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WINNERS ANNOUNCED

bestbreakfast

Voters: Sunrise Cafe best place for day's first meal

By ADAM GAUB
Managing Editor
@agaub

In the first year for the new category, a longtime Maricopa favorite came out on top for Best Breakfast in Maricopa.

Sunrise Cafe won handily, thanks in part to a devoted following that saw the business – which opened its doors in 2007 – need to nearly double the size of its restaurant in 2012 to accommodate the growth.

Owner Luisa Foster acquired the suite right next to her in the Fry's Marketplace center, formerly belonging to State Farm agent Lance Lane, in an expansion project for her little café more than three years ago.

The expansion took seating capacity from 43 to 70, and added a new bar space, which comes with a handful of new flat-screen TVs for patrons to enjoy.

All of it, Foster said, is an attempt to transform the cozy bistro into something a bit more modern.

“We want to catch up with today's atmosphere,” Foster said in an interview in 2012.

That's not to say Foster is going completely away from the old look of Sunrise – using a orange and yellow paint scheme for the revamp – but she hopes new flooring, tables and booths will breathe a bit of new life into a place that has become a favorite of many locals over the past five years.

“Maricopa's growing again, so we want to accommodate that,” said Foster, who hopes to attract in new customers via daily specials, the new beer and wine service and by moving the waiting area for seating indoors.

Having lived in California prior to coming to Arizona, Foster said she has quickly grown to love Maricopa's small-town community feel, seeing some of her customers “nearly every day” during the week.

“I know what people are doing ... when they come in they're talking to me about their kids,” she said. “They're just all very nice people.”