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Now Serving: Cafe Hacienda Home/Made

By Cathy Dausman



Aly Dean at the new storefront. Photo provided

enthusiasm as he spoke to the council. Fisher said many people have forgotten "how bustling the [Hacienda] place was in the 1970s." The biggest problem then was on-site parking, he said. Now, however, "two generations have passed, and a lot of people don't even know the Hacienda exists," Fisher said. "This is a unique opportunity to get [the bustle] back." The cafe site is ADA compliant; there is no alcohol service.

Running the Hacienda cafe represents "an additional opportunity" for Somers, who along with Dean, is also preparing to open Home/Made Kitchen Cafe & Bakery in Moraga this summer. Cafe Hacienda hours are 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 8 to 11:30 a.m. Fridays.

Home/Made Kitchen Cafe & Bakery

Gayle Somers and Aly Dean must like the heat, because they're not getting out of the kitchen any time soon - they are poised to open their own cafe, Home/Made Kitchen Cafe & Bakery, featuring what they describe as "authentic, inspired California cuisine." The full service catering kitchen and cafe will occupy the site of the former Mondello Cucina Italiana on Rheem Boulevard. But, due to what Somers terms "ongoing staffing difficulties," they're unsure just when the cafe will open its doors. With inside seating for 40, and room for an additional 20 customers outside, Home/Made Kitchen will offer breakfast, lunch and packaged take-away meals for dinner daily. According to the owner/chefs' resume, Somers and Dean have together accumulated over 40 years culinary experience. Dean, a California Culinary Academy grad, worked as a baker, pastry chef and bartender, and traveled to 57 countries, gaining international perspective to food service. Somers also describes herself as an international traveler who developed and opened her own specialty gardening stores in Toronto, each with a small cafe and classroom she says were designed to "keep the culinary connection to gardening." C. Dausman

Lamorindans now have the chance to mix a bit of local history with their meals-at least for the next three months. Moraga Recreation Director Jay Ingram introduced chef Gayle Somers to Town Council members during the May 8 regular council meeting.

Somers opened Cafe Hacienda Home/Made May 13, serving breakfast and lunch at the town-owned Hacienda de las Flores. Business partner Aly Dean assists part-time. While the initial contract runs only through Aug. 9, Ingram explained it could be renewed in writing every three months. The town will recoup its lease payments as 7 percent of net sales.

Somers and Dean will use the Hacienda's commercial kitchen and seat most customers outside around the plaza fountain. "I'm delighted to do something for and with the community," Somers said, adding, "Cafe Hacienda was just a conversation only three months ago." In a recent email, Ingram promised a "farm-to-table meal with all locally sourced products," and noted "there is no other venue like this in Moraga."

George Fisher of the Moraga Movers shared Ingram's

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