



A natural barn door slides open between this dining room and the ice cream saloon to expand the area in Don Payne's Buggy Works restaurant. (Staff photos by Harry Mauthe)



Jack Dunleavy (left) and Marty Burke, co-owners of Dunleavy's, say that one of them will be in the restaurant, nightly to survey the goings-on. The pub will do without entertainers. "People make their own entertainment," Dunleavy said. (Staff photos by Harry Mauthe)



Patrons of Dunleavy's Pub and Grub can enjoy an Irish folk atmosphere as well as a sandwich and a drink. Waitress Lana Boyle helps the opening day customers get acquainted with Brendan's new look.

They aim to please Restaurants vie for customers

Success is the elusive key in any business, and an onslaught of entrepreneurs is striving to click with the tastes and styles of Farmington-area residents.

The count tallies 13 new food operations in the past few months, and there're more on the way.

"I don't know why they come here, but the day after they open, they're all busy," says Farmington Hills Clerk Floyd Cairns.

Don Payne, owner of the Buggy Works located in the old A&P on Orchard Lake Road at Thirteen Mile, wasn't quite ready for the long lines of customers already forming in the "general store" reception area of his family-garaged operation.

"I've been working 14 hours a day, but I didn't expect the volume of business already, and we're understaffed management-wise," he laments.

Following the tradition of his nine-year Detroit operation, The Family Buggy, Payne's staff of between 50-60 is comprised of about 25 per cent high school students. He and his wife, Peggy Tillerman Payne, a Farmington High graduate, train the crew to meet their high standards of service, which Payne believes is the secret of success.

Payne majored in restaurant management at Michigan State University and pays tuition for his employees interested in pursuing a culinary arts career at local colleges.

His assistant manager, Dave Miedel, started at the Family Buggy at the age of 16 as a dishwasher and furthered his restaurant career at Schoolcraft College in the culinary arts department.

"If the staff doesn't have the right attitude, the public's going to feel it," maintains Payne, who's in the business because he says he loves it.

"Most people try to open with as little investment as possible, but I've put about \$250,000 into the interior, which is a lot for a leased building," he adds.

Furnaces, air conditioning, and major interior work such as natural barnwood walls and 120 rolls of mat-

tree-ticking wallpaper put up by Mrs. Payne and some employees are all part of Payne's idea to stress the interior rather than the exterior of the building.

"The psychological impact of walking in is important," he says.

He's been collecting antiques such as bikes circa 1880, a 1920s bar for the "Charles Horsefeathers" ice cream saloon, and a bank teller's cage to house the cash register, for nine years, in anticipation of the Farmington opening.

"I live out here, and I've always wanted a restaurant out here," he says.

"We strive for a Schuler's atmosphere with Bill Knapp's prices, hitting the middle of the road," he adds.

DUNLEAVY'S, nee Brendan's on Grand River west of Farmington Road, has two new owners, Mark Burke and Jack Dunleavy, who believe their Detroit experiences will be useful in making the Irish pub a success.

"Farmington is the fastest growing area, and we have the type of business that Farmington seems to need," says Dunleavy, who's tired of commuting from his Southfield home to his pub in downtown Detroit.

"Our customers live in the suburbs, we live in the suburbs, and in Detroit, we'd get our regular customers in the afternoon and early evening. Now we can see them in the evening as well," he maintains.

"We looked for a place for 1 1/2 years before we found this place," says Burke. "We found a place that's Irish, and we're Irish—it's hard to change us."

Sandwiches and drinks are on tap in the blue-and-green plaid bar, and the owners plan to replace the "B". Brendan's initial in the stained glass window soon. Their clientele is mixed, and the entertainment is minimal, says Dunleavy, who believes people make their own fun.

With a combination of 25 years in the business, the owners plan to be visible.

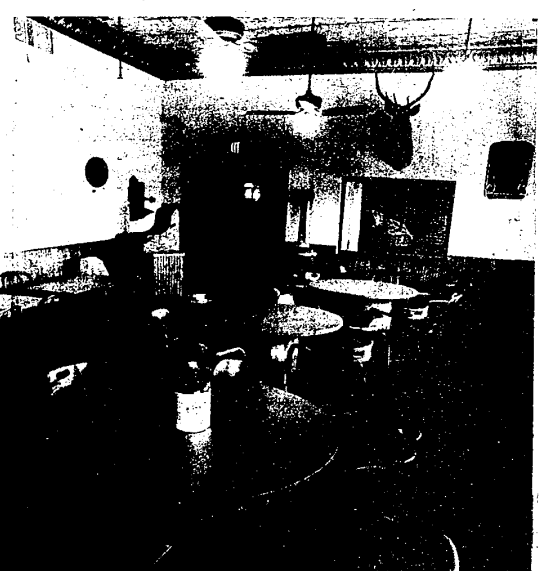
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P. Scott Scherrer, owner of Angie's.



Robert Mijatovich, manager of Angie's.



A low ceiling, stuffed animal heads, revolving ceiling fans and various antiques accent the Horsefeathers ice cream saloon at The Buggy Works.

Harry Spring

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