

DINING

Pike Street now specializing in California cuisine

BY ELEANOR HEALD
SPECIAL WRITER

Pontiac's Pike Street restaurant, housed in a National Register of Historic Places building dating from 1893, is both preserving history and making new tracks with trendy California-style cuisine.

After extensive remodeling, Pontiac's Pike Street Restaurant reopened at the end of September, taking on both a new food style and an updated open look.

The dining room has been painted in California scenes by Mike McGrath. Art, including works by Dale Chihuly, John Glick and Gerhard Knodel, is prominent in the new decor.

As exciting as the new look is the menu now being orchestrated by a tri-chef concept including Chefs Jackie Williams, Steve Hubbell and Randy Garver. All three experienced chefs continue a California-fresh style of cooking introduced to Pike Street by former executive chef Kathleen Duemans.

To augment a seasonally-fresh daily-dated menu, the chefs are buying organic produce from Michigan growers including Golden Toad Farms in Pontiac and Maple Creek Farm, Yale. Organic artisan breads are baked daily by Detroit's Avalon International Breads. Tied in with the California theme are plans for rustic foods. To enhance this concept, a wood-burning grill has been added to Pike Street's kitchen.

Much of what Pike Street has become over the years is due to owner Jim Fitzpatrick, former controller for the Pontiac division of General Motors. After owning Pike Street for 15 years, he sold it in December 1997. He formed a company California LLC which bought it back in August 1998. The company name is fueling the California style from the new sign to land-

- **Pike Street:** 18 W. Pike Street, Pontiac (248) 334-7878 - Lunch Monday to Friday, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.; Dinner Monday to Thursday 5-10 p.m., and Friday and Saturday until 11 p.m.
- **Howe's Bayou:** 22848 Woodward, Ferndale (248) 691-7145 - Open Monday to Friday 11 a.m. to 2 a.m.; Saturday 5 p.m. to 2 a.m., and Sunday 5 p.m. to 2 a.m.
- **The Lark:** 6430 Farmington Road, West Bloomfield (248) 661-4499 - Dinner only Tuesday through Saturday

scaping, interior design and food emphasis.

"I've just come back from a trip to San Francisco where I ate at Zuni and Chez Panisse among others specializing in California style cuisine," Fitzpatrick said. "It's exciting for me to bring this food concept to Michigan."

Here's more of what's new on the metro Detroit dining scene:

Howe's Bayou

Tom Brandel's Oyster Bar reputation has spread from his original restaurant in Grosse Pointe Park to several Oakland County sites. Brandel, Corporate Chef Michael Houlihan and Director of Operations Ray Hanson have given hints of a new interest in "Nowlin's" dishes at every charity event where they've participated.

At the end of August, they opened Howe's Bayou on the east side of Woodward Avenue in Ferndale, north of Nine Mile Road. Real eatin' with specialties such as Opelousas Etouffe, Jambalaya, Atefahafaya Chicken or Bayou Crawdad Boil are reasonably priced under \$10.

Has Brandel abandoned the Tom's Oyster Bar concept? Not on your life. Opening plans are incomplete, but one's in the works for Northville.

East Side Mario's

Recognizing that banquet space is at a premium in the metro-Detroit area, East Side Mario's has added a banquet room to its Southfield Restu-

rant, 29267 Southfield Road, (between 12 Mile and 13 Mile Roads) in the Southfield Commons Shopping Center, with seating for up to 150 guests, call (248) 569-9454 for information.

Through the month of October, East Side Mario's is offering all wines for \$5 above cost. Guests can enjoy rich reds or crisp white wines while dining at any of the three Metro Detroit restaurants.

The three East Side Mario's locations in Metro Detroit are:

Rochester - 2273 Crooks Road at the northeast corner of M-59, (248) 853-9622.

Livonia - 31630 Plymouth Road (just west of Merriman), (734) 513-8803. And Southfield, address/phone listed above.

East Side Mario's restaurants and lounges are open Monday-Saturday 11 a.m. to 1 a.m. and Sunday 11 a.m. to 11 p.m.

