

## SOQUEL AVENUE BUSINESS

# Jerry's Sports to move to Soquel Ave.

Sports shop that lost prior Soquel spot in fire to move into former Harley-Davidson building

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SANTA CRUZ — Jerry's Sports is returning to its former neighborhood near the Rio Theatre after having to move following the 2002 fire that destroyed its Soquel Avenue shop.

Owners Jerry and Joanne Malmin plan a mid-November opening in the building on the corner of Soquel and Seabright avenues that formerly housed Harley-Davidson. Harley-Davidson was forced to close its doors in November of last year, citing bad sales in the declining economy.

"We had to start over from scratch," Joanne Malmin said about the fire, which destroyed their 5,000-square-foot shop. Authorities said the fire likely started in a storeroom wastebasket.

The couple spent the next seven years rebuilding their business along Highway 1 on Soquel Avenue near 40th Avenue, a couple of miles from its former location.

The current location does not see the foot traffic they used to enjoy at the Eastside business corridor, the Malmins said, but their loyal customers ensured their survival.

"We can't wait to get back there," Jerry Malmin said. "From what I hear, the other merchants in the area are



SHMUEL THALER/SENTINEL

**Jerry's Sports will be returning to Eastside Santa Cruz, relocating to the former home of the Santa Cruz Harley-Davidson motorcycle dealership at the corner of Soquel and Seabright.**

excited to have us back."

Business owners say the foot traffic and customer base on the Eastside can't be beat. "My business right now is thriving and it is mostly local people walking in the door," said Lisa Canepa, co-owner of Blue Moon Clothing Co.

She has rebounded this year from a hard time after the economy took a nosedive.

Shoppers interviewed Wednesday expressed a loyalty to the area.

"We can pretty much get anything here," said Kirsten Greer, who lives a block off the business district, while walking her dog along Soquel.

Greer said the addition of the Whole Foods Market in March this year made it virtually unnecessary to leave the area.

Other businesses have opened as well, including: Arteak Interiors, Vivas Mexican food and Solar Technologies.

Jerry's Sports will share

its 13,000 square feet of space with Vanguard Realtors owned by Linda Charmin. She said the business will likely open at the new location in January. Her shop will occupy a small corner of the overall space.

Jerry Malmin is looking forward to occupying and reviving the prime location come mid-November.

"Before the fire, we had been on the Eastside for 21 years. It's going to feel good to be back home again."