

TIP OF MY TONGUE

# Sweet shop goes independent

Monika and Will Bomar will re-brand Powell's Sweet Shoppe as "The Sweet Zone" starting March 11. Dropping the Powell's franchise affiliation will give The Sweet Zone the freedom to be more local, both in their products and their involvement in the community.

Already big donors to Petaluma organizations, the money they save on franchise fees will allow

the Bomars to work with Mentor Me and Petaluma Animal Services, as well as start a scholarship through the Petaluma Education Foundation.

But what kind of sweet story would this be without a Willy Wonka-esque "Golden Ticket" giveaway? Two lucky readers of this column will get a "Golden Ticket" to the invite-only, Thursday evening preview, March 10 from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m., which will include, among other things, chocolate and wine pairings.

To enter, send an email to [will@thesweetzone.com](mailto:will@thesweetzone.com) with "Tip of My Tongue - The Sweet Zone Contest" in the subject line.

The shop will close on March 1 for a major facelift and will reopen on March 11, with all the great bulk candy we have come to expect, as well as a Slushie machine, an expanded chocolate section with over 100 different chocolate bars, a "chocolate club," new delicious local confectioneries and many unique, wonderful and tasty gift ideas.

The Sweet Zone's grand opening is March 12 at 11 a.m., with the first 500 people receiving a custom chocolate bar. There will also be games, Beanboozle challenges and giveaways all day long.

## Chili cook-off

The Great Petaluma Chili Cook-off, Salsa and Beer Tasting still has a few competitor spots available. Held the Saturday of Mother's Day weekend each of the past 18 years, this event brings in teams from all over the state to compete

in categories ranging from individual teams to service organizations to restaurants/caterers.

There are trophies in many categories, with the grand champion receiving

a golden ticket to the World Food Championships. Individual teams take home the top prize just as often as the professionals, so don't be shy. Put together a team of co-workers, family, friends or neighbors and make a party out

of it. With more than 20 local breweries on tap, this is a brew fest and a cook-off. More information is at [www.greatchilicookoff.com](http://www.greatchilicookoff.com).

## Cookbook signing

Celebrity chef Laurie Figone will sign her new cookbook at Brixx Pizzeria on March 9 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Brixx will also have Laurie's Chimichurri Chicken Pizza with French Fries on the menu all week, which is something she created for her appearance on TNT's "On the Menu."

Laurie has won more than a dozen national and international recipe and cook-off contests, appeared on local and national TV shows, and is one of our favorite judges at the Great Petaluma Chili Cookoff, Salsa and Beer Tasting. But what makes Laurie truly special is that she is not only a local and a genuinely sweet person, but she highlights our local food purveyors in all her recipes.

Laurie's new cookbook has an easy to use high tech feature. A free smartphone app allows users to simply point their camera at the picture accompanying each recipe and, voila, a video appears on your phone or iPad in which Laurie shows you exactly how to make the recipe. This is like having your own personal cooking lesson, given by a world famous local chef.

## BBQ food truck

Faron, of Mario & John's

See **PORTER**, page D3



**HOUSTON PORTER**

## Porter

Continued from page D1

BBQ fame, is looking for help launching a BBQ food truck. I've judged a rib cook-off with Faron and have tasted his New Orleans style BBQ, so I can attest to the fact that Faron knows his way around a grill. Faron is using a GoFundMe campaign for this project.

But keep in mind that, unlike Kickstarter, where you are an investor that gets back some sort of gift dividend, GoFundMe works purely on donations, with no strings attached. As a BBQ lover who spent five weeks last summer driving around the U.S. in search of great BBQ,

I would be thrilled to see Faron continue providing his world-class BBQ right here in Petaluma.

## Wishbone relocating

Rumor has it that Wishbone will relocate to Native Kitchen's vacant location in the downtown block of Petaluma Blvd North. When it comes to farm-to-table, it doesn't get much better than Wishbone as they grow a lot of what you see on your plate.

(Contact Houston Porter at [houston@avant-larde.com](mailto:houston@avant-larde.com).)