



JERRY ZOLYNSKY/staff photographer

Joe Fredericks, owner of House of Foods in West Bloomfield, stacks bottles of kosher Coca-Cola for the Passover celebration.

Grocer ready for holiday

By Judith Doner Berne
staff writer

An Italian-Catholic grocer, who recently bought a West Bloomfield supermarket, is getting his first taste of dealing with foods for the Jewish Passover celebration of freedom and tradition.

The holiday, which begins at sundown today and lasts eight days, is celebrated in the temple and synagogue, but mainly recognized at home at family dinners, called seders.

Joe Fredericks, new owner of House of Foods at Walnut Lake and Drake roads, said 30 years of grocery experience in the Flint area didn't prepare him for serving a Jewish clientele.

"I had to address that and learn quickly the religious holidays they observe and the handling of kosher foods," he said. Suppliers of kosher products gave him a crash course on kosher foods. One furnished a pamphlet detailing the background and foods for all holidays celebrated by Jewish people.

AS FOR PASSOVER, which requires the stocking of foods produced especially for Passover (designated "KIP"), "I took the time to read the Haggadah — the Passover prayer book," Fredericks said.

"I'm 50 years old, an airborne infant,

tryman in the Korean conflict, but I was really afraid when I got here," Fredericks admitted. "I didn't want to offend anybody."

House of Foods, as other area supermarkets, stocks a full line of Passover products ranging from soup to nuts, well at least borscht to potato chips. Prominently displayed near the line of more traditional Passover products, such as matzah, gefilte fish and chicken soup, are kosher Coca-Cola and Diet Coke.

FREDERICKS REPORTS heavy sales of the Passover Coke products, offered last year for the first time in the Detroit area.

The Council of Orthodox Rabbis of Greater Detroit reportedly inspected local Coke facilities and equipment and provided a rabbi to oversee the bottling operation, according to a spokesman for Coca-Cola Bottlers of Detroit.

Special syrup tubes were set aside and used for the specially formulated syrups. The entire bottling line was cleaned and sanitized under a rabbi's supervision before bottling began.

Fredericks said he is happy to be adding Passover foods to his overall grocery knowledge.

"To a real dyed-in-the-wool food retailer, holidays are exciting," he said.

"It is another holiday — which I hadn't experienced — that adds excitement."

Kosher donuts galore

By Sharon Dargay
staff writer

WHEN CARLOS Velasquez took over management of a Southfield donut shop five months ago, friends jokingly suggested that he bake "kosher."

Velasquez took the advice to heart. Under supervision of Rabbi Jack Goldman, Velasquez's Dunkin' Donuts shop on Northwestern south of 12 Mile has become the only kosher diner in Michigan.

"This is a Jewish area," the native Chilean said. "When I first came here, I asked what kind of food they liked and when their holidays were. But I didn't know anything about kosher."

Inquiries lead him to Rabbi Goldman, director of the Metropolitan Kashruth Council of Michigan, an organization that oversees the production and sale of kosher foods throughout the Midwest. Goldman also teaches at Macomb County Community College.

"I told him to come and bless my products," laughed Velasquez, drawing the idea from his own Catholic background. "He had to explain it all to me."

Kosher refers to a set of dietary laws observed by Jews, primarily of orthodox and conservative doctrines, which prohibits consumption of certain foods and prescribes methods for food preparation. Milk and meat products may not be eaten at the same time or with the same utensils.

"I TOLD HIM EVERYTHING here is 'treif' — that's the opposite of kosher," Rabbi Goldman said. "I told him he'd have to make a lot of changes. It's not an easy thing to do."

Velasquez first obtained permission from his company to make the switch. He's aware of only one other kosher Dunkin' Donuts, located in Chicago.

During the three-day process all non-kosher foods and ingredients were removed from the restaurant. All soup bowls and silverware were



DEBORAH BOCKEY/staff photographer

"Cheers," says Carlos Velasquez (left), Southfield donut shop owner, and Rabbi Jack Goldman on the kosher baking of the popular donuts.

replaced. The oven was run at a high temperature to burn off traces of non-kosher foods and cooking utensils were boiled five times.

"It requires constant rabbinical supervision," Rabbi Goldman noted. "I watch as they unload deliveries to make sure there are no mistakes. Last week they brought cream of potato soup, which is not kosher."

"I could only do this with a gentile," Rabbi Goldman added. "If he were a Jew I would have to make sure he closed the place on the sabbath and on holidays. Only a gentile could keep it

open all the time."

Velasquez claims the initial ritual was costly and that "keeping kosher" is demanding.

"I had to throw out \$80 worth of (non-kosher) shortening in one day," he pointed out. "I don't know if this will produce more money for me or not. At the Chicago restaurant, business increased 20 percent."

But Velasquez says he's not in the kosher restaurant business for the money alone.

"KIDS CAN'T BELIEVE they can eat anything they want. Some of them

have never tasted donuts," he said. "They love it. It just makes my day."

