

Life in LAMORINDA

Per Tutti Ristorante—Lunch with Your Best Friend

By Andrea A. Firth



Pepsi is enjoying her delicious lunch

Photo Andrea A. Firth

I don't go out to lunch much. My days as a freelance writer are spent in large part on the phone and in front of a computer screen. Lunch is a bagel with cream cheese on a good day, with peanut butter on an ok day, and nothing on some days when my son eats the last bagel for breakfast. So when the editor said she needed a writer with a dog to try out the doggie menu at Per Tutti in Lafayette, I jumped at the opportunity.

I invited my friend Tracy and her flat coat retriever, Bryce, to join my dog, Pepsi, and me for a Friday lunch. (And yes, my kids did name the dog.) Upon arriving, I was thrilled to find a parking spot on Mt. Diablo Boulevard directly in front of the restaurant. I filled the parking meter with all the change that I had to cover a leisurely hour-long lunch. I think a dime got me about seven minutes. When Tracy

arrived, I learned that she had parked for free in the lot a few steps away. It was becoming obvious that I don't go out to lunch in Lafayette very often.

The morning June gloom had lifted by midday, so Tracy and I chose a table in the sun. We decided to order and eat our lunches first then to treat the hounds to Per Tutti's doggie menu. Both Bryce and Pepsi have dark black coats (although Pepsi's coat has a hint of a brown, like the soda of course), so once the dogs realized that they were not going to get any of our food or even much of our attention, both retreated to lie on the cool brick sidewalk in the shade. The waiter had brought each dog a bowl of water, so they were comfortable.

I had a great caprese sandwich—fresh mozzarella with vine-ripened tomatoes, basil, and avocado on a Kaiser roll with pesto



It's all about the beach & the bikini...
be one to three sizes smaller by summer!

Jumpstart Your Weight Loss

Lose 15 to 60 pounds in 12 weeks!

Individual Appointments with Physician • Dietary Guidance
Safe and Effective Medication and Vitamins • Long Term Weight Management

jumpstart
MEDICINE

San Ramon
2301 Camino Ramon, Suite 290
925-277-1123

Walnut Creek
710 S. Broadway, Suite 110
www.jumpstartmedicine.com

sauce, and Tracy enjoyed a spinach salad with bacon, mushrooms, and red onions. The menu includes a number of other appetizing lunch items that I could de-

scribe, but my assignment was to check out the doggie menu, right?
... continued on page 18

Sudden Oak Death Starting to Invade East Bay Area

Submitted by Expert Tree Service, Orinda



Tree located at Sleepy Hollow Lane, Orinda

Photo Expert Tree Service

Sudden Oak Death (SOD) is spreading through the east bay area resulting in the dieback of several tree species including tanoak trees and other oaks, including coast live oaks and California black oaks.

Homeowners need to be aware of this disease caused by Phytophthora ramorum, a plant pathogen that was first discovered in Europe in 1995, and spread to the United States (Santa Cruz County) in 2001. Today, the disease has reached 14 California counties, from Monterey to Humboldt and

continues to spread. Two counties that are highly infected include Santa Cruz and Marin (specifically, Mt. Tamalpais) according to the Department of Natural Resources.

Sudden Oak Death has killed more than one million trees to date, and at least another million are currently infected. Researchers at University of California-Berkeley estimate that 20 percent of the live oaks in the area will perish from SOD if left untreated.

... continued on page 19

PET INSURANCE

By Mona Miller, DVM

Veterinary pet insurance options have become much more numerous in the past several years. Veterinary care for pets is usually an out-of-pocket expense. Depending on where one lives in the country, this can be considerable - whether it is for monthly medication for health (flea and tick control, heartworm preventive) or chronic disease (skin allergies, thyroid disease, diabetes, arthritis) or for unexpected trauma. Here in the Bay Area, it is not unusual for a dog's fractured leg to cost several thousand dollars for surgical repair, or to spend \$50-100 per month on skin allergy medication. Pet insurance can help a pet owner recoup some of these costs. Most of the plans are third-party reimbursement, which means that the pet owner pays his/her veterinarian directly, the vet helps fill out the forms for proper diagnosis/treatment descriptions, the pet owner submits the form to his/her insurance company and receives reimbursement directly. Most plans offer a set reimbursement rate, so one should look carefully to see if there is a demographic variability - whether it is taken into consideration the different cost of veterinary care associated with living in California versus Kansas.

