

## Personal shoppers to the rescue

Leslie Harlib

Judy Domenici, a Larkspur resident in her early 50s, offers yet another type of service. She works as an image consultant, but what she's built a reputation for over the past eight years is helping people shop in their own closets.

"It becomes a coaching situation," she says. "I assist them in feeling good about letting go of articles of clothing that no longer reflect where they are in their lives. It's very personal. I get them out of the clutter and clothing that no longer reflect them and into the present." With a background in fashion and retailing, Domenici, petite and chic, says she has built a core client base of around 30 women and men.

On a Sunday afternoon in late October at Gene Hiller, an upscale clothing store in Sausalito, Domenici's on her knees on the second floor. She's creating what she calls "pre-pulled stories" out of more than a dozen men's wear ensembles that she organized in advance.

Gary Cook, a real estate investor from Los Altos and one of her clients for the past six months, arrives and inspects each "story." Domenici explains why each one works for his coloring, his build, and his various needs. Cook, 58, tries them on and winnows them down to three that he likes, with a lot of input from Domenici.

"She came blazing into my closet and pretty much cleaned it out," Cook says. "She left me with just a couple of basics; we filled up five huge garbage bags of things to give to charity." Over a series of shopping trips, Domenici helped Cook build an image from what she calls the inside out, including new eyewear and hairstyle.

"I never could figure out how I wanted to present myself," Cook says. "Now I dress for the sheer pleasure of wearing beautifully cut clothes that make me feel fantastic. And I'm noticing that people pay more attention to me, both in my personal life and in business."



Judy Domenici, a Larkspur image consultant, displays wardrobe selections to client Gary Cook at Gene Hiller in Sausalito. It becomes a coaching situation, Domenici says of her services. (Special to the IJ/Thomas K. Sorensen)



Gary Cook tries on a pink shirt recommended by consultant Judy Domenici. (Special to the IJ/Thomas K. Sorensen)

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Like the concierge brokers, Domenici notices that her clients are "people who don't have time. I assist working people who have very full schedules as well as families. They don't even have time to shop. That's why we start in the closets. I help them make the best of what they already have before we go out and get new things."

Maryanne Comaroto of Kentfield, an author and media personality, said, "At first I thought the idea of an image makeover was frivolous." She's been working with Domenici for two years.

"But in this busy day and age that we live in, services like Judy's can help me look at what my options are and help me organize so I can present myself at my best, and in the end also have more time for my family," Comaroto says. "It's win-win for everyone."



Tom Gangitano of Gene Hiller in Sausalito watches as Gary Cook tries on a tuxedo picked by Cook's shopping assistant, Judy Domenici. (Special to the IJ/Thomas K. Sorensen)