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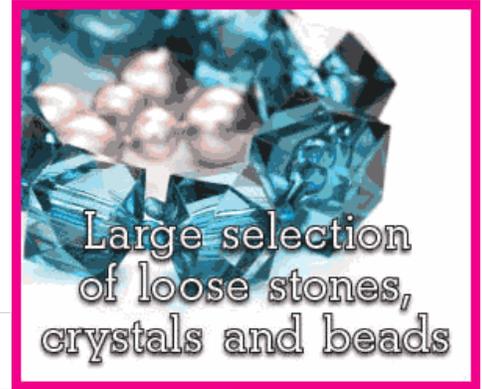


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## Mom & Pops: Queens Craft Store Battling Big Chains

Friday, August 8, 2008, by Leslie Price



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One doesn't think of the arts-and-crafts trade as being a cutthroat business, but the knitting needles are flying in Glendale, Queens, where the 37-year-old **Cook's Arts & Crafts Shoppe** is fighting for its life against the Goliaths that are Michael's and A.C. Moore. Both chains moved into Glendale over the last couple years, and they are squeezing the life out of the family-owned Cook's, which is run by 90-year-old Virginia Cook, with a healthy assist from her granddaughter Michelle.

The shop used to be Cook & Son Television Service, run by Michelle Cook's Grandpa and Dad ran until 1971. Virginia devoted a little section of the front to selling yarn and teaching crochet. She soon expanded to crafts and hobbies and moved the TV repair stuff down to the basement. Since then, she has devoted hours and energy into making sure every home craftsperson gets the material they need.

Michelle has stepped in to stem the decline in business, creating a [website](#) complete with a blog and podcast (the [YouTube clip](#) on how to use Rexlace is oddly mesmerizing), and sending out mailings to locals schools and senior centers. She's also contemplated changing the sign, but we hope she doesn't. That's a sweet piece of old-time signage. — [Lost City](#)

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