

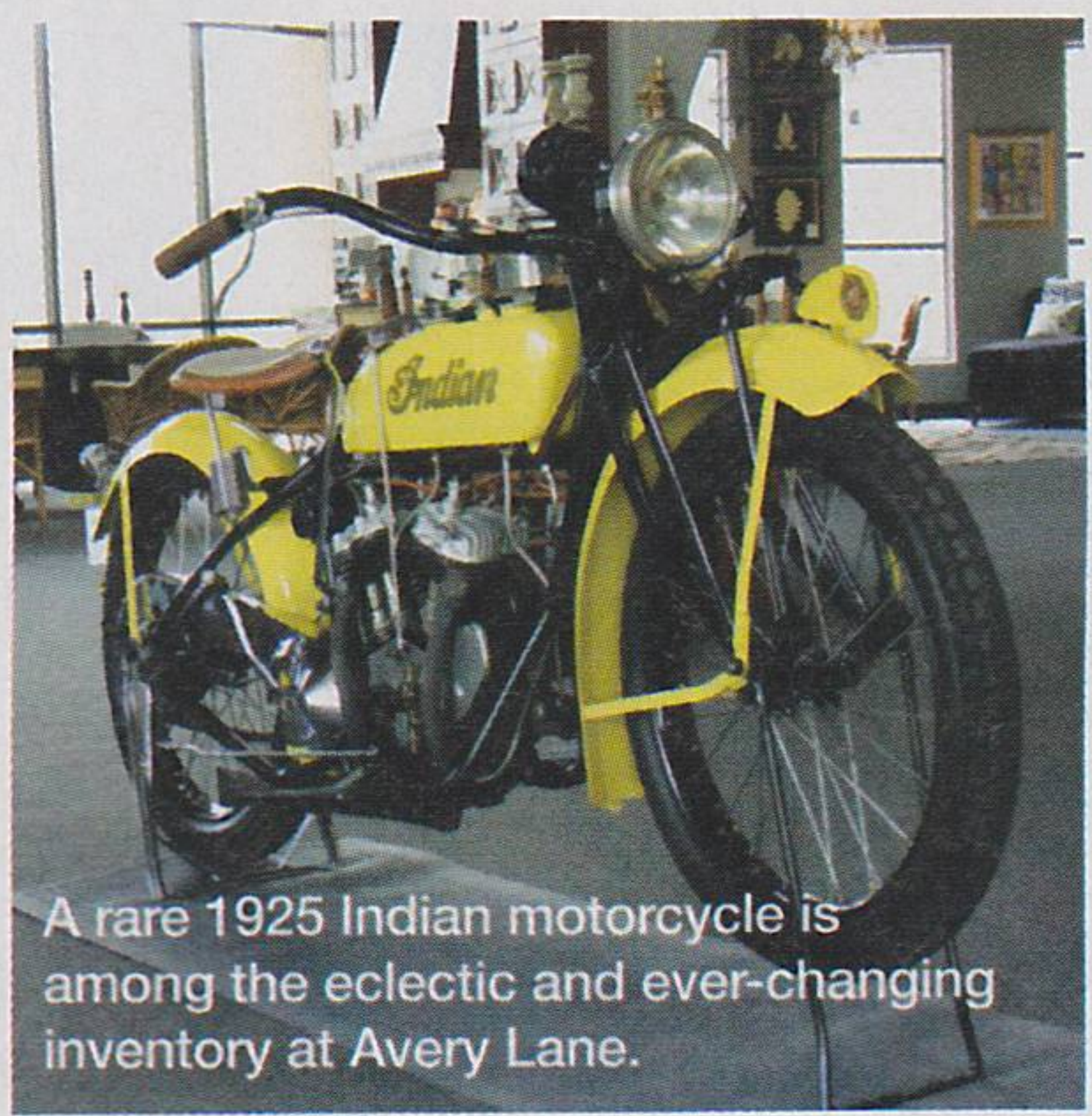
A STROLL DOWN *Avery* LANE

15613 N. Greenway-Hayden Loop
480-991-0700
Averylanehome.com
Mon.- Fri. 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
Sat. 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
Sun. Noon-4 p.m.



