

DINING

Festive holiday dinners offer taste of yesteryear

There are lots of ways to celebrate the holiday season. You can step back in time, and enjoy seasonal delights at these special holiday dinners.

Schoolcraft College

Ye lords and ladies, take heed! You are invited to gather of a winter night and laud the holidays with a lusty meal and a draught of fine wine. The king, his queen and court will assemble for Schoolcraft College's 22nd Annual Madrigal dinner, Thursday-Saturday, Dec. 10-12.

The pageantry begins 7:30 p.m. in the College's Waterman Center where royalty and guests dine on bounties prepared by the award-winning culinary arts department. You'll hear joyous sounds produced by members of the music department and visiting minstrels.

Madrigal Singers, under the direction of conductor Steve McGraves, enter the hall in full costume to present the wassail and toast the season. Diners then partake of the prime rib menu's many choices, each presented to the court with trumpet fanfare and ceremony.

Throughout the evening, the dulcet tones of Good Neighbors All provide music on period instruments, the Madrigal Singers intone the songs of the season, and a court jester amuses guests with magic and juggling.

gling. Celebration proceeds enhance the student scholarship fund. The cost is \$35 per person, call (734) 462-4417. Saturday, Dec. 12 is sold out, seats remain for the Dec. 10 and Dec. 11 dinners. Schoolcraft College is at 18600 Haggerty Road (between Six and Seven Mile, just west of I-275).

Oakland Community College

The college's annual Wassail Feast will be presented 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 3, on Oakland Community College's Orchard Ridge campus, 27055 Orchard Lake Road, Farmington Hills. The cost is \$45 per person, call (248) 471-7786 for details.

Detroit Institute of Arts

Tickets are still available for an Elizabethan England Wassail Feast, Thursday-Saturday, Dec. 10-12, and Dec. 17-19 at the Detroit Institute of Arts, 5200 Woodward Ave.

The evening commences with an open bar reception in the museum's Kresge Court and continues to the majestic Great Hall, an opulent setting for the candle lit tables, mimes, acrobats, madrigals, dancers and strolling musicians.

Trumpets herald the beginning of the feast, and revellers are seated for a sumptuous five-

course meal that was served to nobility of yesteryear.

Highlights include a golden-crusted pork and leek pie, prime rib with Yorkshire pudding, and a finale of bread pudding with brandy sauce.

A vegetarian menu is also available. Wassail punch, a mixture of ale and other libations, is served throughout.

The Wassail Feast runs each evening from 6:30 p.m. to approximately 10 p.m. Tickets are \$150 each for Fridays and Saturdays; \$135 each for Thursday, as well as for purchases of 20 or more tickets.

Tickets include valet parking and are tax deductible. All proceeds support the DIA's general operating fund. Call (313) 833-4005 to reserve.

Eagle Tavern at Greenfield Village

The holiday menu at Eagle Tavern in Greenfield Village in Dearborn, offered on select nights through Jan. 2, reflects the seasonal availability in mid-19th century Michigan and is created from authentic recipes of the time.

A merry band of the area's finest entertainers will delight you and your companions with holiday song and dance. Court-mannered presenters will be entertaining throughout the evening.



Seasonal celebration: Festivities commence at Schoolcraft College's annual Madrigal dinners as the Madrigal Singers enter the hall in full costume to present the wassail and toast the season.

Guests will arrive at Greenfield Village located at Oakwood Boulevard and Village Road, just west of the Southfield Freeway, and west of Michigan Ave., and drive directly to the Eagle Tavern parking lot.

Reserved seating at the Eagle

Tavern is provided family style at tables of eight, as was the custom in 1850.

The menu includes assorted cheese and crackers, corn chowder, Sliced Honey Glazed Ham, Chicken Pie, Roasted Rib of Beef, roasted redskin potatoes, and hot

vegetables.

Cost is \$60 per person and includes dinner and entertainment. The evening begins with a cash bar at 6:45 p.m., followed by dinner at 7:30 p.m. Call (313) 982-6001 for information and reservations.

WHAT'S COOKING

Send items for consideration in What's Cooking to Kately Wygnik, Entertainment Editor, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers Inc., 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, MI 48150, fax (248) 591-7279, or e-mail kwygnik@oe.com.

■ New at Troy's Somerset Collection - P.F. Chang's China Bistro, is scheduled to open Monday, Nov. 30 at the Somerset Collection (South) in Troy. Occupying the ground floor location of the former Sebastian's, the restaurant claims to offer a unique blend of traditional Chinese cuisine and American hospitality in an upscale, modern bistro atmosphere. Hours will be Sunday through Thursday 11 a.m.-11 p.m., Friday and Saturday until midnight. Phone (248) 352-7779.

P.F. Chang's China Bistro has locations across the U.S., but this is its first entry into the Metro-Detroit dining scene. Keeping reading DINING for a full feature on P.F. Chang's to learn how Asian, as in authentic Chinese, and bistro, a French notion, harmonize in this unique concept.

■ Van Gogh's Improv Grill, 27909 Orchard Lake Road,

Farmington Hills (12 Mile and Orchard Lake Road) offers an interactive dining theme. General Manager Stewart Sloan described the experience as one where you will be able to choose everything you want to eat and watch it being prepared at the grill in the middle of the room. Something like The Mongolian Barbecue; only we won't be strictly Asian. We'll have a lot of choices.

Van Gogh proprietors are

William Gitre and Duane Gmerek who also own Roosevelt's Billiards Bar & Grill across the street from Van Gogh. They've named Patrick Houston, formerly with Larco's in Troy as executive chef. In the future, stay in touch with DINING for a review of the menu and an explanation of the Van Gogh name.

■ The Golden Mushroom, 18100 W. Ten Mile Road, Southfield, has reopened its popular

Mushroom Cellar, closed temporarily for a facelift. New carpeting with an upbeat Art Deco pattern has been installed. Wood floors have been replaced with tile. New art work has been added and the popular gathering spot has been generally spruced up!

The same quality food and service as main floor Golden Mushroom dining is offered in the lower-level, cigar-friendly Mushroom Cellar.

■ Flying Fish (17600 W. 13 Mile, Birmingham) has cast off to a receptive dining audience. Wednesday evening last week saw a full house of diners enjoy-

ing the brightly colored and remodeled interior. They were taking advantage of the "Flight Arrivals" boards announcing best catches of the day.

Birmingham's Flying Fish is different from the one at Orchard Lake and Maple Road because it has retained two dining levels from its days as Tavern on 13. Downstairs can get a bit noisy around 7 p.m., but upper-level tables afford a quieter dining atmosphere.

■ Champagne Feast - Eat, drink and be merry as Matt Prentice's Unique Restaurant Corporation toasts the holiday season with the Champagne

Feast. The feast celebrates the rich history of Veuve Clicquot Champagne and the flavorful cuisine of URC Corporate Chef Jim Barnett. The event will be held on two separate evenings, Wednesday, Dec. 2 at Morels, A Michigan Bistro, and Thursday, Dec. 3 at Duet. Each feast begins at 6:30 p.m. Barnett has prepared an outstanding menu.

The cost is \$125 per person, exclusive of tax and gratuity. Morels is at 30100 Telegraph, Bingham Farms, (248) 642-1054. Duet is at 3711 Woodward Ave., Orchestra Place Hall, (313) 831-3838. Call for reservations and information.

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