

## POINTS OF VIEW

# Mom's career sparked son's vocation

It is Mother's Day and here's a story that's a gift to those of us who went back or continued to work as we had children.

Dan Sachs, a West Bloomfield native and Cranbrook graduate, this week realized his dream of opening a "classic, urban American restaurant" — Spruce, in downtown Chicago.

And the 28-year-old says he owes much of it to the fact that his mom took a full-time job during his preteen years.

In an Eccentric story published nearly 10 years ago, Sachs said: "It began when she left little notes, 'put the chicken in the oven at 325 degrees at 5:30, etc.' In a couple of weeks I was doing my own experimenting. Soon I was doing a lot of cooking for my family."

Sachs, then 19, had just returned from nine months at La Varenne cooking school in Paris. He had graduated (first in his class (although he was youngest), while he concurrently took a two-month course in wines at the Acad-

emie du Vin.

He was spending the summer as a cook at Romanik's in West Bloomfield, and would be off to study government at Harvard that fall.

His plans were to eventually own a restaurant or catering business, reporter Carolyn DeMarco wrote. "I'm sure I'll be in a kitchen somewhere," he said at the time.

Well, since then he's been in a lot of kitchens — and dining rooms — in Cambridge, Mass., London, New York and Chicago, methodically learning all aspects of the business.

Sachs, a lanky, soft-spoken young man, says each experience helped him "appreciate the nature of a business that is one of hospitality, artistry and organization."

"It's a wonderful job. Your focus and goal is to make other people happy. I feel very fortunate."

He also is fortunate on another scale. He was able to lure his executive chef,



JUDITH DONER BERNE

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Keith Luce, away from the Clinton White House. Luce, 27, was sous chef there under Walter Sheib.

And if the Clintons ate what was served at the pre-opening party attended by his mom and dad, Martie and Bob Sachs of West Bloomfield and a number of friends and family from our suburbs, well it's a wonder Bill Clinton ever considers eating a Big Mac.

Martie Sachs, although happy he credits her with his vocation, knows in her heart that the creamless Jerusalem artichoke soup served as a first course was not a household staple.

And that the roasted lamb rounds, if she actually ever served them, did not include garlic-chipotle whipped potatoes and mushroom essence.

But it is highly probable that Sachs first sampled dried Michigan cherries at home, an important ingredient in the restaurant's cherry and polenta pudding with mascarpone sorbet.

During his year-long search and the

design for his Chicago restaurant site, Sachs also drew on his suburban Michigan roots. He turned to Cranbrook and Harvard classmate Adam Weintraub, now an architect with the New York firm of William S. Leeds.

"We bartended together and used to talk about the dream of the restaurant he would run and I would design," said Weintraub, whose parents, Dr. Roslyn and Gerald Weintraub, live in Bloomfield Township.

Restaurants are risky businesses. Just 32 percent stay alive at least one decade, according to research from Cornell and Michigan State universities.

But it's hard not to bet on Dan Sachs who owes a lot to his working mom, Happy Mother's Day.

Judith Doner Berne, a West Bloomfield resident, is former managing editor of the *Eccentric Newspapers*. See her comment on this column at (313) 953-2047, ext. 1897 or by writing or faxing a letter to the editor of this newspaper.

# Vouchers are a plot, not parent 'option'

By now, anyone who reads should be wise to the voucher plot.

The plot is to avoid a direct attack on the section of the Michigan Constitution which prohibits aid to private and church-related schools. Instead the plotters will nibble, nibble, nibble at the edges, then say, "Well, we might as well have vouchers because we aid private schools in so many other ways."

We saw the voucher plot at work last month as the state Senate mangled the driver's ed bill. First, the Senate removed the "mandate" (ugh-dirty word) that public school kids be taught to drive.

Next it amended the bill to offer a \$100 voucher that a student could take to a private driving school and buy lessons. The money-hungry wolf got another paw inside the door.

It remains to be seen if the House will be suckered into buying that amendment.

In March, the plot was moved along when lawmakers passed a bill sponsored by Rep. Jessie Dalman, R-Holland, with the clever title of "a bill to establish postsecondary enrollment options for certain students."

"Options" — what a slick disguise for transferring taxpayers' money to private schools.

The bill expands a program allowing high school students to enroll for a course in private and church-related colleges and take their state aid to the K-12 school with them. "This is one more effort to put a nail in the coffin of public schools," objected Sen. Jim Berryman, D-Adrian. We can ignore Berryman — can't we? — because he's running for governor.

