

RESTAURATEUR

Official Publication of the Western New York Chapter of the New York State Restaurant Association

SERVING • ALLEGANY, CATTARAUGUS, CHAUTAUQUA, ERIE, GENESEE, NIAGARA, ORLEANS AND WYOMING COUNTIES

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June - July - August 2010

Massachusetts Avenue Project (MAP) & Tilapia - *Aquaponics: Growing Green in Buffalo*



Jesse Meeder

Jesse Meeder, MAP Farm Director explained aquaponics to a group of restaurateurs in mid May. "The tilapia and vegetables produced in our greenhouses are grown organically in a recirculating system called aquaponics, which combines hydroponics (nutrient solution vegetable production) and aquaculture (seafood production) into a single, sustainable food production method."

The modest greenhouse at 389 Massachusetts Ave. is insulated with straw and crammed with vegetation and tanks. The main tank (pond) houses 2,000 or so tilapia which is small in comparison to the new structure that will have room and equipment to hold 39,000 fish. This project is underway and will be up and running by late summer or early fall.

Meeder explained about the varieties of tilapia. Farm-raised tilapia (the least expensive and most popular) raised with a variety of commercial feed have a high fat content and, according to a new study by researchers at the Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center, suggests that farm-raised tilapia may be worse for the heart than eating bacon or a hamburger. Many countries have huge farms, with the least desirable tilapia coming from China according to Meeder.

In the wild, where few tilapia come from in today's market, they are low in total fat, low saturated fat, low calorie, low carbohydrate and low in sodium. They are also an excellent source of Phosphorus, Niacin, Selenium, Vitamin B12 and Potassium. This is the type of tilapia that MAP is producing.

MAP will encourage area restaurateurs to educate their customers about the featured MAP tilapia on their menu. Whether it be a day, week or weekend, the tilapia will be sold live and unprocessed in order to be as fresh as possible.



Dan Garvey with live Tilapia - *fish taco, anyone?*

"Wally Lorenz" Annual Golf Outing at Diamond Hawk

100+ Golfers and More for Dinner at Joseph's Country Manor



Brett Hickey with Russ Salvatore and Joe Salvatore ready to 'T' off



Don Spasiano relaxes as Bill DeLuca makes his best drive of the day



Tuesday, June 15th was a perfect day for the WNY Chapter's annual "Wally Lorenz" Golf outing.

Duffers galore and a few ringers took to the Diamond Hawk golf course for a morning and afternoon of laughs and relaxation. A huge "THANK YOU" to the committee headed by Larry Pilarz for putting yet another fabulous day together.

A special thank you to the Joseph family headed by Rich Joseph for another wonderful venue and service.

Joe & Ann Gargano share a light moment at Joseph's



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A huge THANK YOU to the following supporters that made our 2010 Wally Lorenz Golf Outing the success it was and a special thank you to the tireless committee, headed by Larry Pilarz, that made it all happen.

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Have a great summer and fill those seats!

Rob Free

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As Though You Didn't Have Enough to Worry About

Remember when word of mouth was a key element in the success of most food-service operations? Well, that has changed, and now it's the electronic brain (computer) that has taken its place, and the change has been profound.

Its impact has been felt not only by restaurants themselves but also by food critics, guides, writers and rating services. It has many names: New media, social media, blogs and twitter. Not only do they say "stuff" about your operation but, in many cases, leave room for readers who have visited your place to comment on their experiences, and this has had all sorts of repercussions.

As you know, there are many new media outlets or social networking websites that feature real-time reviews and commentaries dealing with restaurants and other businesses. Unlike generally accepted experienced reviewers, these would-be critics often come forth with unedited and unrefined comments which are then posted on a website for the whole world to read.

