

Restored inn offers quality fare

BY HELEN ZUCKER
SPECIAL WRITER



MEMORABLE MEALS

The 140-year-old Wooden Horse Inn sits snugly on the green of Sylvan Glen Golf Course in Troy. One-hundred-sixty acres of fir trees, small bridges, and manicured green meet the eye as one drives up and parks in the gravel drive-

way. Inside, dark wooden floors, two fireplaces, lit by natural gas in winter, filled with crates of red potatoes in summer wooden tables, chairs, and slat blinds preserve the comfortable, pleasant atmosphere of the farmhouse and stagecoach stop the inn once was. A Troy historical site, the inn was recently restored by Peterhansrea Designers of Birmingham. It opened for business on Nov. 5, 1992. Co-owners John Reaser and Nick Sorise and their designers had the foresight to keep the comfortable dimensions of the tap room in front, the grill room overlooking the golf course, and the two upstairs banquet rooms intact. There is a ramp to the entryway providing easy access, and an elevator to the second floor. Two new outdoor dining areas increased the farmhouse's seating ca-

capacity from 250 to over 350. There's a ground-floor outdoor dining area with a view of the golf course and a second-floor deck overlooking Rochester Road. The owners also had the foresight to hire Edward St. Laurents, "Chef Edward," as the staff likes to call him, a graduate of the Culinary Institute of America. St. Laurents is a lively, energetic soul. In the month he has been at the inn, he has installed a new rotisserie,

the focus of his Southwestern, country and Cajun chicken dinners, revamped much of the menu, and added eggs made-to-order rather than steam table eggs to the popular brunch served Sundays 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. He's also managed to change even the texture of the hot fresh rolls delivered with every meal. They steam as you break them, taste mildly of sourdough and are presented attractively wrapped in a white linen napkin — with a round hill of butter on the side. Salads and entrees are served in farmhouse-thick bowls set on wide white platters. St. Laurent's hands make a quick, knending gesture as he talks about his passion for quality; his belief in fresh Michigan produce, tangy sauces, chicken marinated in lime, basted with honey and herbs, and ribs that "fall off the bone."

Trained to be "health and taste conscious," St. Laurent believes "the customer should see what they're getting; if the menu says red and green peppers and fried potato peels, that's exactly what will be on their plate." The spinach salad with pine nuts, blue cheese and apple cider vinaigrette is a house specialty. Soups change daily, though chicken soup with dumplings and vegetables is a house staple. Beginning courses feature familiar

spley wing dings with blue cheese dip, fried cheese sticks, chili, and unfamiliar tasty grilled shrimp on remoulade sauce with roasted corn kernels and roasted garlic with warm bread. They range in price from \$2.75 to \$7.25. There is a California wine list, ranging from \$2.75 a glass of house white or red (Glen Ellen) to Gewurztraminer white at \$17 a bottle and Gamay Beaujolais red at \$12 a bottle. The bar has sparklers, and an assortment of beer, including Samuel Adams and Heineken at \$3 a bottle. Fosters non-alcoholic is on hand along with fresh lemonade, espresso and cappuccino. Barbecue ribs, basted with Chef Edward's sauce are another house specialty. At \$9.95 a half slab, \$13.75 a full slab, they come with baked potato and coleslaw. There's also a 1/2 rotisserie chicken at \$6.95 basted with herb oil, served with garlic mashed potatoes and crunchy just-right red and yellow zucchini, red pepper slices, and vegetables in season.

Look for Memorable Meals the first and third Thursday of the month in Entertainment. Call Keely Wygonik, Taste/Entertainment editor, 953-2105 to recommend a restaurant to be featured, fax recommendations to 591-7279 or write Taste/Entertainment, O&E, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150.

ON THE MARQUEE

Jazz band
C hot Bogan's Wolverine Jazz Band featuring "Dixie Belle" vocalist will appear in concert 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 5, in downtown Birmingham's Shain Park. The concert is free and open to the public.

