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They opened their doors to Minuteman Press on State Street on April 15, 1986, and as they get ready to pass the day-to-day business, now located at the traffic circle, on to their daughters, they reflect on how life in Newburyport and business has changed.

"It's a business really rooted in the community," Misenheimer said. "I can easily remember when we

were the new guys on the block and now we are just a name in town and that's very good, that's an

After an 18-year career at Towle Silversmiths where he worked up the chain of command, Sumner

"I said, 'I'm going to quit,' and here we were with two little kids, two cars and a mortgage and we

came home one day and told Dottie he wanted to do something new.

117. The franchise now has close to 1,000 locations.

"branded" promotional products.

have been especially gratifying.

She will continue with the bookkeeping.

NEWBURYPORT — Sumner Misenheimer remembers when he and his wife, Dottie, were the new

BRYAN EATON/Staff PhotoNikki Misenheimer, left, is taking over ownership of Minuteman Press from her parents who opened the business in Newburyport 30 years ago. From left, Nikki, her father, Sumner, sister, Kim Bohlen, mother, Dottie and employees Tammy

Cooper, Lucky Holleran, Vincent Venuti and Linda Laterowicz.

business in Newburyport.

accomplishment."

decided to do something new," he said. It was a trip to Fowles newsstand perusing the magazines that led Misenheimer to his destiny. "I found one of franchises and started pulling things out," he said.

It wasn't long after that the Misenheimers inked a deal to open a Minuteman Press franchise, No.

of my own decisions," Misenheimer said. Dottie, who had also worked at Towle and a bank in Boston, was and continues to be in charge of all the bookkeeping.

"We had to make a living and I felt that we had learned enough at Towle and I wanted to make some

changed any more. In the beginning, they focused primarily on ink printing using old-fashioned metal plates, and it was very much a hands-on trade. Over the years, they have seen a huge upheaval in the business, they said, as printing went digital and people want a one-stop shop for all their printing needs from menus to banners to marketing swag.

Minuteman has recently introduced direct mail advertising opportunities at a lower cost and a line of

"A lot of our customers have been with us for many years. Our customer base is within 10 to 15 miles

of where we sit," Misenheimer said, noting their relationships with the school and municipal systems

Over the past 30 years in business, the Misenheimers say the way printing is done couldn't have

"The biggest shift has been over the last 10 to 15 years with Newburyport becoming a location for restaurants," Misenheimer said. "We see new businesses come in and sometimes people come in with

a solid business plan and you know they are going to make it and sometimes you hope they make it.

The family counts the vast majority of small businesses and restaurants in the area as clients.

All the restaurants have become a great destination for the town."

While Misenheimer said he and Dottie are taking more time off these days, they are calling it a "working retirement" and will continue to oversee the business from afar. He also mentors new business owners through the SCORE program in Haverhill and Lawrence. "It's a lot of fun to take what I know and give back," he said.

"We are proud of our long-term relationships with our employees. Linda Laterowitz, our sales rep,

our company general manager, is at 12, and Tammy Cooper just celebrated her fifth year and Kim

Bohlen is our newest at two and a half and the most recent family member to join us," Misenheimer

has been with us 15 years; Vic Venuti has an accumulated time of nearly 20 years. Nikki Misenheimer,

said. Nikki Misenheimer will eventually take over full-time. "It's exciting to watch them do what I did so many years ago, but better." The company is also planning an expansion to kick-start the next 30 years, Misenheimer said, including new cutting-edge machinery and technology and added personnel in client services to better work on a one-to-one basis.

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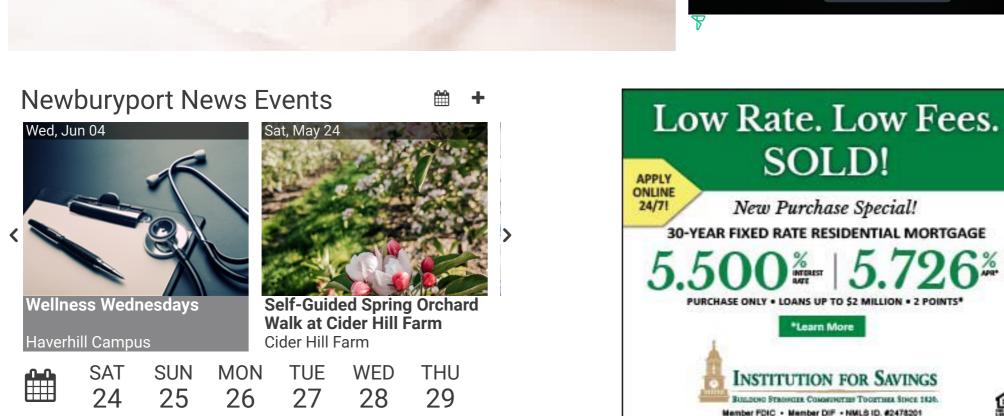
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"Dottie and I are looking forward to more time off and transitioning into 'retirement' as soon as we

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can figure out what 'retirement' is," he said.



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