

## CHEAP EATS

Lisa Rudy takes a gastronomical tour of restaurants offering dinner for two for under \$25.

BY LISA RUDY  
SPECIAL WRITER

I'm not exactly sure if it was the decorative men's room urinal-turned flower planter prominently displayed outside the Traffic Jam & Snug Restaurant or simply the unusual name itself that beckoned me inside, but the moment I decided to take the green light into this place I was glad I did.

The Traffic Jam & Snug (T.J.'s for short), located just minutes from Wayne State University's campus, has a lot to boast about, and its menu is just one of the unique things this place has to offer. OK, yes, so T.J.'s does have its very own pamphlet, citing historical and culinary facts and figures, and even a brewery tour that's conducted out back on a monthly basis. And there is a sign inside the front door that states: "Please form a line to the left." But don't start feeling like a tourist just yet. Go inside.

T.J.'s many dining areas (I think I counted eight) are warm and inviting, featuring a huge fireplace in the front room, tapestry-topped booths and seats throughout, interesting paintings and prints, and a second level that gives patrons an overview of downtown diners and that ever-increasing line forming to the left.

Fresh flowers bedeck the tables and just about every other empty space not filled with some trinket or another — even old fruit crates placed here and there in odd places throughout the dining area look tastefully chic.

A bakery, a brewery and a dairy are all housed on site, and guests are encouraged to view what all is going on inside the kitchen here. With the help of Detroit & Mackinac Brewery, T.J.'s is able to offer some very unique brews to its guests, making the restaurant Michigan's first "brewpub." Greenapple Ale seems to be the favorite.

T.J.'s "whatever's in the fridge" philosophy extends to both the bakery and the main kitchen, with daily surprises to keep you on your toes. This place is famous for their bread of the day — vegetable supreme, cheddar, sourdough, there's just no telling.

A homemade cheese platter, Pesto Pasta Pillows and Fire and Ice Armadillo eggs are just a few of the appetizers. T.J.'s, incidentally, has won awards over the past years for their housemade cheese.

Burgers and sandwiches range from spicy lentil burgers and the Ratatouille Cheddar Broll to the more traditional Jam-Burger (half pound of ground round) and the classic BLT.

Even meatloaf gets jazzed up with bits of carrots, apples, currents and leeks, and T.J.'s does a tremendous job of making a meal out of an accompaniment by stuffing it with wild rice, roasted corn and sweet peppers. Chicken and seafood are also offered in one form or another.

Desserts are all homemade and T.J.'s even takes the credit for making their own ice cream. They pile it high to look like Mt. Everest. Cheese-cake, shortcake, muffins, cookies, everything's whipped up according to what's in season, keeping with the "no cans in the kitchen" motto. And if your feeling the least bit guilty about dessert, don't bother. T.J.'s also offers a treat called the "Itty Bitty."

A butcher, a baker, a pamphlet maker — T.J.'s seems to have it all. But hurry, the line is forming to the left.



**TRAFFIC JAM & SNUG**  
4268 Second  
Detroit  
831-9470  
Hours: 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday,  
11 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. Tuesday  
through Thursday, 11 a.m. to  
midnight Friday, 5 p.m. to  
midnight Saturday.

## LOOKING AHEAD

What to watch for in Street Scene next week:

- Kyle Green takes a look at what's happening at local recording studios.
- Christina Fuoco has the latest gossip in her Music Notes.
- John Monaghan looks at the latest offering on the alternative movie scene.
- And don't miss Street Sense by Barbara Schiff.

## Frank Allison — one Odd Sox

■ A producer with the code name "Yoda" and an independent record label out of Chicago have made Frank Allison one happy musician with the release of his "Pig Out" album.

BY CHRISTINA FUOCO  
STAFF WRITER

Frank Allison is every record producer's dream. In speaking about the recording of his next album, Allison has nothing but respect for the producer, whom he'll only call "Yoda."

"He's a smart guy; he's Yoda. You don't tell Yoda what to do," said Allison with a cheshire cat grin. (That respect is something most record producers only fantasize about.)

With further probing, Allison leaks that this "Yoda" character is really a "famous Motown producer" but won't reveal his full name. He admits that the collaboration is a little bizarre but it should bring about some interesting results.

"Country soul. That's what we'll end up with," the Manchester resident said.

His simple professionalism has in turn inspired Allison.

"He does it really simply," Allison said. "He knows where the mics go, instead of (some producers) taking like five hours to set up."

### STREET BEATS

"I asked him how long it would take to record and he asked me how long it takes me to play," he added, distorting his face with a goofy smile.

The album will be his second for Waterdog Records — a new independent label based in Chicago. That release along with Frank Allison and the Odd Sox's back catalog will be distributed by Waterdog in early 1994.

His first album for them is the recently released live CD, "Pig Out." The album was recorded, appropriately enough, at the Blind Pig in Ann Arbor on Sept. 26, 1992. The gig was Allison's farewell stop with original Odd Sox Dan Beckett and bassist John Boyle. Devout fan Jeff Tavis, part owner of P.J.'s Records in Ann Arbor, wanted to capture the moment on tape so he rented \$900 worth of equipment and hired producer Mike Clark to record the show. It wasn't intended for public purchase.

"He told me he had \$800-900 worth of equipment and I told him, 'You're a crazy man,'" Allison said. "I didn't think any more of it."

