

Cheese People expanding to become 'Cafe Fromage'

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The aroma of baking baguettes and other goodies will be filling downtown Beloit as Cafe Fromage opens at 431 E. Grand Ave. in October.

“Our business has grown and we are looking forward to offering products made with the best ingredients for our customers at Cafe Fromage,” said Darren Larsen of the Cheese People of Beloit, who is now ready for a new direction with this restaurant.

Cafe Fromage’s all new menu will feature a variety of salads, sandwiches, coffee, baked goods, and, of course, cheese.

The Cheese People of Beloit currently has a staff of four, but the operation will be looking to fill six to eight new positions for Cafe Fromage beginning in September.

Individuals interested in applying should look for directions on The Cheese People of Beloit or Cafe Fromage Facebook pages. Applications can also be filled out at the store.

Larsen says that the bakery portion of the business will be handled by current Cheese People of Beloit employee Rose Orbison. Orbison used to operate a bakery in Belvidere.

“We’re really excited that we’ll be having fresh baguettes and then also have a rotation of scones, muffins and brownies,” Larsen said.

In addition to the new menu, the interior of the current building will receive a little facelift and there will be the possibility of new table configurations to accommodate groups of 30 to 50 people.

Nikki’s Cafe, which has been operating for the past five years in Beloit under the direction of Lloyd Smith and his wife Taylor, will close at the end of August. Nikki’s Cafe has shared the address at 431 E. Grand Ave. with the Cheese People of Beloit.

“It’s extremely hard to be closing because if it was going to happen it should be because the product is bad or there aren’t customers...but that wasn’t the case here,” Lloyd Smith said. “We looked at other locations to lease, but couldn’t find one that would work.”

Smith says that he and his staff will now be transitioning to work at the Mandolin Cafe, a new coffee shop opening soon at 10684 Main St. in Roscoe.

“We appreciate the support that the people of Beloit have given us over the past five years and I love

this community,” Smith said.

Two final events are planned to take place at Nikki’s Cafe. They are the Pawcasso Art Auction and Gala today and a performance by Paul Zimmerman on Aug. 28.

The Cheese People of Beloit opened at its current location in May 2012 with Nikki’s Cafe as a tenant. In addition to having a storefront, the Cheese People of Beloit’s products are found at area farmers markets each week.