

Published May 11th, 2011

## True Green in Lafayette

By Sophie Braccini



Mollie Kastner presents Elmwood Stationers' green options Photo Sophie Braccini

Sugar cane paper is made of bagasse, the fibrous residue left over after the sugar cane has been crushed and the sugar extracted. The paper can be composted and it reduces the stress on our forests. "Sugar cane paper looks like any other paper; it's the same price, great quality; people just don't know about it," says Hahn.

Further exploration of the store reveals other interesting items such as binders, folders and wine bags made of bamboo, and "Plant-me" greeting cards for mailing, that are made of a paper containing seeds that will sprout into flowers if your addressee plants the card after reading.

"Large companies are also coming with sustainable alternatives," adds Hahn, "Scotch has an eco-friendly tape and Westcott offers clean earth scissors."

Very popular in Lafayette and beyond, Chow Restaurant was nominated three times for the Green Award. "They have such a commitment to sustainable practices," says Sustainable Lafayette's Steve Richards, "but they do not really advertise it. It's only fitting that we recognize them."

Tony Gulisano opened the first Chow in San Francisco in 1997. "Chow promotes sustainability through many different avenues in their restaurants," says Richards, "from the organic local ingredients they select, to the food-scrap recycling program in which they were one of the first to participate in Lafayette."

2011 Green Award winners include:

John Kiefer

Rebecca Calahan Klein

Contra Costa Jewish Day School

Springhill School

Chow

Elmwood Stationers

The Urban Farmers

Allied Waste Services (Tim Argenti)

The 2011 Green Awards were presented by Lafayette Mayor Carl Anduri at a City Council meeting in mid-April. In the business category, the two businesses that were recognized are mainstream and successful in the community: Elmwood Stationers and Chow Restaurant. Both locally owned (with one or more other Bay Area locations), these two businesses 'do green' because they believe in it, and because it serves a growing demand.

Andrew Hahn opened the Lafayette Elmwood Stationers store less than two years ago. "Sustainability is something we've practiced from the get-go in our Lafayette store, starting with our remodel," says Hahn, who recycled the carpet, and ensured toxin-free paint and fluorescent light bulbs.

What is relevant to customers today is the wide range of sustainable products that the store carries. "40 percent of our products are recycled," says Hahn. Entering the store, the first display on the left boasts fun and colorful shoulder totes made of 95% recycled material. The store is full of sustainable options for everyday stationery needs. Printing paper comes in surprising options - sugar cane paper is offered along with 100 percent recycled copy paper.

Reach the reporter at: [sophie@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:sophie@lamorindaweekly.com)

Copyright © Lamorinda Weekly, Moraga CA