Favorite oldies
L ivonia Music Under the Stars 7:30-9 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 5, will feature the Grose Pointe Music Makers, Favorite Oldies at Civic Center Park, Five Mile at Farmington Road, Livonia. For information about upcoming concerts, call 425-2326.

Benefit concert
C harles and Gwen Scales will perform at the third annual Jazz Under the Stars, 6:30 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 14, a benefit for the abused, neglected and abandoned children of the St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center. Tickets are \$25 per person, and tax deductible. A country picnic is included with admission, call 626-7627.

Radio show
S RO (Standing Room Only) Productions is presenting "WSRO, On The Air," a simulated 1940s studio radio show complete with announcer, 1940s songs, newscast and sound effects table, 8 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays, Aug. 6 through Aug. 21 p.m. and Sundays, Aug. 8 through Aug. 22, at the City of Southfield's historic center. Theburgh on the corner of Civic Center Drive and Berg Road, one block east of Telegraph. Tickets are \$7, seniors and children \$5, available at the door, or in advance by calling 827-0700.

Alumni outing
T he alumni associations of the 10 member schools of the Mid-American Conference are hosting a joint outing at Pine Knob 6:30 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 22. The \$25 per person tickets include hospitality and lawn tickets for the Beach Boys concert. Call Bob Bradley, 476-4589 for information. Deadline for reservations is Monday, Aug. 16. Eastern Michigan alumni should call (800) 825-8664.

Children's classic
T he Children's Entertainment Company will present "Cinderella" 7:30 p.m. Wednesdays, Aug. 11 and Aug. 18, at the Anton DeRoy Theatre in the Jewish Community Center Main Building, 6600 W. Maple, West Bloomfield. Tickets are \$4 each, available by calling 661-1000.

WHAT'S COOKING

Send items to be considered for publication in What's Cooking to: Keely Wygonik, Taste/Entertainment editor, The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150. Our Fax number is 591-7279.

PUNCHINELLO'S Punchinello's on Pierce Street in downtown Birmingham is closed until Friday, Aug. 6 for needed roof repairs.
CHEF'S DINNER The Michigan Chefs de Cuisine Association is hosting a dinner to raise money for the Chef's Disability Fund 7 p.m. Friday, Aug. 13 at Indian Wood Country Club, 1081 Indianwood, Lake Orion. Tickets are \$35, call 683-9100. Participating chefs include Brian Polcyn, Pike Street, Chikayo and Acadia restaurants; Edward Jones, Avenue Dinner, Kevin Brennan, Orchard Lake Country Club; and Chuck Rachwitz, Rocky's. The chefs of Oakland Community College's Culinary Arts Program will take part in the preparation.

MACHUS 160 To help celebrate its 60th year, Machus 160, at 160 W. Maple, Birmingham, has been given a new look. Machus 160 now features a cafe-like atmosphere. Center booths were replaced with tables, there's new tile flooring, fresh paint, hand-painted creative art work and an outdoor canopy. New menu items include burgers in a basket, flatbread pizza, sandwiches and salads. Hours are 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday, Tuesday,

Wednesday, 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Thursday and Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. Saturdays.
THE LARK A Wood-fired Brazilian Barbecue dinner will be offered at the Lark, 6430 Farmington Road, West Bloomfield, 7 p.m. Monday and Tuesday, Aug. 30 and 31. The cost is \$67.50 per person, not including other beverages, tax or gratuity. Call 561-4466 for information and reservations. The last date for cancellation without

charge will be Aug. 21. Tickets are still available for the 15th annual chili cookoff at the Lark 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 19. Tickets are \$32.50 per person and include beer, pop, coffee, sandwiches and other snacks.
Spend an afternoon cooking and dining at the Lark with Chef Marcus Haight, 11 a.m. Saturday and Sunday, Aug. 7-8 and Aug. 14-15. Cost is \$75 per person. Each class is limited to 12 people. Call the restaurant for details.

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