Allison — now teamed with gu-



tarist Kevin Allison (no relation), drummer Rob Hejna and bassist Chris Noteboom — heard the tape and was impressed. He passed it along to the aforementioned "Yoda."

"When we got the tape back, it sounded better than anything else I've recorded," he said.

Waterdog then agreed to release it as his first for them. Having a live first release has its good and bad points.

"It's a easy for Waterdog to book us dates — but it won't get any air-play."

Still, it fulfills his dream of mak-

ing money with his humorous songs. He's developed a huge following — "Frankheads," he calls them — with his wide-eyed, goofy facial expressions and animated stage presence.

"I wanted to write comedy that's how it started," he said. "You know how a comedy troupe has one musical person? That's what I wanted to be. I would do music for it."

Instead he's doing country/rock music intertwined with comedy for himself. You don't need to go past some of the titles — "The Rodent of Love," "Workman's Goon" and "Rita Meets the Mighty Mouse" — to sample Allison's music.

"If the high school me looked into the future and saw what I'm doing, he would have died and I wouldn't be here."

Frank Allison and the Odd Sox will perform Friday, Oct. 8, at Lili's, 2930 Jacob, Hamtramck. For more information, call 875-6555. They will also perform, Saturday, Oct. 9, and Sunday, Oct. 31, at the Blind Pig, 206-208 S. First St., Ann Arbor (996-8555).

Frank Allison will perform solo on Wednesday, Oct. 6, at Gotham City, 22848 Woodward, Ferndale. For more information, call 398-7430.

## Instruments aside, Stew follows a dream

Cookin' with a taste for success, but minus real musical talent, are Forehead Stew members Matt McGuire, Jeff Fowlkes, Al Sutton and Andy Sutton.



BY KYLE GREEN  
STAFF WRITER

If you thought the band Forehead Stew was spacey, your hunches are correct.

The four-member band has one ultimate plan: to make enough money to start a multi-conglomerate corporation, build a space ship and fly into outer space.

Best of all, fans who collect 10 UPC symbols from their releases can enter to win 10 spots to travel with the band. Forehead Stew fans can begin collecting those UPC symbols late next month when it releases the 7-inch single, "House of Reason" and

"Water." It's a joint venture between the band and Third Gear records.

However, frontman Al Sutton sees one hitch holding back astronomical profit — namely the pricey corporation.

"As soon as we learn to play our instruments, we will be a damn good (money-making) band," Sutton said.

The members have no qualms about stating they have no true musical talent — except drummer Jeff Fowlkes. Nevertheless, that has never delayed the members from creating a wash of rock with angry, hard-edge music.

See STEW, 8A

## IN CONCERT

Monday, Sept. 27

MARY MCGUIRE AND MYK RISE  
Four Greenfields, Royal Oak, (acoustic)  
280-2902

Tuesday, Sept. 28

21QUANA'S FROM EARTH  
The Grand Cafe, 33316 Grand River, Farmington, (acoustic)  
615-9181

MARY MCGUIRE AND MYK RISE  
M. B. a Farm, Nov., (acoustic)  
349-7038

TAR  
With The Big F at the Blind Pig, 208 S. First St., Ann Arbor, (rock)  
69-MUSE

Wednesday, Sept. 29

ORANGE LAKE DRIVE  
Q Club, 29 S. Saginaw, Pontiac, (blues)  
334-7411

GEORGE HIGGINS AND A.K.S. BAND  
Attila Bar, 11667 Jos. Campau, Hamtramck.

(blues)  
365-4194

ACQUINTANCE MUSIC NIGHT  
Avin's, 5758 Cass, Detroit.  
632-0589

THE JANGLERS  
Blind Pig, 206-208 S. First St., Ann Arbor.  
996-8555

JIMMIE DALE GILMORE  
The Ark, 6371 S. Main St., Ann Arbor.  
761-1800

ALICE IN CHAINS  
With Ted and Sweet Water at State Theatre, 2115 Woodward, Detroit. (hard alternative rock) SOLD OUT  
361-5451

Thursday, Sept. 30

DEAD RECKONING  
Studio Lounge, 6921 N. Wayne Road,

Westland,  
729-2540

6223  
With Saturday's Child at Giff's Grill, 49 N. Saginaw, Pontiac.  
334-8224

TIM FLAHERTY AND PAUL MARVIN BLUES  
Jazz  
Q Club, 29 Saginaw, Pontiac.  
334-7411

RUSTY REID BAND  
With Harmonica Shah at Attie Bar, 11667 Jos. Campau, Hamtramck.  
365-4194

DON'T LOOK NOW JAZZ BAND  
Avin's, 5758 Cass, Detroit.  
632-0589

MICHAEL MCDERMOTT  
Blind Pig, 206-208 S. First St., Ann Arbor.  
996-8555

TRIBAL TECH  
Magic Bag Theatre Cafe, 22918 Woodward, Ferndale.  
544-3030

FUDGEHOLE  
With Painters and Season to Risk at St. Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress, Detroit.  
(alternative rock)  
361-MELT

RUSSELL MALONE  
Bird of Paradise, 207 S. Ashley, Ann Arbor.  
662-8310

SHED ROOM  
The Ritz, 17580 Frasco, Roseville, (alternative rock)  
778-8150

MAJESTY CRUSH  
Celebrate the release of their latest CD, "Love 15" on Dali Records, at Industry, 15 S. Saginaw, Pontiac, with an acoustic performance, (ethereal alternative rock)  
334-1999

See IN CONCERT, 8A