



Take It or Leave It clothing & more

S. Elaine Lyttleton

Published 12/18/2009 - 11:09 a.m.

As Vince Lombardi said, "It's not whether you get knocked down, it's whether you get back up." This is certainly true for O'Dean Negrón, owner of the Take It or Leave It clothing store.

In the past three years Negrón has been burned out by the Witch Fire, involved in a head-on collision on state Route 78 that left him in the hospital for two months and in recovery for another eight months, and has had to close and/or move his store three times.

After the Witch Fire, Negrón gave away much of his inventory to families who had lost everything in the disaster. He coordinated the donations through teachers at the schools to be sure clothing reached the people who needed it the most.

When he subsequently had to move store locations, a job he was trying to tackle on his own, many people with trucks showed up to help—the people he had helped when he had donated clothing to them.

Negrón is back up and with his partner Robert Sisson now has the store open at 1530 Main St., Suite 1B, next to MacDonald's. With the help of manager Carol Anderson, who has been with him throughout these ordeals, they opened in August.

The inventory is comprised of apparel and accessories for both men and women, with about 50 percent new and 50 percent consigned gently used items.

"We have clothing ranging in price from \$6 to \$6,000, and aim for high-end items," said Negrón. Their goals are ambitious: by the end of next year they expect to be carrying 80 percent new clothing and 20 percent consigned high-end items, again both men's and women's. Plans are in the works to open two other consignment shops—one in Poway and one in San Marcos—and in January Negrón is buying the salon in Carlsbad where he works as a hair stylist.

Through all his trials and tribulations, Negrón has kept his bookkeeping in order, tracking all of the 300 consignees.

Consignees are encouraged to come in to the new location with their consignment tickets to retrieve monies that may still be owed to them.

"We are also still honoring the Bonus Bucks promotion we had at the prior location, and encourage customers to bring them to shop," said Anderson.

"It's been quite a road, but I'm back," said Negrón.

He has a sign hanging up in his Take It or Leave It store that he said perfectly reflects his attitude toward life that keeps him going: "Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away."