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business briefs

Bye Bye, Big Blue

Dave Simpson's Bookmobile is for sale

It was just over a year ago that Dave Simpson lost his lease in the Clocktower building and transformed his brick-and-mortar Lafayette Bookstore into the creative Bookmobile, the bookstore on wheels that traveled the area stopping at private homes for book-club meetings, at Fastframe on Brown Ave. in Lafayette to take and deliver orders, and at farmers markets, schools, restaurants, etc. In his farewell address on Facebook, Simpson reminisced about his book-selling career. "The irony is not lost on me that I am announcing my departure from the book business on the day that Borders Books is announcing their demise," he wrote, "I started in bookselling over 30 years ago as the night manager of the first Crown Books on the west coast, and over those years there has been monumental change in bookstores and in bookselling. Book sales have become so slivered and fractured and splintered and sliced and diced, I don't see how any unsubsidized brick-and-mortar bookstore could survive." Big Blue, his beautiful bookmobile, is for sale. "Although it is amazing as a mobile bookstore, most of the interest in purchasing it has been from people who want to convert it to living space!" wrote Simpson, who was very active in the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce and was the chair of the successful Try Lafayette First campaign.

Lavecchia Calls it a Day

Both Moraga and Orinda residents got to know the charming Italian man who came to Lamorinda as a partner in the restaurant Amoroma in Moraga some eight years ago. A year and a half ago he opened his first solo restaurant, with his wife Mariam, in Orinda- Trattoria Lupetti. When Lavecchia came to the U.S. from Rome, he brought his love for Roman food along with his melodic Italian accent. Lavecchia attributes the failure of Lupetti to a lack of funding and the 11 months it took him to get the proper license. "We could not have a web site, could not get our name and make the necessary changes to get the business in full gear," said Lavecchia. The restaurant owner served his last dinner on July 30, and though he was sad, he was not bitter. "I want to express my thanks to the Lamorinda community that supported me all these years," he said, "it has been a pleasure to get to know all of you, and we have made a lot of friends here. I hope that other opportunities to work in Lamorinda will present themselves." Mariam Lavecchia has already started a new job with Peet's coffee; Michele Lavecchia is actively looking for a new opportunity.

News from the three Chambers of Commerce

Lafayette

- Ribbon Cutting at Collectors Choice Antiques, August 11th, 5:00pm, 3574 Mt. Diablo Blvd.
- Rock the Plaza concert, August 12, 6-8pm, starring Stagefrite
- Entrepreneur's Club, August 18, 8:30am, Lafayette Chamber Conference Room
- Movie in the Park, August 18, 8-10pm on the Plaza, featuring *Finding Nemo*

Moraga

- 1st annual Moraga Jazz Festival, Jazz for Joplin Benefit on Sunday, August 7 2pm at the New Rheem Theatre
- Annual Chamber BBQ, Tuesday, August 30, 6pm at the Moraga Commons Park. Everyone in Moraga is invited to the Annual Moraga Chamber of Commerce BBQ sponsored by Safeway. Kickoff for reinvigorated Shop Moraga First Campaign. R.S.V.P. to kathe@moragachamber.org

Orinda

- After Hours Mixer on Thursday, August 18, 5:30-7pm, at Orinda Motors, 63 Orinda Way

Reach the reporter at: info@lamorindaweekly.com

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