By Kristian Seemeyer

What do an antique Parisian flower cart, a 1925 Indian motorcycle and a Clive Christian luxury kitchen have in common? Seemingly nothing at all until you step through the doors of Avery Lane Fine Consignment Furnishings, Antiques and Specialty Gifts, where the treasures have found a temporary home amongst other signature pieces in a sprawling 8,000-square-foot showroom in the Scottsdale Airpark.



A rare 1925 Indian motorcycle is among the eclectic and ever-changing inventory at Avery Lane.

After years of specializing in luxury real estate and property marketing, Avery Lane's founder and owner Darlene Richert decided to take the road less traveled. She wanted a business where she could work side-by-side with her daughters and teach them a work ethic and the value of a dollar. On weekends and after school, says Richert, the store's namesakes—Delaney, 13, and Avery, 9—dust, vacuum, label items and perform odd jobs in the showroom and 1,500-square-foot warehouse.

Richert says her children practice math and computer skills as they input the inventory, add the profit margin and then make the price tags. "This is where they learn how the business makes money," she says. "They can also create marketing fliers and it helps them work on their writing skills. I've been blown away with the funny slogans or taglines my girls create."

With that mission in mind, Richert proceeded and found a parallel purpose: to discover knockout home furnishings and showcase them in the ample space they demand. "I want to be known for signature pieces," says Richert, pointing to some 17th and 18th century French and Italian



Darlene Richert says official store mascot Ringo comes home exhausted but happy after a day of charming customers.



chairs and trumeau. "I am narrowing in on fine furniture, and finding that diamond in the rough. Each of these pieces has a story."

The stories behind Avery Lane's inventory have brought some unintended benefits for Richert and her clients. "Many times people are looking for help. They may have to downsize due to illness or age, and they want a good home for family pieces. Much of it has been in the family for ages. I didn't

realize I would be having this kind of relationship with my clients," Richert says.

One Avery Lane client, who declined to give a name, said she was impressed with the seeming newness of the pieces and how they are showcased. "It doesn't even look like a consignment shop in here; there is so much space to show off the pieces," she said. "It's immaculate. Take the way the furniture is displayed—you can actually step back and see it."

The art of display turned out to be one of Richert's biggest challenges: saying no to a great piece of furniture. "I think there is this urge out there [amongst consignment businesses] to take in every single great piece, but I want to maintain ample space to showcase them." Before the March 2012 opening, Richert says she had a terrific response from business connections and friends—there

was no dearth of fabulous choices with which to furnish the Avery Lane showroom.

Coveted lines such as Clive Christian, Drexel Heritage, Kreiss, Ethan Allen and Robb & Stucky adorn the space along with antiques the likes of which are rare in the Valley. Unusual light fixtures, lamps and chandeliers are another of Richert's passions.

Richert was drawn to the Airpark by the vibrant small-business atmosphere. "People

Richert's RULES

- "I look for items that are extremely well made, clean and that will stand the test of time."
- "I steer away from items I've seen a hundred times . . . I know my clients shop consignment for the quirky nature of our items."
- Functional antiques are fab: "Like a beautiful 1920s dining set. The buffet's side cabinets open to reveal four velvet-lined drawers—charm and function at the same time."
- "Whenever a particularly colorful piece arrives, I know the design clientele will jump at it and make it the room's statement."
- "Our shoppers visit the store on a weekly basis just looking for accessories, so we are always hunting as well."

shop the Airpark when they want to buy local, so it fits the overarching philosophy of a consignment store, recycling, go green, etc.," she says.

Also, her target market is those who live in the private golf club communities that abound in the area. "The Greenway-Hayden Loop is perfectly accessible to that clientele, who might be visiting Kierland or the Scottsdale Quarter to shop or dine," says Richert. "Avery Lane is a mere two minutes from these shopping malls so the location is a perfect complement. But most importantly, it is my neighborhood and close to my friends, family and all the places I need to frequent." ■