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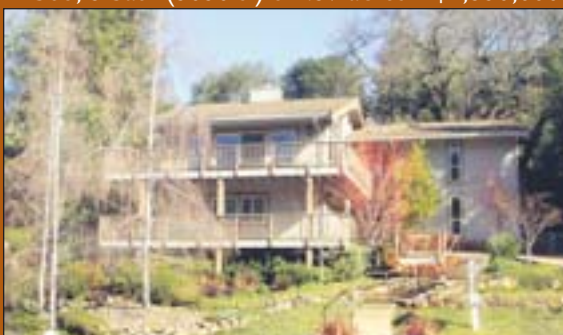
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business briefs

Artisan Bistro Opens on Brown, 962-0882 - www.ArtisanLafayette.com

Artisan Bistro opened in the space formerly occupied by Gigi on March 10th at 1005 Brown Ave under the new ownership of John Marquez. Marquez has had a very successful career as a chef at Fringale in San Francisco, as a chef de cuisine at Coi in San Francisco, and he has worked with Thomas Keller at Per Se in New York and at the French Laundry in Yountville. "I chose Lafayette because the residents are restaurant savvy," says Marquez, "and because it's close to my Walnut Creek home." Marquez changed the décor and completely redid the kitchen. His cuisine's style is definitely Californian, using French techniques to magnify the organic local ingredients he uses. "We chose a distinct sustainable approach to our offering, including the wine," says the Chef. The dishes include herbed rack of lamb with carrot puree and balsamic potatoes, duck breast and leg confit with fennel and orange, and salmon tartar. At lunch a great variety of salads and sandwiches are served.

Lafayette Bookstore and Knox Partner to Provide Tasteful Reading

Linda Grana and Dave Simpson, owner of the Lafayette Bookstore, have been doing book presentations to book clubs for years, up to 50 times a year. The new idea is to open the presentation to the public and to partner with the business across the street, Knox restaurant, to offer an even more enjoyable experience. "Our book talks are always casual and interactive," says Simpson, "so bring a friend and get together with other book lovers for an afternoon of literary conversation at Book Talks at Knox." He and Grana will be presenting about 20 books they've just read, some of which are not out in the public yet. The idea of partnering with Knox is an offshoot of the Try Lafayette First campaign. "It is a good way to cross promote each other," says Gary Singh, Knox's owner, "we will sample some of our foods so people will get to know us better and at the same time they will hear about great books they can get across the street." "Yes, there is no more efficient public relations than cross-publicizing," confirms Simpson who had been looking for a way to open the book club talks to the public for a while. He confirms that he and Grana will continue to present to book clubs, while offering the public sessions at Knox about once a month. After the first run on March 26, the second talk is scheduled for April 30th, at the same time of 3 to 4:30 p.m. at Knox, 576 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Lafayette. For more information call the bookstore at 925-284-1233 or email at mail@lafayettebookstore.com.

Wolf Camera (Now Ritz) to Close Half of its Stores

The almost 100 year old private company was bought by Ritz Camera in 2001 when it filed for bankruptcy. Now Ritz, one of the largest retail camera and photo chains in the United States with approximately 1,200 locations, filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection in February of 2009, resulting in the closure of half of the group's stores nationwide. Ritz Headquarters declined to give any details or comments at this time. The Moraga store closed late in March 2009, the Lafayette store is still in operation.

Owners of the Rheem Theater Expand to Orinda

Jim Sheehan and Tom Peterson, the two partners currently running the Rheem Theater in Moraga, confirmed that they have reached a verbal agreement with the landlord of the Orinda Theater to take over the landmark. "It will take a few more weeks before it's all signed, but it looks like no one is throwing a monkey wrench at the deal right now," says Sheehan. The two partners believe that owning the two theaters will allow for more diversity and better synergy between the establishments. "Overall we will have seven different displays to offer Lamorinda residents a multiplicity of choices," believes Sheehan. Further details will be divulged in the summer.

Lafayette's Top Realtor, Dana Green of J. Rockcliff Realtors' Lafayette Office, Earns Top 1% Honors and Achieves GRI Designation, 3799 Mount Diablo Boulevard, Suite 100 - 339.1918



Green has also recently earned the highly regarded Graduate Realtor Institute (GRI) designation having successfully completed an intensive, comprehensive course of training providing her with an additional array of skills and expert services with which to serve her clients. A native of Lafayette and a second-generation Realtor, Green augments her real estate career by donating time, energy and leadership skills to a variety of local organizations such as the Lafayette Juniors where she is a past president as well as the founder of that organization's popular Kitchen Tour event. Green has been recognized for her volunteer work with Lafayette School, and also donates a portion of each transaction to Lafayette Art & Sciences Foundation.

Lafayette Tree & Landscape completes Contra Costa Green Business Program

P. O. Box 1116 Lafayette - 284-7816 - www.laftree.com

Lafayette Tree & Landscape has won official recognition from the Bay Area Green Business Program for its longstanding environmental practices. "We've always focused on doing the right thing environmentally when it comes to running our business," said Thomas Raeth, the owner of Lafayette Tree & Landscape, "we have solar power, make an effort to conserve water, with smart controller technology, and electricity, recycle and take many other steps to tread lightly on the environment." Raeth explains that the practices carry to the landscape projects, so their customers benefit from the company's green expertise in every project they take on. "Sometimes the green choices we make are something simple, but we also have the depth of experience to install some high-tech irrigation systems that can really save water and money over time. The key to going green is looking at projects from top to bottom and making choices that are environmental and cost effective." The Bay Area Green Business Program verifies that businesses meet higher standards of environmental performance. Their partnership of government agencies and utilities helps local businesses comply with all environmental regulations and take actions to conserve resources, prevent pollution, and minimize waste.

