

SURVEY RESULTS

The survey showed nearly 9 out of 10 consumers said they heard about the recall,

vey of 1,200 people was conducted over three weeks in November, more than six weeks after the spinach recall

supermarkets, not including big-box stores such as Wal-Mart or Costco, showed an overall 14 percent drop in

Russell, president of the grower and shipper of leafy green vegetables in Salinas, Calif.

Some firms hurt by 9/11 are thriving today

By CAROLYN RUSHEFSKY
STATEN ISLAND ADVANCE

Many Staten Island businesses that were severely hurt following the World Trade Center disaster have managed to survive and even thrive.

Among those on this list is a thankful My Going Places Travel, which has increased its business by expanding its Internet service, and was re-named: My going places travel.com.

"We book clients across the country now," said Peter Fanizzi, owner of the Castleton Corners-based travel agency, whose family has been in the travel business for more than three decades.

"The travel industry was directly affected by 9/11 — and even now faces worldwide terrorist problems," he said. Last year, for instance, travelers were delayed at London's Heathrow airport after the British government smashed a terrorist plot to blow up airplanes heading to the U.S.

"Yet, people today are adamant about going on vacations, especially those who are in their 20s and 30s," Fanizzi said.

"It's a matter of record that most of those in this age group have grown up going on vacation, cruising, touring with their families and even going somewhere on their own. This is also the so-called Internet generation, and expanding the dot-com portion of his travel agency from a fraction of his business in 2000 has led to its becoming a major part of his business. And their interest in travel enables our agency to exist, thanks to our combining the Internet with our personal service," he said.

Fanizzi's booming travel business prior to 9/11, completely evaporated following the attack on the World Trade Center, he said.

In April 2002, he moved out of his former Victory Boule-



Peter Fanizzi, owner of the Castleton Corners-based My Going Places Travel agency, and Diane L. Montali, of Arrochar Fuel Corp. say their businesses have rebounded since Sept. 11, 2001.



STATEN ISLAND ADVANCE/FRANK J. JOHNS

vard location to a smaller store a few doors away. He began developing e-mail programs, currently sending some 40,000 e-mail promotions a month.

One example, for instance, is Fanizzi's www.mygoingplacestravel.com offer for travel to Italy, featuring a "Tuscan Culinary Experience."

"You have to be a constant marketer," Fanizzi said.

ARROCHAR FUEL CORP.

In the days immediately following the Sept. 11, 2001, disaster, the Arrochar Fuel Corp. trucks, like all non-emergency vehicles, were unable to access the downtown area.

But that restriction was lifted a month later, said Diane L. Montali, who heads the Rossville-based business. The company specializes in onsite deliveries of diesel fuel, kerosene and No. 2 heating oil.

"Today, business in general is very busy — our five trucks head out every day to general construction sites in the five boroughs and in surrounding New Jersey counties," Ms. Montali said.

Founded 50 years ago by

her mother-in-law, Lydia Montali, Arrochar Fuel Corp. has been run by Ms. Montali since 1980. She noted that the company now has its third generation woman principal. Ms. Montali's daughter, Amanda, has joined the business, and is in charge of its daily operations. The family-owned business also employs Diane's husband, Guido Sr., and their sons Guido Jr., Michael and Matthew.

Asked about her business outlook for 2007, Ms. Montali said: "We're hearing from our customers that are big construction companies that they are planning major projects, and that it should be a pretty big year," Ms. Montali said.

SUCCESSFUL RESTAURANT

In the aftermath of Sept. 11, 2001, Michael Calore of New Springville had to shutter his Italian restaurant, Via, on Greenwich Street, one and a half blocks from Ground Zero.

Almost all of his business — dining, takeout and delivery — had been from the World Trade Center, Calore said.

Despite his obvious economic loss, Calore was unable to obtain a low-cost loan from

the U.S. Small Business Administration.

So, in 2002, Calore, an experienced chef, decided to open Es-Ca, a Italian restaurant at 1559 Richmond Rd., Dongan Hills. (Es-Ca combines the first two letters of Calore and Esposito, the last name of his father-in-law, Andrew, who helped him set up the restaurant. It also contains that first two letters of the last name of Calore's partner, Max Calicchio).

"The restaurant business is tough, but we are surviving into our fifth year as of Oct. 1, and are doing well," Calore said. "We have had a few decent restaurant reviews, and have a good base of loyal customers."

A large part of Es-Ca's success "is that we do a tremendous amount of parties at the restaurant, with space suitable for more than 120 people, he said.

"We do weddings, showers, communions, graduations, christenings," Calore said, adding "It also helps that our specialty is really good food at a reasonable price."

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