

LAMORINDA WEEKLY

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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.

Reach the reporter at: info@lamorindaweekly.com

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