News from the three Chambers of Commerce

Tri-Chamber Mixer on Tuesday, April 7, 5:30 to 7 p.m.: Tri-Chamber Mixer with Lafayette, Moraga & Orinda Chambers, Douglass Designs 3577 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

The tradition of a Lamorinda Chamber Mixer is gradually settling in. This time the meeting will be hosted by Douglass Designs a full service design firm and tailored remodel consultant, at their Mt Diablo Blvd. showroom. This is a great opportunity to meet and mingle with Chamber neighbors.

Lafayette Chamber

- Shop Lafayette working group meeting on Tuesday April 14 at 8 a.m. in the Chamber Conference room.
- Green committee meeting on Wednesday April 15 from 11:45, Lafayette Chamber and bring your own lunch.
- New member reception on Thursday April 16, hosted by Bank of the West, 3583 Mt. Diablo Blvd. 5:30 to 7 p.m.
- Business Issues Committee, Friday April 24 at 8 a.m. Chamber conference room.

Moraga Chamber of Commerce

- The Community Faire will be held on May 9 from 11 to 4 p.m. in the Rheem Shopping Center. For a registration form go to www.moragachamber.com/events.
- Chamber mixer on Tuesday April 28 at 6 p.m. After talking about "Constant Contact" and How to optimize your web site, the next meeting will focus on networking.

Orinda Chamber of Commerce

Orinda Chamber Luncheon, Friday, April 24, Noon to 1:30 at the Orinda Country Club, 315 Camino Sobrante. Luncheon Presentation: Guest Speaker Lee Ann Kleinfelter, owner of Keeping Order, is an expert in implementing personalized time-saving strategies for corporate executive and business leaders. She is a member of the National Association of Professional Organizers and a certified "Eyes of a Stranger" assessment consultant. Cost \$30.00 - Please RSVP 925-254-3909.

CCCSWA Turns Commercial Food Scraps Into Electricity

By Sophie Braccini

Believe it or not, commercial food waste is the second largest stream of waste in our suburbs, after green waste. According to Paul Morsen, Executive Director of the Central Contra Costa Solid Waste Authority (CCCSWA) it represents 19.7% of what ends up in the landfill. These are produced by restaurants, supermarkets (whether they offer catering or not), schools, retirement homes and more, and right now these commercial sites have no recycling obligation.

"We had been looking for a way to reduce this important stream at a reasonable cost," said Morsen, "in San Francisco this is done by the NorCal Waste Authority but at a cost that would be too high for our region." Then, during one of his professional meetings, the Director talked with one of his associates at the East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD) and found out that the agency was running a digester that transformed the sludge from polluted water into electricity (capturing methane) and creating soil covering material, and that this unit was running under capacity.

Now if CCCSWA could transfer its commercial food waste to EBMUD, it would turn it into electricity and fertilizer as well. To that end, two things needed to happen: First, convincing the producers of the waste to sort it themselves, and then to find a place and material to grind the waste small enough for EBMUD to process.

CCCSWA decided to run a pilot of some 30 locations along highway 680, including one Lafayette location: the Duck Club restaurant at the Lafayette Park Hotel. "We thought our restaurants could sort at the source," says Morsen, "now we have more people ready to go than we can accommodate."

Everything in the kitchen of the Duck Club at service time has to be fast and efficient. If sorting trash between compostable and non-compostable items could be made here it had to be very practical and not add any extra tasks to the cooks. "I was aware of the recycling in the restaurant in San Francisco," says Lafayette Park Hotel General Manager Tony Eichers, "and as I was looking for a solution for us; I heard of CCCSWA pilot, it was a perfect opportunity."

The practical solution was found in the installation of tall green trash bins that sit by each workstation. "Our staff was very easy to train," says Chef Chuck Courtney, "first of all they all knew about recycling and were eager to contribute; we found the right ergonomics and the program has been running flawlessly." "The new bins improved my productivity," says young cook Joseph Zarati, "the height is better, it is very easy to just slide the scraps in." Another bin is located by the station where dirty dishes are returned, but there are rarely scraps to be had there.

The cost for CCCSWA is right too. "The charge for us is reduced," says Morsen, "so it is really a win-win solution." The tipping fee for waste is \$52.50 a ton while EBMUD charges \$32.50 a ton to dispose of the food waste. To that cost needs to be added the grinding and transportation,

but Morsen does not anticipate an increase in rates.

The pilot will progressively be extended to all of the commercial clients of CCCSWA over the next year. "Commercial food waste recycling is a priority for Orinda and the entire CCCSWA," says Orinda Council Member Victoria Smith who sits on the Board of the agency, "we very pleased with the initial results (the pilot) and the growing interest in the program. I understand from the CCCSWA staff liaison, Bart Carr, that there is a waiting list of volunteer restaurants that want to participate.

The benefit to the environment is enormous; not only do we remove large quantities of food waste from the landfill, but we turn it into energy to power the EBMUD plant. In 2010, the pilot program should be expanded into the Highway 24 corridor into Lamorinda."

The biggest commercial food waste producer in CCCSWA territory is Saint Mary's College. Matt Carral, the Sodexo Director on campus, has expressed a great interest in participating; now CCCSWA has to figure out a route that will include the pastoral location.



Moraga Rotary Is Hosting An Open House!

Come and learn what it means to be a Moraga Rotarian.

Learn About:

- Our History
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- Our International Projects
- How to Become a Member



Please join us for a hosted lunch at our open house on:

Tuesday, April 14th, 2009 at Noon

at ...

Saint Mary's College, in the Soda Center

Please RSVP: Let us know if you will be attending the Open House by phone, Day: (925) 376-2244 Night: (925) 631-0725 or by email, Mike@MikeisThere.com (Limited Space Available)

We are looking forward to seeing you there!

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