

Alumni chef shows teachers how it's done

By Craig Piechura
staff writer

Young men and women who came into the class not knowing how to boil water were breaking eggs with one hand, baking dessert shells shaped like little swans and chopping up herbs to add to the vinaigrette.

After flipping his last omelette, Keith Famie, 22, the *chef de cuisine*, surveyed the scene and expressed his approval.

"Look at this. We have formed a very strong kitchen crew here."

The setting for the feast was a home economics classroom at Farmington High School dubbed "Le Petit Cafe" for the day. Famie, a former vocational education student at the school, came back to school last week to lend his expertise as a chef to students learning about the restaurant business.

Faculty members paid \$4 in advance for a luncheon featuring a salad of Boston bibb and Romaine lettuce and carrots topped with an herbed vinaigrette dressing, a smoked oyster and cheddar cheese omelette surrounded by a champagne dill sauce, and a dessert of swan shaped shells filled with a white chocolate mousse and pistachio sauce raspberry.

A far cry from an Egg McMuffin, to be sure.

WHILE FAMIE was pleased with the students' performance at the luncheon, he didn't treat them with kid gloves. Like most head chefs, he barked orders, demanding larger pans. Nobody moved fast enough, in his estimation. "For example, when I make these swans they look like baby swans," Famie said. "But it wouldn't be right if I did all the work."

And the young chef who starts work at a new location — Raphael's in the new Sheraton-Oaks Hotel in Novi — saw some students who have the potential to become master chefs if they keep up their enthusiasm.

He singled out two students — Tom Rigoulot and Todd Williams — for praise.

Both students said they are considering a career in cooking or restaurant management.

"I learned how to prepare food like an assembly line," said Rigoulot, a sophomore. "Lots of speed. And he told us the correct way of cutting something. If you were using the knife wrong, he'd show you how to hold it."

Williams learned not to call the cuisine "gourmet" cooking because chefs prefer the term "gourmand." But he is proudest of his new-found skill in breaking open 120 eggs one-handed.

It's not done to be slick, says Famie, but to be quick and to keep the other hand free for some other chore.

THE END PRODUCT impressed Paul Hamway, a school counselor who remembers counseling Famie.

"Here's someone who's gone through the vocational program and has become successful at it," Hamway says. "There are other things to being a success than going to college. Keith can be a role model to these students."

The young chef admits he was never "school-inclined" and decided instead to knock on doors of good restaurants and attend cooking classes taught by the tops in the field.

Students who don't want to be a chef but want to work in a restaurant followed the advice of Famie's friend, Kevin Mains, head waiter at The Lark, a restaurant in West Bloomfield.

He made sure students served their guests food from the left and drink from the right.

He was asked why.

"I really don't know," Mains said. "Not too many etiquette rules have a basis in common sense."

Dean Jones listened to the head waiter's advice and tried to follow it exactly. He wasn't happy with himself, though, because more than once he forgot to ask diners if they wanted cream and sugar with their coffee.

He was working on establishing ambience.

Staff photos by Randy Borst



Chef Famie prepares omelettes in the Farmington High kitchen which for a day, at least, became part of "Le Petit Cafe."



Adding that extra little something to make the salads served at Farmington High taste good are (from left) Tom Rigoulot, Richard Greer and Dawn Bedwell.

Cleaning up is always part of running a successful restaurant, as Farmington students John Formella and Donna Lehner learned.

Northwestern viewed with new plan in mind

By Judith Berne
staff writer

It's time to discuss the future of Northwestern Highway — again.

That's because West Bloomfield Township is about to update its 1975 master plan.

And township planners don't quite know how to map acreage sitting in the right-of-way of the long-planned Northwestern extension to I-275 which has neither funds nor firm support for construction.

Northwestern Highway alternatives are the subject of a 7:30 p.m. Tuesday planning commission work session. The planning commission will move from Township Hall to Orchard Lake Middle School to accommodate the expected turnout of residents and developers.

Basis for discussion is a recently released analysis of three highway alternatives by the Detroit firm of Gerald Lundie and Associates, commissioned by the township at a cost of \$14,000.

THEY ARE:

- No change from the existing terminus of Northwestern Highway at Orchard Lake Road. Existing mile roads would be widened as necessary to accommodate future traffic demands.

- Extension of Northwestern as a limited access freeway to connect with the proposed I-275 freeway in Commerce Township.

- Extension of Northwestern as a controlled-access thoroughfare from its present terminus at Orchard Lake Road to a future terminus at West Maple Road. The extension could terminate at any of several points along Maple.

Extension of Northwestern to West Maple is cited as "the most reasonable thoroughfare alternative" and "a reasonable compromise," by the study.

However, "additional planning is required to improve access to the west side of the township and to improve regional transportation linkages," the study says.

The township and Oakland County Road Commission have agreed to a policy of developing West Maple as a boulevard between Orchard Lake and Haggerty roads, regardless of what happens to Northwestern.

