

Safeway Responds to Concerns

By Sophie Braccini



Deborah Potter loves the new smaller carts at Safeway

Photo Sophie Braccini

New small shopping carts, cleaner bathrooms and products on request are some of the innovations you might notice while shopping at Moraga Safeway. These improvements are the result of a meeting held a few weeks ago between David Volo, the new manager of the Moraga Safeway, his district manager, Helen Carver, Fiona Artiaga, Moraga Juniors Women's Club President and Edy Schwartz from the Shop Moraga First Committee.

It all started when Schwartz was invited to a Moraga Juniors' meeting to present the "Shop Moraga First" campaign. There, the young women expressed their frustration with the supermarket, which is the only grocery store in town. Schwartz asked them to put their concerns in writing and went on a quest to find a sympathetic ear at Safeway.

Schwartz contacted the local Human Resources manager, and a meeting was organized in Moraga. During the discussion, the women handed out their list. It was comprised of four different categories in which Safeway could improve: Customer service, out of stock items, cleanliness, and navigability of the store. In all these areas, the management decided to take rapid corrective action.

"We wanted to respond quickly to the customers' most urgent requests," said Esperanza Greenwood, Public Affairs manager for Safeway. "One of the first things we implemented is the suggestion box in the customer service section of the store where customers can provide feedback to the new store manager about their specific concerns." The previous procedure involved sending the suggestions to the corporate office where they were sorted and dispatched.

Safeway has also made other changes to the store. The wire baskets and aisle stacks have for the most part been removed from the aisles. Management has also ordered 60 new shopping carts. "These are the smaller shopping carts that are easier to maneuver and were specifically requested by the residents," comments Esperanza. The store is also addressing the issue of cleanliness and has implemented a new schedule for cleaning the bathrooms every hour and conducting a deep clean every day at 3:00 p.m.

Another key request from Moraga customers had to do with the choice of products in the store. "If a customer requests an item that is sold anywhere at another Safeway, I guarantee that we will get it as soon as the request is formulated," assured Volo during a Moraga Chamber of Commerce meeting.

Schwartz was happy with the outcome of the meeting. "Carver is committed to responding to any customer demand and has given her email, Helen.Carver@safeway.com, so people can use it. It is possible to improve the shopping experience at Safeway in many ways. The management is listening, so let's give them a chance." She wants to remind Moraga shoppers that even though food is not taxable, there are many items at Safeway

such as paper towels, tooth paste and cleaning products that should be bought locally to maximize the town's tax revenue. "As other issues come up we will do our best to address them and work with the residents to provide them with the outstanding customer service and superior quality items," concludes Greenwood.



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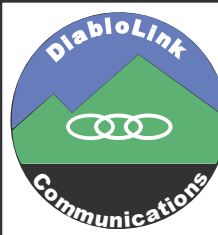
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