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business briefs



Tony Inzerillo (right) and John Piermattei present the 2013 Moraga pear wine. Photo Sophie Braccini

Pear Wine from Moraga Pears

Vincenza Ranch, (925) 708-8342

Asia Palace 1460 Moraga Rd, Moraga

(925) 376-0809

Tony Inzerillo usually makes wine from grapes, but when he saw the enormous amount of pears that could not be harvested at the top of the trees in the orchard next to Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School he thought he could do something with it. After calling around, Inzerillo was told he couldn't use a ladder to pick the fruit, "so we used a man-lift and harvested tons of fruit (after all the lower fruit had been picked and taken to the food bank)," he explained. Inzerillo said it was a huge project involving Lamorinda Winegrowers Association members - some members provided bottles, one member created the perfect recipe - and it resulted in the 2013 Moraga Holiday Pear Wine that is fruity and fresh, and pleasant to the palate. "We thought our wine would go well with spicy Chinese food, so we took it to Alan at Asia Palace. He loved it and decided to offer it in his restaurant," said Inzerillo. "We produced it with no sulfur; the pears were never treated, so this is an organic product with an alcohol content of about 6 percent."

Meet New Owner of Loard's Ice Cream in Moraga

1480 Moraga Rd., suite H, Moraga

(925) 388-0695

A few months ago Claudina Ovenden was still a CVS manager in Orinda where she lives and is raising her three kids with her husband, David. Neighbor, Brook Stubblefield, owner of Loard's Ice Cream next door to CVS, used to come by and became friends with Ovenden. "One night my husband and I had a conversation about opening a family business in downtown Orinda," remembers Ovenden, "but there was no availability." The very next day, when Stubblefield came to CVS, she mentioned that the manager of her Moraga store had left. When Ovenden asked about the job, Stubblefield told her she probably couldn't afford her as an employee, but said that she was ready to sell the store. After a few weeks of negotiation, the deal was closed and now the Ovendens - husband and wife - are co-owners of Loard's Ice Cream in Moraga. "My husband is a retired electrical engineer," says Ovenden. "He comes by to help." In her new store, Ovenden beams with pride, she has become a master cake decorator. "We get all our ice cream from the Loard's San Leandro manufacturer, then we make all the cakes and do special prep here in the store." Ovenden says she loves decorating cakes; she also created ice cream pies, and a new ice cream cake sundae. "During this season we also sell a lot of our 'snowballs,'" she notes. The snowballs are a ball of traditional vanilla ice cream rolled in coconut flakes, "but you can order different flavors," adds Ovenden.

Reusable Bags at Venture Display Lafayette Pride

3571 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette

(925) 385-0259

www.venturegoods.com

While on vacation in Los Angeles, Venture Quality Goods co-owner Rosylyn Stenzel found quality reusable bags that can be personalized. She contacted the manufacturer, Apolis, which is a company that empowers communities worldwide with a commitment to global advocacy through industry and understands of the importance of manufacturing locally. "The bags are made in Bangladesh by a community of women," Stenzel says. "The handles are leather, made in LA. We asked to add the Lafayette logo that you can't get anywhere else." The bags are waterproof on the inside and have become very popular. "People get them to use as gift wrap, realtors get piles of them for their clients, they are used for swim bags or grocery shopping," says Stenzel.

News for the three Chambers of Commerce

Lafayette

Last Entrepreneur Club meeting of the year from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. Thursday, Dec. 19. The chamber offices will be closed from Dec. 24 to Jan. 1.

Moraga

Chamber office grand opening from 8 a.m. to noon Monday, Jan. 6. Come say "hi" to Kathe Nelson in her new office in the LaSalla building of the Hacienda de las Flores, 2100 Donald Dr.

Save the date for the first chamber business meeting of the year at 7:30 a.m. Friday, Jan. 31 at the Hacienda de las Flores.

Orinda
Stay tuned for new events in 2014.



Claudina Ovenden decorates a birthday cake in the Moraga Loard's prep area. Photo Sophie Braccini



Lafayette shopping bag at Venture Quality Goods Photo provided

Reach the reporter at: info@lamorindaweekly.com

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