family owned enterprise, Maxwell

Corrugated Box Co. in operation since 1923, was originally located in Charlestown, and later in Dorchester. Her father sold the business in 1994 to the Unicorr Packaging Group headquartered in North Haven, Connecticut.



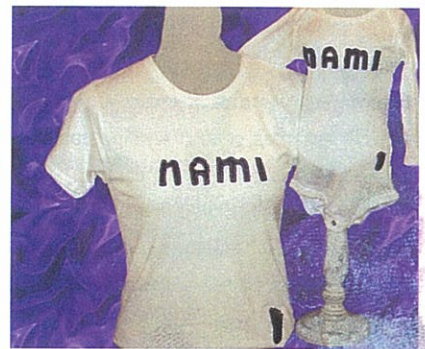
Marcy says she was given lots of responsibility at an early age while she was employed by her dad as the customer service manager in that firm. Navarro worked there during her summers while in high school and college and then full-time from 1990 to 1993. That early training, she says, helped her learn how "to close the deal." And, that experience enabled her to become a businesswoman in her own right by helping her develop the traits common among successful entrepreneurs —creativity, discipline, a can-do attitude, vision, persistence, unflagging energy and dedication to one's enterprise.

Ann Ackerman of Barrington, Rhode Island is one of Navarro's satisfied clients. About six

months ago, a friend gave one of Navarro's t-shirts as a baby gift for her new infant daughter. Ackerman liked the gift so much that she tracked the designer down via the Internet so that she could give something similar to her expectant female friend.

"We loved it. It's really simple and lovely—not frou-frou or overdone like some little girl's clothing is. It was simply perfect," she said. ▲

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