There are a couple of plans that offer a percentage reimbursement (and these are the ones I usually recommend to my clients) - so that the higher cost of living is factored in automatically. A veterinarian founded the first pet insurance company in 1982. Since then, several other companies have offered insurance packages. Most offer a benefit schedule for reimbursement, giving an amount available per incident. Most insurance plans offer many levels of care coverage, ranging from wellness packages (generally would cover a spay/neuter in the first year or so, anesthetic dental procedures during mid-years, and annual lab tests for senior wellness)

to urgent care only. Some plans offer multiple pet discounts. Exclusions can include breed specific hereditary conditions (for example, some purebred cats may not be covered for specific heart disease, or some purebred dogs may not be covered for spinal degeneration). Some pets might be excluded from their own "pre-existing" condition(s) prior to enrollment in an insurance plan. This becomes less of a factor when enrolling a young puppy or kitten. Even "exotic" pets are covered by most of the well-known plans - providing owners of birds, rabbits, rodents, and reptiles some financial help with veterinary care. Additionally, some plans will



Dr. Mona S. Miller lives in Lafayette with her 3 year old son and her yellow Labrador Retriever. She has worked at Four Seasons Animal Hospital in Lafayette since moving here in 2001. She attended Cal as an undergrad, and received her DVM from U.C. Davis. She can be reached at Four Seasons, 938-7700, or by email to MonaSDVM@aol.com.

cover "holistic" veterinary medicine (which might include acupuncture, chiropractic or supplements) when prescribed by a licensed veterinarian. If pet insurance is some-

thing that interests you, check with your veterinarian for his/her opinion or recommendation for a specific company.

Frequently Questions and Answers for Homeowners About Sudden Oak Death



Q How Can I Tell If My Oak Tree Has Sudden Oak Death?

A On oaks and tanoaks, trunk cankers are formed on stems. Black or reddish ooze sometimes bleeds from the cankers, staining the oak's bark. Cankered trees usually survive a few years, but once crown dieback begins, leaves usually turn green to yellow to brown within weeks. Since the bleeding ooze is hard to see once it is dried or washed off from rain, it is difficult for many homeowners to detect SOD.

Q How Can Sudden Oak Death Be Treated?

A The phosphate compound, Agri-Fos®, is the only preventive treatment approved by the State for use against Phytophthora ramorum infections on oaks and tanoaks. It is not a cure, but a preventative measure with healthy trees. There is no treatment for trees showing advanced signs of SOD. This treatment protects trees from getting infected and suppresses SOD in very early infections. It takes between three to six weeks for the material to fully assimilate and start warding off the pathogen.

Q Will my oak tree die if it has Sudden Oak Death?

A Tanoaks seem to have a higher probability of dying of SOD over live oaks. Generally, most tanoaks die within one to two years after becoming infected while live oaks last for another three to four years.

Q When landscaping, what types of oaks should I consider?

A Some native oaks (white oak group) are most resistant to SOD. Small live oaks are less susceptible to SOD versus larger trees if provided the proper preventative protection when planted. Compliments of Expert Tree Service in Orinda, CA

A Neighbor You Can Trust...



"As a single mother, Stephen helped me with an investment out of state that was sold to me in a negative cash flow position. He educated me how to use an option ARM loan for my investment property. Stephen turned it around to produce a \$7,100.00 positive cash flow investment for me. Steve gave me hope and another chance to remain a real estate investor." Tracy - Walnut Creek

C·M·G
MORTGAGE SERVICES
1575 Treat Blvd., Ste 100 - Walnut Creek

Steve Snyder
Senior Loan Officer
Lafayette Resident since 1990

284-7255

CA Dept. of Real Estate Broker # 01370755

DAHN YOGA

Yoga / Tai-chi / Meditation /
Brain Education for Kids /
Successful Aging / healing /
Weight management

925-377-9642 (YOGA)
www.dahnyoga.com
(10% off online membership)
452 Center St., Moraga (Next to TJ Maxx)

Special Introductory session

**Energy check-up
with Aura Photo**

Check-up Includes (45min)
Flexibility, balance, stress level,
breathing, energy flow, posture,
Aura reading, mini healing

\$20
(\$75 value)

"Nothing makes me happier than to see you smile!"

- Comfortable, Convenient Family and Cosmetic Dentistry
- Certified in Full Mouth Reconstruction

Family & Cosmetic Dentistry Providing Personalized Care through Quality Dentistry

Scott D. Lothamer, DDS

Moraga
925-376-4602
1030 Country Club Drive

\$40 off

mention this ad to receive \$40 off any dental treatment

Member: ADA • CDA • CCDS • AACD

INTERLOCKING PAVING STONES - SPRING SPECIAL - 20% OFF

Beautiful Long-Lasting Patios Driveways & Walkways

Spring Special

INTERLOCKING PAVING STONES

20% OFF

RGP CONSTRUCTION INC.
- ORINDA -

Call For A Free Estimate (925) 518-8258
www.rgpconstruction.com

Please mention this ad. Not valid with other offers. Exp. 6/15/08

INTERLOCKING PAVING STONES - SPRING SPECIAL - 20% OFF

MENTION THIS AD FOR OUR SPRING SPECIAL

MENTION THIS AD FOR OUR SPRING SPECIAL