In an article appearing in Restaurant Report, Anthony Martin, a partner in the law firm of Blackwell Sanders Peper Martin of St. Louis, made the following observations when discussing Old School vs. New Media: "It should come as no surprise that a traditional and continuing response to a bad review by a food critics is...SUE THEM." For many years, this tactic of sending a horde of lawyers to beat up the publisher and reviewer was viewed as a ham-fisted attempt to subvert the perceived Freedom of Speech. This assumes, of course, a constitutional right to complain about cold soup, overdone fish and a belligerent waitstaff. Nonetheless, many hospitality trade folks believe that a review is libelous. While there are a number of reasons for bringing these kinds of lawsuits—the mantra of "any publicity is good publicity" being one of them—these leverage lawsuits against old-school publishers are not applicable to the new media, web-based networking sites.

First, when an established food critic savages a restaurant, everyone knows who published the review. In these user-generated content communities of the new media, the reviews come from anonymous posters. So even if a business owner has been unfairly or even illegally harmed by comments, the victim will have a terrible time trying to identify the critic. Sure, the business operator can run to court to file suit, issue subpoenas and raise a ruckus. But there is no guarantee that any of the online service

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Sampson Continued...

providers will disclose any information about their posters, and courts are not always willing to compel such disclosure.

If you or your business feels that you have been unfairly criticized at a review site or someone has posted blatantly false and damaging information, your first reasonable course of action should be to contact the service provider directly. Most of the social networking sites have formal or informal compliance procedures to ensure that the subjects of reviews are treated fairly. In many instances, the sites will simply offer to remove the objectionable content.

In the "old days," when a restaurant critic published a potentially harmful commentary, the owner or proprietor would often respond directly to the magazine or newspaper in a Letter to the Editor. There is no reason that your business cannot have an online presence to actively monitor the sites, to address the poor reviews and to dispute the allegedly inaccurate portrayals. The websites themselves certainly appreciate and welcome additional traffic from both sides

If you would like to know what is being said about your operations online, there are some firms equipped to do that. Social Mention is a social engine that searches user-generated content such as blogs, comments, bookmarks and news. Blog Pulse is an automated trend discovery system for blogs. It analyzes and reports on daily activity in the blogosphere. Trendpedia can track a topic or a company's popularity over a three-month period of time. It is my understanding that all of these services are reasonably priced.

Never before have both verbal and pictorial information been transmitted as quickly and often as they are today. From world-wide events to something happening in your home town, the Internet is the vehicle of choice. Your operation may very well be part of that commentary. Wouldn't you like to know what's being said?

Comments can be sent to redgsampson@juno.com

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George Schaeffer

Wally Who?

Rotund in stature and in personality was the one and only Wally Lorenz. Wally worked for a company called Henry & Henry. What Henry and Henry did was produce some of the finest chocolate and a variety of ice cream toppings available. I got to know and appreciate Wally at many of the NYSRA outings for more than 30 years.

His appearance and his attitude were without question – “one of a kind.” Wally was a huckster and made the NYSRA raffle a success. God knows how many cans of chocolate syrup Henry and Henry gave away! With his out-sized personality, Wally offered you a multitude of options for buying a multitude of tickets for the fabulous prizes that sat on the head table. Wally would size you up. If he thought or knew you were a “Daddy Warbucks,” he would extract as many bucks as possible from your wallet. If he knew you were a “bystander” to the gathering, you would be spared to buy a few tickets. But you were always asked to contribute. Wally always helped make the NYSRA raffle a success.

Interestingly enough, nobody was ever insulted. His jovial attitude and his kind smile brought any and everyone to his call. If tickets were back in the late 60’s and 70’s a dollar a shot, Wally would hawk them at 12 for ten bucks or 25 for 20 bucks. He garnered a lot of \$20.00 bills and that made the raffle a success, and the budget for the WNY Chapter a success.

To this date, and well after Wally has left this earth, we not only remember him and his wonderful contributions to the chapter of the NYSRA, but we name the golf tournament after him. The June 15th 2010 Golf Outing for the NYSRA was again a success because of a lot of hard work by the committee, headed by Larry Pilarz, and the spirit of Wally Lorenz



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