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Napoli's Vallejo joins fight against breast cancer with 'Slice of Hope'

By Rich Freedman
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Nobody ever said eating pizza would cure cancer.

But money raised from the second "Slice of Life" on Friday helps fund research, and that's a good thing, believes Anthony Guerrero, general manager of Napoli's in Vallejo.

Napoli's is the only area pizzeria participating in the national fund-raiser for the Karen Mullen Breast Cancer Foundation and only one of 11 pizza parlors in the state involved.

"Normally, we would keep most of our charities and donations local," Guerrero said. "But this is bigger than that. We all know somebody who has had breast cancer."

For Guerrero, it's his sister-in-law. Fortunately, he said, she's in remission.

"Most of us can't write a \$1 million check to some foundation, but we can all help in some small way," Guerrero said.

Friday is typically the 56-year-old eatery's biggest night, anyway.

"It's our top-grossing day of the week and we hope this helps make it the top grossing day of the year," Guerrero said.

Napoli's will donate 15 percent of all pizza and dessert sales to the Mullen Foundation, said Guerrero. Last year, about \$500 was raised for the nonprofit.

"It was hugely successful and everybody had a great attitude about it," he said.

Guerrero found out about the "Slice of Life" in Pizza Today, the industry's top trade magazine and event sponsor.

"They said that, as one, what can we really do? But if we get together as a network of independent pizza operators, there is something we can do," Guerrero said.

The fund-raising runs from the 11 a.m. opening until 11 p.m. closing, the manager said, and no fliers or special coupons are needed. Take-outs also contribute to the cause.

"Buy pizza and 15 percent is going" to the foundation, Guerrero said.

DeEtta Platisha, an 11-year Napoli's server, said she missed last year's "Slice of Hope" and looked forward to this one, as crazy as it's expected to be.

"It's gratifying. Very gratifying," she said.

Last year's "Slice of Hope" debut raised \$70,000 nationally, according to Mullen Foundation website, endthisdisease.org.

Karen Mullen was diagnosed with breast cancer in October, 2006. She

fought the disease for four years, but died.

She was 44.