In past months, some of us have pointed to the misnamed "charter schools" that are being so loosely licensed, particularly by Central Michigan University.

The law calls them "public school



TIM RICHARD

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academies." Most are not, of course. Two-thirds or more were previously existing private schools, many with ethnic and religious agendas.

If you want to know how "public" these charter schools are, check your June 10 ballot when you vote for local school trustees. Look high and low for "public school academy" board candidates. Hint: Don't hold your breath until you find them on the ballot.

Off in the wings is Dr. Paul DeWeese, a physician who is at least honest about his intentions. DeWeese wants to amend the Michigan Constitution to strike out the language voters, by a 300,000 majority, added in 1970:

"No public monies or property shall be appropriated or paid by any public credit utilized, by the legislature or any other political subdivision or agency of the state directly or indirectly to aid or maintain any private, denominational or other nonpublic, pre-elementary, elementary, or secondary school."

DeWeese is an embarrassment to the plotters because he is so forthright. Their tactic is to drain off the school aid fund, a dollar here and 50 cents there, all couched in the free market language of giving parents options.

Gov. John Engler is known to be partial to parochial schools. That's his and Michelle's right. Michigan does not go so far as some jurisdictions in the world by outlawing parochial schools. In fact, our constitution protects freedom of religious worship and gives tax-free status to religious schools. These are pretty generous "options."

What we will see is a series of these tiny raids on the budget, all in the name of giving parents options. The goal is to soften up television watchers and talk radio listeners over a few years into believing that parochialism is here, and all we need to do is bring our constitution up to date. Readers won't be fooled.

Tim Richard reports on the local implications of state and regional events.

# Term limits may be means to wrong end

Over the weekend, I happened to share a platform at the University of Michigan commencement with 13th District U.S. Rep. Lynn Rivers.

"How are things going?" I asked. "Terrible," she replied. "It's an election year, and by now all we do is driven entirely by politics. Everything — literally every thing — is spinning and pandering."

She's right, of course. That's the price we pay for living in a democracy.

OK. But here's a question: Given the vast popularity of term limits in the polls, how come the U.S. Senate recently voted down a bill to enact term limitations on members of Congress?

Certainly, much of the momentum for term limits was the 1994 election. Voters figured out they had their own tried and true system of term limits: Vote out the incumbent rascals.

Moreover, most voters are pretty conservative about making big changes in the fundamentals of our political system. Better to see how the idea has worked out in the 20 states that have adopted term limits since 1990 before amending the U.S. Constitution.

Michigan voters adopted in 1992 a referendum that limited state representatives to three two-year terms. Newly-elected state senators and the governor, as of 1994, may serve only two four-year terms.

The idea was to get back to replace careerist officeholders with citizen politicians and to cut the corruption, pork-barreling and arrogance that so characterize legislatures.

What's the evidence so far? Already Michigan's term limits have produced a lot of legislative turnover. The highly-respected Republican speaker of the House, Paul Hillebrand, has decided not to run for reelection, while GOP Sen. Doug Carl, citing term limits, has announced plans to run for Macomb County treasurer.

A lot of state reps already are figuring out how to run for the state Senate in 1998, when they hit the term limit barrier. There's going to be a lot of churn over the next few years, plus lots of jostling for leadership positions as senior legislators tromp off into the sunset.

If nothing else, getting rid of long-term legislators means the loss of lots of experience. "We'll lose a lot of institutional memory," said Hillebrand. This will change the balance of power in Lansing, according to Sen. John Schwarz, R-Battle Creek. "We've made the governor a proconsul (a Roman district ruler), we're giving inordinate power to the professional staff and bureaucracy."

Not to mention the dreaded lobbyists.

While term limits will eliminate the long-stand-



PHILIP POWER

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ing, bipartisan "old boys network" that has run the Legislature for years, it may also introduce much more sharply polarized people and confrontation dynamics into the political process. A quick look at the celebrated — and radical — Republican freshman class in the U.S. House tends to confirm this fear.

Specific legislative issues also will be affected by term limits. For example, Wayne State University David Adamany testified that because of the loss of institutional memory in the Legislature, university "funding arrangements are likely to become highly unpredictable and even chaotic." Adamany urged the Legislature to adopt a funding formula for universities before chaos descends.

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In and of itself, limiting the time folks can serve will not insure that good people run for office.

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