

ARGUS-COURIER  
THURSDAY  
JUNE 4, 2015

# PETALUMA COMMUNITY

ABOVE THE BRIM

## Time to get rowing on the river this weekend

I am home at last from a whirlwind tour of Europe, which included visits to Budapest, Donostia, Dublin, Luxembourg, Paris, Porto, Prague and Vienna. I love traveling but nothing compares to Petaluma. Trust me; I've checked. (Follow "Above the Brim" on Facebook for the upcoming day-by-day account of my culinary adventures through Europe.)



**HOUSTON PORTER**

### **Sonoma Resource Conservation District ([sonomarcd.org](http://sonomarcd.org))**

■ Open Field Farms — There are still spots available for the special tour of the organic

biodynamic Open Field Farms on June 6, from 1 to 3:30 p.m.

■ Cloudy Bend Ranch — Another upcoming tour visits Craig Jacobson's Cloudy Bend Ranch on June 13, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. John Fitzgerald (Petaluma historian) and Laurel Collins (Watershed Sciences) will enlighten us about our local levee systems and the uniqueness of farming along the largest in-tact tidal salt marsh.

### **Petaluma Small Craft Center ([petalumasmallcraftcenter.org](http://petalumasmallcraftcenter.org))**

■ Ninth annual Day on the River — Head down to the Turning Basin on Sunday, June 7, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. to try out everything that the Petaluma Small Craft Center has to offer for water-born fun. At \$10 for

adults (free for kids), this is an affordable way to enjoy Petaluma's biggest park, from a kayak, Hawaiian outrigger canoe, stand-up paddle board, water bike, Hobie Cat, pedal boat and much more. Contact PSCC for volunteer opportunities.

■ Floathouse — In other great news for Petaluma, the PSCC's Floathouse received Planning Commission approval and now heads to the City Council. Offering boat rentals, classes and river access at the Turning Basin, the Floathouse (designed by venerable MAD Architecture) will expand access to this vital part of Petaluma's charms and character. Find out more at the Day on the River.

### **Marin French Cheese ([marinfrenchcheese.com](http://marinfrenchcheese.com))**

The MFC celebrates their 150th anniversary with an Appreciation Picnic Party on Sunday, June 14, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Having recently read Frances Rivetti's *Fog Valley Crush*, I now know a few things about MFC that I didn't before, even though I have been enjoying their cheeses, picnic area and pond for years. MFC's historic highlights include being the oldest continually operating cheese factory in the U.S. Additionally, during the Great Depression, MFC ceased its own dairy operations and bought from neighboring farms, in order to help support the area's struggling dairies, a practice continued today.

MFC is also the only U.S. producer of a Triple Crème Brie to ever best the French at the World Cheese Awards, from what

I understand. Along with a close-up look at cheese making and bee keeping, market-style tables will offer local foods for sample and sale, including sparkling mead, cider, beer, bread, baked goods, pickles, preserves and cheese from the California Artisan Cheese Guild. MFC will read your stories of how you and your family have enjoyed visiting the "Cheese Factory" over the years. You can submit your stories through their website.

### **Point Reyes Farmstead Cheese Company ([pointreyescheese.com](http://pointreyescheese.com))**

While we are on the subject of local cheese, I was excited to find Original Blue at Costco in Rohnert Park. I frantically checked up and down the aisles for their Toma and Bay Blue, too, to no avail, but was happy enough to find the Original Blue. Yes, of course I prefer to buy local cheeses from Marie (Petaluma Market), Molly and the gang (Thistle Meats), and Donna (Achadinha Cheese at the Farmers Market), but I simply couldn't resist a huge chunk of Original Blue for such a great price. Never a fan of blue cheese, it wasn't until I stumbled across a burger topped with Original Blue that I finally found a blue I liked ... no, loved. It remained the only blue I would eat until Point Reyes released their Bay Blue, which is now equally my favorite alongside the Original.

*(I look forward to your feedback, as well as hearing about any Petaluma food news that you choose to share with me at "Above the Brim" on Facebook or [abovethebrim@houstonporter.com](mailto:abovethebrim@houstonporter.com).)*