

15 MINUTES

Filling a niche

While Julie Avery sat in the shade at the corner of Clark and Pearson roads in Paradise, a truck driver passed and leaned on the horn. After the bellow ripped away, Avery, owner of the Julie's Grill trailer stationed in the parking lot of Ace Hardware, laughed and said, "We get to deal with that all day." Avery opened Julie's Grill at the beginning of June, offering quickly prepared breakfast and lunch eats at one of the busiest intersections in town. Avery's family roots in Paradise go way back—"100-plus years," she says. She currently lives in Chico but grew up in Paradise and attended high school there. After the Camp Fire, which claimed homes of her family members, she seized an opportunity to feed the rebuild effort, filling a food niche that has her considering an expansion. Julie's Grill, at 5720 Clark Road, is open Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 2 or 2:30 p.m. Avery stepped away from her crew of helpers on a recent morning to catch up with the CN&R.

What do you cook at Julie's Grill?

We have hot dogs—Polish dogs, kraut dogs, chili dogs—and then ... we have hamburgers, cheeseburgers, bacon burgers, Philly cheesesteaks. Actually, we call them Paradise cheesesteaks, which are really popular. French fries. We do breakfast burritos.



PHOTO BY ANDRE BYIK

We do have a veggie burger, and we also have a chicken sandwich that we do. So, we have a little bit more variety there.

How's the reception been so far?

Well, you're working with truck drivers, and they want hearty food. ... They're really happy to see us here. I do get a lot of acknowledgment for my business. People are getting to know it, and that's one of the reasons why I want to expand. I want to offer them more.

Where would you expand?

Well, I have a trailer right now I'm looking at, and I would leave it here. I would park it here with the hot dog cart and then possibly take this one and move it across the other side of town. Possibly towards the Magalia area.

Did you have previous experience in the food industry?

Nope.

How has starting out been?

A lot of blood, sweat and tears. Yeah, it's been really interesting. It's a lot of work. People think that, you know, running a food trailer, "Oh, that's gotta be easy." And it's not easy. It's a lot of hard work. I work 12-hour days at least six days a week. It doesn't end.

Any advice?

Don't give up. Don't give up. It's worth it.

That sounds like advice that could apply to the town, too.

Yes. Yep. Don't give up. Keep pushing forward. Paradise is going to rebuild again. It's a great community. There's a lot of support up here. It'll never be the same, but it will be great again.

—ANDRE BYIK

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THE GOODS

History, music and connection



by
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Back in 2011, a group of locals launched a major project to preserve the historic **Jonesville Hotel** (see "Saving the Jonesville Hotel," Cover story, Oct. 6, 2011). The structure—the last remaining hotel along the old Chico and Humboldt Wagon Road—was in bad shape. I'm happy to report that, eight years and a whole lot of work later, progress has been made.

The red two-story building got a new foundation and the first floor restoration has been completed. It's all gussied up, too—filled with period décor. To celebrate, the **Jonesville Cabin Owners**—the folks who own the cabins behind the hotel, as well as the historic barn across the street—are hosting a dinner there Oct. 24, titled "Dinner and Music on the Meadows Edge." **Bacio Catering** will be whipping up a farm-to-table feast; **Apollo School of Music** will provide the entertainment. Tickets are \$100 and must be purchased by Aug. 17 (go to tinyurl.com/jonesvillehoteldinner).

SPEAKING OF ... A few weeks ago, I was invited to attend a party at **The Lounge** at the **Apollo School of Music**, a fundraiser for the **Arc of Butte County**. It was the debut performance of the **Chico Latin Orquesta**, which was accompanied by salsa dance lessons—and, fittingly, a salsa bar.

I'm super bummed that I missed the dance instruction, though I caught glimpses of the teachers on the dance floor and they were great, making sure everyone was having a good time. The band was really fun and the space naturally has great acoustics. I'd not thought of a music school putting on events like that, but, I don't know, why not?

Turns out the idea sprouted from working with **Correlare**, a company I was unfamiliar with but seems pretty cool. It offers a different way to market your business, by connecting you with the community, but in a nonforced way. Hence Apollo hosting events for nonprofits—it gets people in to the school while also helping a good cause. Check it out at correlare.com.

Apollo has a different fundraiser night planned each month—and they're hiring dance instructors. The next event is "One Hot Irish Night," Aug. 24. **Ha'Penny Bridge** will be playing and proceeds benefit **Little Red Hen** and children's music programs (tinyurl.com/onehotirishnight).

FOR THE PETS I recently got word that **VCA Valley Oak Veterinary Center** received some well-deserved kudos earlier this summer for its efforts taking care of animals that were burned or injured during the Camp Fire. They were presented with the **California Veterinary Medical Association's Meritorious Service Award** for their tireless efforts.

I didn't even know until reading the award website that the field next to the center became a staging ground for emergency workers. Just thinking about all those scared and injured pets makes me weepy, so I think it's awesome that the Valley Oak staff—some of whom lost their own homes in the blaze—recognized the toll it took on everyone trying to treat them. They brought healthy found pets around to the first responders to lift their spirits. Well done.

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