The study advocates a layout which would set the Northwestern-West Maple intersection east of Farmington Road. It also suggests upgrading West Maple Road and Fourteen Mile Road in an east-west direction and Haggerty, Farmington Road and Orchard Lake Road in a north-south direction.

EACH ALTERNATIVE is analyzed to determine its impact on traffic circulation, land use, industrial traffic, tax base, aesthetics and sensitive environmental areas.

West Bloomfield Planning Director Frank Reynolds calls it "a completely unbiased, fresh approach to the question" which has created local controversy between government and developers on one side and environmentalists and others com-

mitted to the residential nature of West Bloomfield on the other.

"It's really a very good report," said Lorna McGowan of Concerned Citizens For West Bloomfield. "But it doesn't include costs or who will fund it."

"We feel it's just going to create a new bottleneck a mile further west and disrupt the subdivisions in that area. Their no-build alternatives are not the same as ours. We would upgrade existing roads — pave and widen Farmington and Drake up to Maple."

The Northwestern question directly affects every township resident because it will influence the course and timing of future development, McGowan advances. It will particularly bear on property values and climate of the township's south end.

THE STUDY shows the recommended extension to Maple would create a possible decrease in traffic on Orchard Lake, Walnut Lake and 14 Mile roads, but would probably increase traffic on West Maple-Farmington Road access to Northwestern and on Haggerty. It would also allow potential for cut-through traffic onto residential streets near the proposed Farmington-Maple roads interchange.

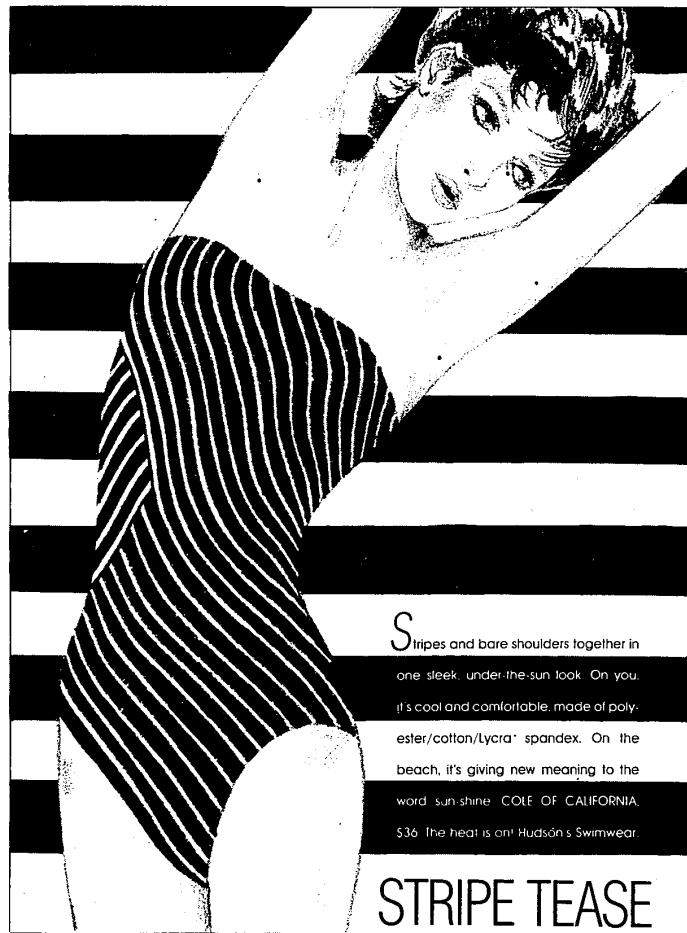
The study suggests a potential excessive increase of industrial traffic on Haggerty, Maple and Pontiac Trail. Lack of direct access to a freeway could impede industrial development as planned in the township's southwest section.

The compromise proposal is likely to increase pressure for development at Maple-Northwestern interchange as well as accelerate the pace of development on the township's west side, and on the triangle bounded by Northwestern, Maple and Orchard Lake roads. Existing residential uses along the highway may become obsolete and township environmental policies could be undermined.

USE OF approximately 66 acres for the Maple extension, now slated for single family, multiple family and commercial development, could cost the township \$1.4 million annually. That's based on a millage rate of 47.9 mills and assuming 100 percent development of the township. At the same time, the continued restricted access to the township's west side could restrain pace of development and growth of tax base there. Property values would increase on the township's east side, however, because of intensive concentration of development.

Aesthetically, extension of Northwestern to west of Maple would make arterial roadways increasingly unattractive, according to the report. Their heavy use also could have a negative impact on adjacent residential areas. However, retaining the natural character of the west side of the township would be less difficult since there would be less pressure for development there.

The highway extension would eliminate wetlands, open fields and sensitive environmental areas. Also, with a build-up of traffic on major roads, adjacent woodlands and wetlands may be negatively affected.



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