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business briefs



Jeff Assadi, the owner of Lafayette's 2014 Small Business of the Year, La Finestra Ristorante, with Supervisor Candace Andersen. Photo provided

La Finestra Ristorante Named Lafayette Small Business of the Year

100 Lafayette Circle, Suite 101, Lafayette
 (925) 284-5282, www.lafinestraristorante.com

La Finestra Ristorante was honored as Lafayette's 2014 Small Business of the Year by the East Bay Leadership Council's Small Business/Entrepreneurial Task Force in May. "Jeff Assadi has been the owner/chef of La Finestra since 2003," said Jay Lifson, executive director of the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce. "He is committed to providing a great dining experience and has given back to our community in many ways. La Finestra supports all the schools each year with gift certificates and hosted dinners. He is a proud participant of Taste of Lafayette since the event began, and he gives of his time for special events like the annual Loaves and Fishes fundraiser." La Finestra is centrally located in Lafayette, but secluded among large eucalyptus trees, giving the place a unique charm. Assadi has a great reputation as a passionate cook who makes most of his plates to order with the finest ingredients. His Italian cuisine with a Sicilian accent has been celebrated for years.

Artists' Market

Lafayette Art Gallery

3420 Mt Diablo Blvd., Suite A, Lafayette

(925) 284-2788, www.lafayetteartgallery.com

The first of a summer series of Artists' Markets was held in the courtyard of The Forge, the new home of the Lafayette Art Gallery, at the corner of Mt. Diablo Boulevard and Brown Avenue in Lafayette on May 17. It was the first such event for new member Karin Lechner, a bead artist, who recently joined the gallery; while photographer Warren Rice participated for many years in the summer shows the gallery held in its former location on Lafayette Circle. "The new location for the market has a Carmel feel to it," said Rice. "It is a lovely setting, with a fountain, and we enjoyed very much displaying our art there." The Artists' Market will be open from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. on three more Saturdays, June 21, July 19 and Aug. 16. "We have about 15 artists coming to the events, including some invited artists who are not members of the gallery," said Rice. "We strive to offer a wide variety of artistic productions." Although foot traffic is not as developed as it was on Lafayette Circle, both Rice and Lechner say they enjoy the new location of the art gallery - a wide, luminous space they moved into last October. "It's also a great place to hold our wine reception, every second Friday of the month," added Lechner, who is one of three artists featured in June.

Moraga Employee of the Month for May

Chris O'Connell, Los Perales Elementary School's secretary and front office manager, was named the Moraga Employee of the Month for May. O'Connell first started working at Los Perales in 1999 as a substitute teacher, then became a teacher's assistant and eventually was hired as the school secretary in June, 2001. She has been described as the glue that makes the school run so efficiently. "Every person who walks through our doors is greeted with a warm, genuine smile from Chris," said Los Perales principal Amy Black. "She is the first one here and the last one to leave. Her

attention to detail is unparalleled. She never gets flustered, never misses a beat. LP would be lost without her." O'Connell is the 28th recipient of the monthly award sponsored by the Rotary Club of Moraga and the Chamber of Commerce. She will be presented with her award, and gift cards to Safeway and Massage Envy, at the Moraga Rotary luncheon on Tuesday, June 3.

News from the three Chambers of Commerce

Lafayette

Rock the Plaza at 6:30 p.m. on Fridays with Azure Moon, June 6, and The Floorshakers, June 13; at Plaza Park (corner of Moraga Road and Mt Diablo Boulevard) in Lafayette.

Chamber Mixer at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, June 11 at The Mechanic, 3328 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Entrepreneur's Club at 8:30 a.m. on Thursday, June 19 in the Chamber Conference Room.

Ribbon cutting at 5 p.m. on Thursday, June 19, Lily Dong Photography, 3506D Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Moraga

Save the date for the all-day 3rd annual Moraga Chamber Golf Tournament on July 14. The event is the chamber's largest fundraiser of the year. Proceeds support the chamber's many community and business-based programs. The cost is \$175 per player and includes golf, dinner (starts at 4:30 p.m.), refreshments and prizes. For more information or to sign up, visit www.moragachamber.org.

Orinda

First Chamber Bruncheon from 8 to 9:30 a.m. on Tuesday, June 17 at Barbacoa in Theatre Square. Enjoy delicious brunch food while meeting with the board of directors and ambassadors, hear the annual report presentation, and get the latest chamber news. RSVP to Candy Kattenburg at info@lamorindachamber.org; the cost is \$10.



First Artists' Market at The Forge in Lafayette. Photo provided

Reach the reporter at: info@lamorindaweekly.com

[back](#)

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