

TREASURED HAPPY VALLEY TRADITIONAL



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Celebrating Opening with Sourdough

By Cathy Tyson



Breaking a loaf of sourdough under the eyes of the first customers

Photo Doug Kohen

“This is a homecoming for me,” said Gary Ramirez, Store Team Leader, welcoming shoppers to the opening of Whole Foods, “I went to Lamorinda schools and got my first job at a deli in Lafayette.” While thanking everyone for their patience in bringing the store to fruition he added, “it’s worth the wait.” Instead of a ribbon cutting there was the

breaking of a gigantic loaf of sourdough bread by key Whole Foods Team Members and land owner Joan Bruzzone.

“After five plus years of rumors and speculation, it’s finally here,” said Jay Lifson, Executive Director of the Chamber of Commerce. “Good luck and congratulations to the Bruzzone family.” He joked that he had some

notes disguised as a grocery list, and commented on parking concerns “that can be a good problem to have,” referring to an abundance of customers, “but we’ll figure it out.” Part of the negotiations between the store and City was providing adequate parking for shoppers and employees. To remedy the situation, Whole Foods purchased land and developed a lot on the corner

of Deer Hill Road and First Street to accommodate employees, removing a sizeable number of cars from the lot directly in front of the store.

Ramirez introduced Harve Singh who described his job for Whole Foods - Local Forager. Over the past three and a half years, he’s been responsible for scouting out local vendors for Northern California stores. “We have a commitment to re-invigorating local purchasing, and we help scale up local producers through our Local Producer Loan Program,” said Singh. Ritual Coffee Roasters of San Francisco received a check for \$50,000 and Gelateria Naia of Hercules got \$25,000 at the store opening as a low interest loan to help them grow their businesses. Singh invited anyone with local product to come to customer service desk and pitch their product.

With the store opening a week prior to the Lamorinda Weekly publication date, hopefully some of the initial curiosity will taper. But if the parking lot is any indication, the store is off to a good start.

Drizzle Doesn’t Dampen “Taste”

By Cathy Tyson



Deborah Kwan and Susan Sohrakoff

Photo Cathy Tyson

It was a good thing that Jay Lifson, Executive Director of the Chamber of Commerce, announced, “We have you covered!” and “When it rains, we still pour!” on e-mail blasts just prior to the annual Taste of Lafayette. A large, hastily erected tent was put to good use due to the constant drizzle that threatened to put a damper on the event. Despite the gray skies, this year’s party had a more intimate, friendly feel – perhaps partially due to the cozy space, or chalk it up to cheerful Lafayette resi-

dents. Now in its ninth year, this event benefits the Lafayette Community Foundation and the Services and Programs of the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce and brings out diners ready to compare and contrast the signature dishes of many of restaurant row’s finest establishments including Chevalier, Pizza Antica, Oyama Sushi, Yankee Pier, Postino and more. The neighborhood block party and moveable feast combo started with wine and appetizers at Plaza



Marty & Tom Dejonghe

Photo Linda B. Jenkins

Park. Brand new Lafayette resident, by way of Saratoga, Carol Fara called the seared scallops with shitake mushroom on a wonton crisp, provided by the Lafayette Park Hotel, “so delicious.” Perky volunteer wine staff Deborah Kwan and Susan Sohrakoff called themselves the Gilmore girls since they were working for Barbara Gilmore of the Chamber. Wine was generously provided by Wine Thieves. Just a couple of blocks from the tent, Amarin Thai was serving its sig-

nature Yellow Vegetable Curry with chicken and steak, a favorite of many attendees. The highlight of the evening for Marty and Tom Dejonghe was winning a week in Maui from the Community Foundation raffle. Turns out it was Marty’s actual birthday. “The weather kept some people away, but it was fun – seemed like everyone had a good time,” said Lifson. Norma Evans, an ambassador/volunteer describes the event as wonderful, lots of younger people and first timers this year.

Significant Savings on Downtown Streetlight Project

By Aleksandr Auzers

In a unanimous decision on Monday, May 9th, Lafayette’s City Council approved a disbursement of \$137,000 for the retrofit of 189 streetlights along Mt. Diablo Boulevard between Pleasant Hill Road and Risa Road. This will ultimately cost Lafayette next to nothing, as the City will receive a federally-sourced grant reimbursement shortly after construction is completed. According to

Project Engineer Jay Yu, the upgraded streetlights are to be significantly more cost-effective than the models currently in service; he projects annual savings of about \$16,000, a remarkable improvement in excess of 46%. The retrofit will entail replacing each light’s lamp assembly and protective globe. As the project’s total cost is slightly higher than the expected

grant repayment, a small supplement of approximately \$4000 will be paid out from the Public Works streetlight maintenance fund. Originally, Lafayette had planned to upgrade 244 lamps, but Yu said the City received bids from contractors that were higher than anticipated. Given the present economic climate, he noted, the City believes it imprudent to upgrade the 55 lamps excluded from

the current retrofit project, unless additional grant-based funding can be secured at a later date. During the construction period, which is expected to commence within two months and last twenty days, City residents may encounter higher levels of traffic congestion, though Yu said both day and night crew shifts are planned, to minimize the impact on traffic flow.

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Lafayette

Civic News

Public Meetings

City Council

Monday, June 13, 7:00 pm
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd

Planning Commission

Monday, June 6, 7:00 pm
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd

Design Review

Monday, June 13, 7:00 pm
Lafayette Library & Learning Center
in the Arts & Science Discovery
Center at 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

City of Lafayette:

www.ci.lafayette.ca.us

Chamber of Commerce:

www.lafayettechamber.org



Police Report

Who’s Armed and Dangerous now? 5/12/11 That’s what police want to know. Someone broke the rear window of an SUV parked at Lafayette Park Hotel and stole a Browning handgun. The gun was valued at over \$5,000; \$400 damage was also done to the broken window.

Definitely not soccer mom material, 5/15/11 A thief stole a Toyota van from the Acalanes High School lot. The suspect, 5’ 11 and 180 pounds, was wearing a big red tee shirt, baggy blue jeans and has buzz cut blond hair, and arm tattoos. Don’t hang your arm out the window driving around—someone might recognize you.

No bail, no how...5/9/11 The deal is sweetheart—you’re on probation. Violate that probation (no details available) and you get served with a warrant. Lafayette Police caught up with you on Acalanes Road, arrested you, and took you to Martinez for booking. This time...no bail.

No Free Parking...Go Directly to Jail, 5/3/11 A graveyard shift traffic stop on Mt. Diablo Blvd. and subsequent vehicle search turned up stolen property in the trunk. Police notified victims. One victim identified his property and recognized the vehicle as having been recently parked in his apartment complex. That thief didn’t have a Monopoly on smarts.

Car jacket-ed, 5/10/11 Someone broke the side window of a car at Lafayette Park Hotel, causing \$100 damage and stealing a men’s jacket valued at \$100.

You’ve (not) Got Mail, 5/3/11 A Pine Lane resident lost \$50 in material goods and a lot more in personal aggravation when he discovered his outside mail box was rifled for valuables. An envelope from the DMV thought to contain vehicle registration information was on site but empty.

Got Gas? 5/5/11 A thief crawled inside an Upper Happy Valley home through an unlocked window. \$2,000 went missing, including an ATM. card. The victim cancelled his card, but not before it was used to buy gas at a station in Concord.