

Monday, March 29, 1982

At Slimmery

Whipping up desserts designed for the dieters

By Kathy Parriah
staff writer

Martin Benson treats himself to a hot fudge sundae every day. But the pharmacist isn't worried about gaining back the 41 pounds he lost in the last couple years.

Actually, he took off the extra girth while enjoying ice cream and hot fudge sauce daily.

"I don't have to deny myself" said Benson, who whips up the desserts from Slimmery products designed for dieters. "And I don't."

The Bloomfield Hills resident handles Michigan sales of the St. Louis treats fashioned by chef Manfred Zettl. There are Slimmery restaurants in Farmington, Livonia, Rochester, Sterling Heights and Wyandotte, where the Michigan franchise is based at Grove Drugs.

The modest eateries — which do as much carry-out business as sit-down — offer entrees with fattening names like Veal Empanada Turnover, Tortilla with Cheese "Fiesta," and Spinach Mushroom Quiche. For dessert, the menu includes tempting Black Forest Cake, Strawberry Pie, Vanilla Cake Cookies with Anise, and eclairs.

Zettl, who claims to test and retest each recipe "to perfection," aims the low-calorie dishes at people who must avoid sugar-laden delights. Customers usually are on diets to lose weight for health reasons like diabetes and hypoglycemia.

"I LEFT THE taste in while decolorizing the recipes and leaving out the sugar and fat," explained the president of Slimmery International.

Austrian-born Zettl, who studied cooking in Vienna, worked his way up from cook to executive chef of Famous Barr Department stores in St. Louis.

His sister's diabetes led him to experiment with low-calorie gourmet entrees, pastries and desserts for people who must avoid sugar.

He opened the first Slimmery in 1974 with Joseph Folender, administrative director of Weight Watchers of Missouri and Illinois.

In eight years, Slimmery has expanded its offerings from seven products (two ice cream flavors) to 82 products and 52 flavors of ice cream, ranging from vanilla to pina colada and champagne. There are now soups, salads, snacks, entrees and desserts available in the 24 restaurants in 14 states.

"People — especially those on diets — like to try something new," said Zettl, who even tries to duplicate popular candy bar flavors in his ice cream.

"And I'm the type person who is never happy. I'm a perfectionist, but it's hard to reach perfection unless you try and improve."

WHEN THE OPERATION first started, the foods were higher in calories and contained more chemicals. Zettl admits his first ice cream — made from a purchased base — was "terrible."

"After two days in the freezer, it got grainy and tasted like sand," explained the chef, who through trial and error developed his own mix.

Today Slimmery products contain no fats, sugar, starches or added salt, said Zettl, who uses mainly eggs, skim milk, fruit and lots of vegetables. The items are immediately chilled and blast frozen, so there is no need for preservatives.

Zettl's desserts contain saccharin, which he feels is a safe sugar substitute in small quantities.

The member of the American Association of Food Chemists takes two or three months to think out a recipe. But once it's decided upon, he now executes it smoothly — which didn't use to be the case.

In the beginning, his trial-and-error method resulted in a couple of failures like his ill-fated sauerkraut coconut cookie.

"It's no longer a painful guessing

game," said Zettl, who still hasn't been able to execute some of his favorite pastry recipes.

BUTTER AND SUGAR are to pastries what mortar and brick are to a house," explained the chef. "We have beautiful low-calorie eclairs, but they don't have that crackling crisp sparkle. I'm honest about that."

Menus in Slimmery restaurants list ingredients, which diners are encouraged to read. "We teach people how to read labels," said Benson, who graduated from Ferris State College with a degree in pharmacy.

"If they have a specific need, we encourage them to talk it over with their physician. We don't play doctor."

Both believe in good nutrition and emphasize they use foods that are made of healthy ingredients.

"I could be very successful having a gourmet restaurant. But I wanted to do something for people. I make an effort to help them eat right and understand what they're eating," explained Zettl.

But both believe it's also important for dieters to be able to treat themselves a little.



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Pat Hizey holds away over the low-caloried dishes with fattening names in Pat's Nuirwood Slimmery in Muirwood Square on Grand River and Drake. There

are now about 82 items on the menu for eating there or carrying out.



DAVID FRANK/staff photographer

Slimmery International president and chef Manfred Zettl gives Teri Krywko a taste of fudge frozen dessert, the flavor of the day at Chi Chi's Slimmery in Rochester.

Complete with whipped topping, the pumpkin tart contains a mere 70 calories. Slimmery products contain no fats, sugar, starches or added salt.



RANDY BORST/staff photographer



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Sculpture on display

Lois Bro, one of the few sculptors in the Farmington Artists Club, shows her work in Farmington Branch Library through the end of the month. Bro is as well known for her work in fabric design and the needlecraft classes she gives in Farmington Community Center as she is for her work in direct metal and bas relief. Among the pieces she shows in the library are "Portrait of Mary" (left) in bronze and "Secrete" (above), executed in plaster.

Young career woman sought by local BPW

Farmington Business and Professional Women's Club (BPW) is calling for applications for this year's Young Career Woman competition.

Last year's Farmington young careerist was Daria Killinger, a law student at University of Detroit and a runner-up in the district competition.

Nominees must be between the ages of 21 and 30 and must be or have been employed in business or the professions with at least one year of full-time work in her career area.

Consistants or nominators must call Karen Dolsen, 476-5596, before April 1, to be eligible for the club selection which will be made during the 6:30 p.m. dinner meeting April 13 in the Buggy Works restaurant.

Selection will be made by three judges based on a personal interview. Major

factors are the nominee's job, goals, personal successes, overall poise and community work.

The young careerist chosen by the local clubs go on to competition and may then go on to state and national competition.

The Young Career Woman program is BPW's way of honoring successful young career women while at the same time introducing them to the ideals and standards of its national federation.

The program provides BPW members' experience and expertise.

The young careerist keeps BPW current on the changing role of women in society, and they can also suggest ways in which BPW can better serve the interests of the young career women in the community.

Easter party planned

Pat Ash's Easter party is set from 1-4:30 p.m. Sunday in Knights of Columbus Hall, 21900 Middlebelt Road.

Ms. Ash is a handicapped resident of Farmington Hills who says one of her greatest pleasures is preparing the party for 1-12-year-olds. She has staged the party on a break-even basis for the past five years.

This year she is making "playgy heads," she said, for a play she has directed for the party that will be acted

out by a group of neighborhood children.

She also makes her own Easter bunny costume, devises the games and hopes to have all the party-goers doing the Hokey-Pokey at the event.

She asks for early reservations to accommodate party-goers with Easter baskets.

Admission is \$2 for children and \$1 for adults. Reservations are asked to be made by April 1 by calling her at 476-0381.