

Published April 25th, 2012

business briefs



Safeway checker Mike Hamiche (center left) is pictured with Safeway manager Bonita Vigil, Rotary president Nora Avelar and Chamber Vice President Kevin Reneau. Photo by Ryan Koss

Mike Hamiche Named April's Moraga Employee of the Month

Mike Hamiche, who has been charming Safeway patrons for the past seven years as a checker, has been named April's Moraga Employee of the Month. Hamiche is the second recipient of the new monthly award, sponsored by the Rotary Club of Moraga and the Chamber of Commerce. His friendly manner and excellent customer service as a checker at Safeway has consistently drawn favorable comments from the store's customers. He scored a rating of 98.76 percent in an internal Safeway customer service rating system. "Mike provides world-class customer service to all of our patrons," said Safeway manager Bonita Vigil. "He is universally liked by both our customers and our fellow employees." Hamiche speaks many foreign languages and often greets customers in their native tongue. In addition to his work time at Safeway, Hamiche also attends DiabloValley College with plans to earn an engineering degree. In winning the award, the Rotary and Chamber presented Hamiche with a \$50 gift card to Orchard Supply Hardware as well as a \$50 gift certificate to Michael's Ristorante in Moraga. Hamiche was presented with his award and gift cards at the Moraga Rotary luncheon Tuesday, April 24.

Owner of Very Nice Pools returns to Korea for Pool Maintenance, 3379 Mt Diablo Blvd., Lafayette

This April, Paul Barendregt celebrated the 35th anniversary of Very Nice Pools, the business he founded in Lafayette, and at the same time was called to return to Suwon, South Korea to maintain two school pools he built almost 20 years ago. "The construction of a new school was awarded to Oakland Contractor Branagh," said Annie Barendregt, Paul's wife. "There were not that many private pool specialists at the time [in South Korea], so they hired my husband to build two swimming pools at the school." While everything had been working well since he built the pools, he was asked to replace some of the equipment. This Korean construction site is not Barendregt's only international experience; he also was hired 11 years ago to repair a pool in the Seychelles Islands, in the Indian Ocean. Although Barendregt has an international reputation, most of this local company's work is done in the East Bay. "He does everything," said his wife, "from building, to remodeling, to servicing pools."

News from the three Chambers of Commerce
Lafayette

Ribbon Cutting for Mike Rose Auto Body, April 26, 5 to 5:30 p.m., 3430 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette.

Monthly Mixer, May 9, 5:30 to 7 p.m., Round Table Pizza, 3637 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette.

Save the date for the 10th annual Taste of Lafayette, 5:30 to 9 p.m., Tuesday, May 15. Tour Lafayette's finest dining establishments and sample the signature cuisine of each restaurant. The tour begins at Elam and Margaret Brown Plaza (corner of Moraga Road and Mt. Diablo Blvd.) From there, ticket holders will go at their own pace to any or all of the participating restaurants. The evening wraps up back at the Plaza with dessert and coffee, more music, raffles, and a silent and live auction. The Taste benefits the Lafayette Community Foundation and the programs and services of the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce. Cost is \$45 per person, reserve by mail to Chamber Office or register online at Lafayettechamber.org

ECOlunchbox and Clocks, Etc. Recognized in Lafayette, www.ecolunchboxes.com, clocksetc.net

Sustainable Lafayette announced the 2011 City of Lafayette Green Awards April 22 at Earth Day. In the Business Category, Clocks, Etc. and ECOLunchbox (which was featured in Lamorinda Weekly's November 2008 issue) received the Green Award. Sandra Ann Harris, a Lafayette mom who was confronted by the endless waste of plastics in her children's lunch box, developed a 100 percent machine-washable lunch bag with matching napkins, an alternative to the less environmentally-friendly options. "Our hard work has paid off," said the very proud ECOLunchbox president. Steve Richards of the City of Lafayette Environmental Task Force told Harris, "Your efforts impressed the Task Force and met the criteria of reducing your environmental footprint, helping the city achieve its environmental goals, and being an inspiring example that can be emulated by others in the community." ECOLunchbox was also recognized at the City Council meeting on Monday, April 23. Clocks, Etc. was recognized by Sustainable Lafayette for being "an active example of what businesses can do to reduce waste and adopt green practices to help Lafayette reach its waste reduction and environmental goals."

Moraga

The 6th annual Moraga Community Faire is scheduled from 11a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, May 12 in the Rheem Valley Shopping Center. Attractions will include a classic car show, wine tasting from local vineyards, cool music from our schools' bands on stage, and oodles of activities for the kids (crafts, bounce houses, carnival games, dunk tank, chalk art, and more). This event is planned and organized by the Moraga Chamber of Commerce, in cooperation with the Town of Moraga. The purpose of this community gathering is for businesses to come out to meet and greet the public.

Orinda

No news this week.

Reach the reporter at: info@lamorindaweekly.com

[back](#)

Copyright © Lamorinda Weekly, Moraga CA