Velasquez worked as a chemical engineer before taking over management of a Dunkin' Donuts shop in Connecticut a few years ago.

"I always had an interest in the Jewish religion," he said. "Catholics never used to eat meat on Fridays, but I never followed those things. When I found out about kosher I didn't understand why they would deprive themselves (of certain foods)."

"But it's a commitment they have."

INSIDE ANGLES

THE ALDRICHs ARE a proud family this month. Harold and Ila Aldrich have been notified that their daughter Gale Stoner of Battle Creek was placed in the "1982 Book of Outstanding Young Women in America." Son Howard, who is the present chairman of the Farmington Historical Commission, was named Farmington Jaycee of the month of January. Daughter Keri has just graduated from Ferris State College with a degree in accounting, while third daughter Connie Qualman of Northville is adding on to the home in preparation for the arrival of two adopted children this spring. Harold, received his gold watch in appreciation of 30 years of employment with Federal Screw Works in Detroit, and Ila gets to teach time to the new children she'll be baby sitting for.

GEORGE HUNT has been named to the Automobile Club of Michigan President's Honor Club for outstanding 1982 sales performance. He is among the top 20 percent of the Auto Club sales force recently inducted as charter members of the President's Club for sales of membership, life, auto and homeowners insurance.

FOR THE LAST four months, the city of Farmington Hills has operated an emergency food distribution center for the Farmington area. The center receives donated food staples and monetary donations contributed by residents of the community and various businesses and industrial complexes. Among the many contributors, the employees and physicians at Botsford Hospital have been the longest and largest contributors to this project, donating in excess of \$6,000 in cash, in addition to food donations. Doug Gaynor, director of special services and in charge of this program, is able to see firsthand, the good that is being accomplished along with the gratitude that the recipients of this food display. This continues to re-emphasize those important characteristics of generosity and sensitivity exemplified by the Botsford Hospital Group and all the other community donors, he said.

CONGRATULATIONS to Bernadette Athey, who was inducted into the University of Detroit Chapter of Alpha Sigma Nu, the National Jesuit Honor Society. Membership in Alpha Sigma Nu is one of the highest honors a student can achieve at a Jesuit college or university. It signifies that they have distinguished themselves, not only scholastically, but also through exceptional service to others on campus and in the outside community. Scholastically, the society requires candidates for membership to be juniors or seniors, ranked in the top 15 percent of their class, with a grade point average of 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale.

BIRMINGHAM COMMUNITY BAND recently awarded half-tuition scholarships to area

music students to attend the two-week All State Band Session at the National Music Camp at Interlochen this summer. Farmington-area winners are Martha Scheer and Daniel Ross.

STUDENTS FROM 33 southern Michigan high schools participated in the seventh annual History Day for high school juniors and seniors held at Eastern Michigan University. The event gave the students the opportunity to compete in examinations on United States or world history. Mike Bogan, a Harrison High School junior, received a book award for being a winner in the U.S. history exam. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Bogan of Farmington Hills. George Fekaris, a North Farmington High School senior, received a \$750 scholarship for being a winner in the U.S. history exam. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Fekaris of Farmington Hills.

KUDOS to Harrison High School students who recently became full-fledged members of the National Honor Society Feb. 24. They are Todd Barry, Mark Barsamian, Kim Cardecia, Todd Cherkasky, Brent Couzens, Scott Dechant, Dawn Durham, Mark Ekstrand, Brendan Fitzpatrick, Marcia Freedland, Lisa Gilbert, Darryl Ginter, Sheila Hennessy, Carol Kopko, Donald Lacey, Craig Lindberg, Joelle Lukasiewicz, Kathleen Mahinske, Monica Mara, Andrew Marcheff and Keith Mazy.

Also honored were: Martha McCaughey, Stephen Miller, Theresa Mochlin, Scott Novia, Steven Orsini, David Quarles, Kent Polkinghorne, Kenneth Rudofski, Eric Sander, Bruce Scanlon, Karen Schofield, Karen Schurgin, John Sepetys, Jacqueline Sopotich, John Stewart, Robert Takis, Helen Tucker, Stefanie Varga, David Weiner and Howard Weiner.

CONGRATULATIONS to Robert Vertabedian of Farmington, who will be inducted into the Phi Chi, a national pharmaceutical honor society that admits graduate students with superior records and undergraduate students in the top 20 percent of their class.

JULY 1 marks the 10th year anniversary of the city of Farmington Hills. It was on that same date in 1973 that the city charter took effect. In order to recognize this significant milestone, the Farmington Hills City Council is forming a 10-year anniversary celebration committee. What is necessary at this point is the valuable, creative input of active and interested Farmington Hills residents who are willing to work with the city council and city staff. Enthusiastic volunteers are needed for all aspects of the planning and implementation of this commemoration. Anyone interested should call the director of special services' office at 474-6115, Ext. 284, and place your name on the list of volunteers. You then will be contacted in the near future for the first meeting.

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