

currents



A midtown coworking space called THINKHOUSE COLLECTIVE caters to writers, designers and other creative types. Owners Jeremy Maron and Janna Marlies Maron call it the "unoffice." >>

THEY LOVE COWORKING (AND EACH OTHER)

Two years ago this month, midtown residents Jeremy Maron and Janna Marlies Maron started ThinkHouse Collective, a coworking space, in a yellow Victorian house three blocks from the Capitol. Since then, they've become engaged, married and moved the business.

Conceptualizing coworking

Janna found out about coworking in 2007, when she left her editorial job to freelance. Working from home got lonely, and the coffeehouse work environment didn't offer the collaboration and social interaction she craved. A Google search on shared workspaces led her to information on coworking, an unheard-of concept in Sacramento at that time. "I'm the kind of person who believes that if the thing I want doesn't exist, it's up to me to create it," she says. In the spring of 2009, she connected with local marketing consultant Brandon Weber, who had posted on his blog the idea of using his building at 20th

and H streets as a coworking space. The two coworking visionaries, along with James Pierini, opened The Urban Hive in June 2009.

Thinking about ThinkHouse

In December 2009, Janna left The Urban Hive and went back to working from home and cafes. She and Jeremy began exploring the idea of opening a coworking space together. They found many businesses unwilling to rent them office space because they didn't

understand the coworking concept. In October 2010, ThinkHouse Collective opened in a house at the corner of 11th and R streets.

Playtime at ThinkHouse

ThinkHouse has hosted everything from poetry readings and murder mystery parties to bridal showers and birthday celebrations. Creative nonfiction magazine *Under the Gum Tree* (Janna is founder and editor-in-chief) had its launch party at ThinkHouse, and several Second Saturday events have taken place there. Artwork from local artists adorns the walls. "We never thought of using the space for just one thing," says Jeremy. "You're only limited by your imagination." Their own events run the gamut from weekly bull sessions to a monthly book club with selections related to entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation.

Moving on up

In July, the Marons relocated ThinkHouse to a bigger building at 1617 18th St. The additional space allows



Jeremy Maron and Janna Marlies Maron

ThinkHouse to charge monthly rates starting at \$49. In the two years since ThinkHouse started, its members have included writers, photographers, software designers, social media managers, editors and sales representatives. While the setting is different, the goal is still the same: to support Sacramentans who need a place to work that isn't a cafe. "There's something to be said for working at a place where you're surrounded by other entrepreneurs and professionals," says Jeremy.

Love and coworking will keep us together

You could say that work—and coworking—brought the Marons together. The two met when Jeremy was dating one of Janna's coworkers. In 2007, after that relationship ended, Jeremy and Janna frequently ran into each other in midtown and started up a friendship. The pair began dating in 2008, but it wasn't until after they started ThinkHouse that they got engaged. If they could handle the stresses of entrepreneurship as a team, they reasoned, they could make a marriage work. "I realized, hey, I'm really in love with this girl and we've started a business together," says Jeremy.

Second Saturday wedding

The Marons decided early on that their October 2011 wedding would be more of a party with friends and family, and midtown Sacramento would have to be one of the invited guests. So on that month's Second Saturday, the couple exchanged vows in a parking lot not far from Mulvaney's Building & Loan, their reception location. The bridal party's recession to Mulvaney's turned into a parade, with onlookers cheering and applauding the couple. "It was like something out of a movie," says Jeremy. "Sacramento was standing up and celebrating us."

—Corinne Litchfield

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