The Lark

Gourmet magazine's top ranking was given again this year to Jim and Mary Lark's The Lark restaurant in West Bloomfield. A readers' poll conducted by the magazine not only put it at the top of the Detroit Metro area dining scene, but considered it best in five of 11 categories including service, presentation, food, special occasion dining and wine list.

"We treasure our ranking in Gourmet magazine more than any other rating," Jim Lark said. "I'm a firm believer in readers' polls because they offer more than one person's opinion. There



Chefs in charge: Chefs Randy Garver (left to right), Steve Hubbell and Jackie Williams present some of new California-fresh style menu items being offered at Pike Street.

are only two publications, *Delicatessen*, Ann Arbor; *Cafe Bon Homme*, Plymouth; *Charley's Crab*, Troy; the *Earle*, Ann Arbor; *Andiamo Italia*, Warren; and the *Capital Grille*, Troy.

The Lark is hosting a Gourmet Celebration Dinner to celebrate its Gourmet's Top Table Award 7 p.m. Monday and Tuesday, Oct. 26 and 27. The cost is \$85 per person, call the restaurant for details.

Little Daddy's

Royal Oak's Oakland Grill (32832 Woodward Ave.) closed Sept. 20. Its partners sold their lease to Jimmy Zazzadinos, Tommy Peristeris and Rick Rogow, partners in Big Daddy's Parthenon. They plan to open a

Little Daddy's Parthenon & Coney Island in the former Oakland Grill location by the end of October.

"This Little Daddy's location will be a bit more upscale than the Little Daddy's in Applegate Square [Southfield]," Peristeris said. "We'll add ribs, barbecue chicken, lamb and pasta to the regular Little Daddy's menu. We'll be open for lunch, dinner and takeout service."

Over the last several years, the location has seen a number of restaurants come and go.

"We will be successful because we will have people in and out, particularly at lunch, in 25 minutes," Peristeris added. "We've been successful everywhere we've opened in the Detroit metro area."

RESTAURANT SPECIALS

Send items for Restaurant Specials to Evelyn Wygonik, Entertainment Editor, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, Inc., 36261 Schoolcraft, Livonia, MI 48150, fax (734) 591-7279 or e-mail: ewygonik@oc.homecomm.net

■ **Mr. Z's Steak House** - 27331 Five Mile Road (corner of Inkster) Redford, (313) 537-5600 is decorated for Halloween. They're offering dinner for two for \$16.95 (choice of entrees) on Sweetest Day, Saturday, Oct. 17. Call for reservations/information.

■ **Too Chez** - 27155 Sheraton Dr., Novi (248) 348-5555 will serve a carbo-loaded buffet lunch 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 17 the day prior to the Detroit Free Press Marathon. Executive Chef Greg Upshur, a marathoner himself, will prepare an assortment of carbohydrate rich specialties including Pesto Penne Pasta with Pinenuts. The cost is \$7.50 per person, not including beverage, tax and gratuity. Call the restaurant for reservations.

■ **The Golden Mushroom** - 18100 W. 10 Mile Road, Southfield, (248) 559-4230 is offering a Wild Game Dinner, Monday, Oct. 19. The cost is \$75 per person plus tax and gratuity. Call for reservations/information.

■ **Envoys Cafe** - Is starting its fourth year at the Simsbury Plaza, 33210 W. 14 Mile Road in West Bloomfield, (248) 855-6220. They offer casual dining in a cozy atmosphere. Check out their new fall and winter menu. Entrees include Marinated Salmon, White Fish, Eggplant Neapolitan, Baja Chicken and Shrimp, and Wild Mushroom Pasta.

■ **World Food Day** - The Michigan Committee for World Food Day is sponsoring the 13th annual "Seven Percent Solution" to raise funds and awareness of

those who go without meals in our state. On Thursday, Oct. 15, participating restaurants will donate seven percent of that day's receipts to the Food Bank Council of Michigan and Hunger Action Coalition. Participating

restaurants include: Beau Jacks Food & Spirits, Buddy's Pizzeria, Diamond Jim Brady's, ?How About Lunch, Marco's Dining & Cocktails, Star of India, Sweet Lorraine's Cafe and Unique Restaurant Corp. restaurants.

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