

15 MINUTES

Sweets salesman

In the business world, Keith Bussey is known as a fixer; he dives in to improve the conditions of an operation, to leave it better than it was before. After working as administrative lead for Chico's Department of Veterans Affairs outpatient clinic for 3 1/2 years, making changes to help the operation, Bussey felt like his job was done. Looking for a new endeavor that would allow him to stay in Chico, he and his wife, Lara, along with friends Kiran Singh and Vikram Reddy, discovered Nothing Bundt Cakes, a franchise bakery that exclusively sells deliciously moist bundt cakes. Convinced the store would be a great fit for Chico, the four new business partners flew to Addison, Texas, to meet for an interview at Nothing Bundt Cakes headquarters. After being approved, they started the build-out in September, and opened their doors to customers on Nov. 20. For something sweet, visit nothingbundtcakes.com or stop by the shop, located at 2061 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Parkway.

Can you give me a brief history of the franchise?

It started in 1997. Two good friends, Dena Tripp and Debbie Shwetz, joined baking forces—one bringing her bundt cake recipe and the other providing the cream cheese frosting. They opened the first shop in Las Vegas, and now there are about 315 locations around the country.

When you were looking for new business opportunities, what made you want to stay in Chico?

It felt like the right decision for our family. It offered us stability. When my wife's father was diagnosed with a terminal illness, we moved out here from Philadelphia, because we just felt like we needed to be closer to her mom. We had moved a couple times within a short period of time and it felt right to stay somewhere. My wife thought Chico would be the best fit.

When is the grand opening of the Chico location?

Jan. 10, and 20 percent of sales from that day will be donated to Chico Unified School District, through the North Valley Community Foundation. On Jan. 11, our first 50 guests will receive free Bundtlets for a year.

PHOTO BY RACHEL BUSH



What types/flavors of cakes do you have?

We have the bite-sized Bundtinis, the miniature Bundlets, the 8-inch bundt cakes and 10-inch bundt cakes, plus tiered cakes. There are nine flavors listed on our menu, but we also have a seasonal feature flavor and usually a gluten-free option. Some of our most popular flavors are chocolate chocolate chip, lemon, red velvet and white raspberry. In addition to the bakers, the managers are taught how to bake the cakes, so I now know how to bake and frost all of these.

What is it that makes them so moist?

[Laughs.] That's a secret. But there is a process that seals in the moisture. You could get a cake here in Chico and then you could go to Worcester, Mass., and taste the same recipe, the same cake.

Do you have a favorite flavor?

Right now it's lemon, but it changes.

—RACHEL BUSH

THE GOODS

A week of goodbyes



by
Meredith J. Cooper

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The first time I visited the **Bamford Family Farms** tasting room on Myers Street in downtown Oroville was during a rainy **First Friday** event. That's when downtown businesses rally around a theme and invite participants into their shops and restaurants and galleries for refreshments and to show off their stuff. The young woman behind the counter was memorably friendly, happy to offer not only tastes of the Bamford line of flavored olive oils and balsamic vinegars, but also recipe tips.

I walked out that day with a small bottle of blood orange olive oil and traditional balsamic. With dinner party plans that night, I wowed my friends with a simple scoop of French vanilla ice cream topped with a drizzle of both. So good! The Bamfords—three generations of them on the farm—also run a cattle ranch, with pasture-raised beef it sells out of a freezer at the store.

I'm sorry to say this story doesn't have a happy ending. Last week, via Facebook, Bamford Family Farms announced it's shuttering its operations effective immediately. While certainly not the first business to fall victim to the Camp Fire, it is the first I've heard of to go under because the **Miocene Canal** is now dry. **PG&E**, which owns the canal, won't fix the portion that burned, so dozens—more, probably—of ranchers and orchardists are struggling.

Stop by the tasting room at 1442 Myers St., where all the goodies are on sale. Last year alone, the Bamfords took home eight gold and silver awards for their oils. It's delicious stuff, and I'm sad to see it go.

MORE CLOSURES As tends to happen, some businesses close up shop without a lot of fanfare. Such was the case with **Cream**, the ice cream sandwich shop by **Tinseltown**, which posted an unassuming sign on its door last month simply notifying customers it's closed indefinitely. Then there was **Broadway Market & Deli**, the Chinese restaurant downtown that just kept the name of the business there before it. Both seemed to have their followers, so I'm sure they'll be missed.

A FINAL FAREWELL Organic farmer **Carl Rosato** has graced the pages of the CN&R on multiple occasions. His **Woodleaf Farm** in Oroville was a pioneer in certified organic growing. After decades of tending the fields and getting multiple grants to advance the science of natural insect suppression, Rosato had become quite an expert, someone others looked to for advice and mentorship. He and his wife, **Helen Atthowe**, sold Woodleaf Farm in 2015—it's now **Peach Jamboree**—and moved to Oregon. Sadly, last year Rosato suffered a bad accident on his farm there that left him in a coma. He passed last week (Nov. 25).

Atthowe shared this: "Carl never stopped learning, changing his ideas, being curious, and seeing with the eyes of wonder and awe. He had a life of passion and purpose and service and has been loved and been well-loved by family, friends, students, and all the people he touched with his work."

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