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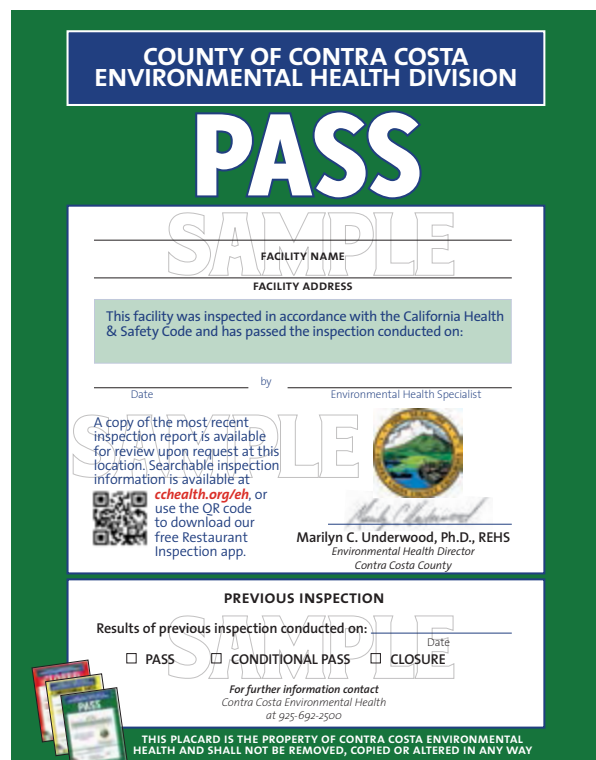
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## New Signs Will Encourage Lamorinda Eateries to Be Healthy

By Nick Marnell



Lamorindans will soon be able to tell the health and food safety record of their favorite eating establishment just by looking in the window.

The Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors last month adopted an ordinance requiring food purveyors to post a color-coded placard informing the public about violations discovered during their most recent health inspection. The program will be phased in starting with regular inspections after April 15.

“The placards are another great resource for our residents who want to make informed decisions about where they eat,” Board Chair Candace Andersen said. “With the placards prominently posted, they will be able to instantly tell whether there have recently been any health code violations.”

A green placard means zero or one major violation, yellow means two or more and red will be posted if a busi-

ness is shut down because of an imminent health hazard. Major violations include food measured at unsafe temperatures, a sick employee handling food, or equipment that is unclean or not properly sanitized. Any of the problems discovered by a Contra Costa Environmental Health inspector must be corrected on the spot.

Tampering with or removal of the placards, which can be posted only by Environmental Health inspectors, may result in the business losing its operator’s permit.

“Our primary goal is to reduce food-borne illness,” Environmental Health Director Dr. Marilyn Underwood said in a statement. “Making inspection results highly visible appears to have an impact on making businesses that sell food operate more safely.”

“It’ll certainly keep everyone on their toes,” said Pat Vahey of Peninni’s

Pizza and Pasta in Moraga. “I’m not that concerned about it. If you keep a clean shop, you won’t have anything to worry about.”

For one Lamorinda chain restaurant, Denver-based Chipotle Mexican Grill, a green placard likely cannot be posted quickly enough. Customers across the country have recently contracted food-borne illnesses from eating at Chipotle, and to ensure better food safety, the restaurant announced it will process more of its ingredients through centralized kitchens. Neither Chipotle area manager Anthony Thomas nor director of public relations Chris Arnold chose to comment on the placard program.

Contra Costa Health Services maintains a searchable database of county health inspection results through its free Food Inspector app, downloadable for Google Android and Apple iOS operating systems.

## There’s a Lot to Cheer About in Cheerleading Competitions

By Cathy Dausman



The Miramonte Competitive Cheer team is serious about their sport, winning the national championship in the Varsity Small Show Cheer Division. Photo provided

Succeeding at Miramonte High School’s National Champion Competitive Cheer Team is a bit like climbing the human pyramids its members build.

It began last April when 32 female students were selected as members of the Spirit Team Cheer, said parent Gina Armstrong-Smith. This group performed during MHS football and basketball games.

Several weeks later, a subset of 12 Spirit Team members were selected to form the Competitive Cheer Team. For three hours a day, three days a week, the team worked on physical conditioning and developed two-and-one-half-minute timed performances consisting of a dance routine, stunting (pyramids) and standing and running flips, known as tumbling.

Stature determines where each team member is placed; younger, smaller athletes top the pyramid while taller athletes take back row spots on the ground. Cheer and execution portions of each performance are similar to gymnastics moves,

and like gymnastics, performances may involve risks.

Junior Sydney Smith knows because she’s been dropped. “It’s pretty dangerous,” Smith says.

Smith and best friend Jessie Musacchio, a senior with four years on the Cheer team, each bring 10 years of gymnastics know-how to Cheer. The two explain that gymnastics is a more mentally challenging sport for individuals, while Cheer is more a physically demanding team sport. Practice starts in October, and regional competitions begin in December and run through February. Win enough regional competitions, and the team advances to nationals, where as many as 1,000 students compete in categories ranging from small to super-sized groups in novice, intermediate and advanced classes. A team of four to seven judges award points for the energy, showmanship, difficulty, recovery, cheer and execution portions of each performance.

MHS Cheer placed first in three regional competitions this year and second in two others before competing against 23 teams in Anaheim this March to earn the Varsity Small Show Cheer Division National Championship.

And that, as they say, is something to cheer about.

Acalanes High School entered 28 competitors in the Super Large Varsity Show Cheer division in Anaheim but did not advance to the final round. Cheer coordinator

Sallina Boynton said theirs was “a very hard division.”

“Miramonte did phenomenal,” Boynton said.

Campolindo High School does not have a Competitive Cheer Team.

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