



The Maine Event

Winter 2008

U.S. Route #1, Wells, Maine www.mainediner.com

World Famous, Local Favorite

Savoring Sweet Success The Maine Diner Celebrates 25 Years!

By MARY RAITT JORDAN

WELLS – After serving close to 5 million customers in the past 25 years Myles and Dick Henry agree it is time to celebrate. Together they credit their devoted Maine Diner family of employees for delivering a sterling performance of serving up home-cooked food and hospitality to the legions of customers that have come through the doors at their blue-and-white local landmark on Route 1.

“We were hoping to make a go of it when we first opened up, but we never envisioned in our wildest dreams it would take off like this,” Myles Henry said. “One of the most satisfying things is to see the way our employees have absorbed our passion for this business and treat it like it was their own. It’s very rewarding.”

The Henry brothers bought the Maine Diner from its original owner back in 1983 with the goal of keeping the establishment very local and very friendly. Their recipe for success was simple: deliver the best home-cooked food at a good price with the friendliest staff available. When they first opened on February 19 they served 42 people totaling \$42 in sales.

Henry admits the first 10 years were a bit lean, when they struggled to keep their heads above water in southern Maine’s seasonal economy. But having grown up in a family of seven children Myles and Dick were no strangers to hard work. Patience, persistence and commitment paid off. Sticking with their formula and building upon a loyal local customer base they gained momentum. The rest, he says, is history. Typically the Diner serves 1,200 to 1,600 people a day in season: that translates into 300,000 to 325,000 customers a year. The Diner served their one-millionth customer after 12 years of business; their second-millionth four years later; and has averaged a million customers roughly every three-and-a-half years. They plan to hit the five-millionth mark in 2008. Along with the burgeoning customer base have come a slew of accolades as well, from NBC’s Today Show, to a high rating

with The Phantom Gourmet.

With a background in both the restaurant business and in the corporate world, Henry says there was nothing more meaningful in this endeavor than the lessons he drew from his own family’s experiences. He and Dick were both inspired by their grandmother Doris Woodman and their mother Phoebe Henry, a science teacher, who handed-down practical information and tried-and-true recipes which have been the gold-standard of their success.

“I learned a lot from both of them. My grandmother came from a generation when women did old-style cooking by making everything from scratch and working in the kitchen most of the day. My mother as a schoolteacher was a working mother who was very practical and a master at whipping-up leftovers to feed all of us seven children; she didn’t waste a thing. I saw the best of both worlds. These were essential lessons to running a restaurant successfully,” Henry explained.

Those lessons of methodical and frugal meal planning –yet creating wholesome, delicious comfort food- remain the standard the Maine Diner has stuck by to this day.

“It’s simple, not fancy, but consistently wholesome and delicious. We picked recipes from our family that we liked the best, that anyone could replicate –we never wanted to depend on a chef,” Henry said. “We really want people to feel like a well-fed guest in our home. Consistently prepared comfort food, served with a truly genuine smile... that’s our niche.”

To carry out that mission the Maine Diner has a 75-member staff that is truly devoted to service. Most have been with the family for 10 years or more, including the first person they hired 25 years ago. Like a well-oiled machine, Henry says the staff takes their jobs so seriously that they coach their own co-workers, creating their own internal train-

ing department. Their commitment and loyalty – especially in the restaurant business- are uncommon, Henry says.

“One of the things that give me a great deal of satisfaction is to see how the Diner has positively impacted employees. Not only do we have some of our first people we hired still working for us, but we get visits from people we hired in high school who have come back 10-15 years later to share their experiences on the different paths they have taken. These are all people with wonderful work ethics, dedication and integrity who say their experience in working here has had a positive impact on them. That’s incredibly gratifying.”

As for future plans for the Diner?

“Our goal is to stick with the formula. We will make subtle improvements and we are always tweaking ways to become more efficient,” Henry said. “But as for that traditional Maine Diner experience, we want to ensure it will be the same for customers 20 years from now as it is today... where you could go to the same booth, experience the same ambiance, be greeted by a friendly face and get a great home-cooked meal. It is important that some things remain timeless. So many things change, it’s often nice to have something you can count on.”





*What's
for
Dinner?*

*Something good every-
day of the week!*

MONDAY
Meatloaf Madness

TUESDAY
Shepard's Pie
Chicken à la King

WEDNESDAY
Beef Stew with Salad
Baked Lasagna
with Salad

THURSDAY
New England
Boiled Dinner
A local favorite!

FRIDAY
Lobster Stew
with Biscuit
Escaloped Seafood Casserole
Salmon Pie -
usually sells out!

SATURDAY
Red Flannel Hash -
while it lasts!
Yankee Pot Roast

SUNDAY
Roast Pork Dinner

*And Don't Forget
Breakfast is
served anytime!*

love & marriage...

The Maine Diner Family Celebrates its Joyful Expansion!

In the course of 25 years our Maine Diner staff has become one closely-knit family, sharing both our successes and pulling together through challenges. We think that's what makes us a strong and compassionate team. Over time our tried-and-true employees who have been here since we started have worked and raised their families, and now they are sharing their next generation of grandchildren with all of us. We think that is pretty special in this day and age and a cause for celebration.

We are delighted to share the news with you, our patrons, whom we consider our extended Diner family!

Longtime waitress Kathy Lovejoy, one of the first we hired, welcomed grandson Logan Wayne Boisine on March 24 and

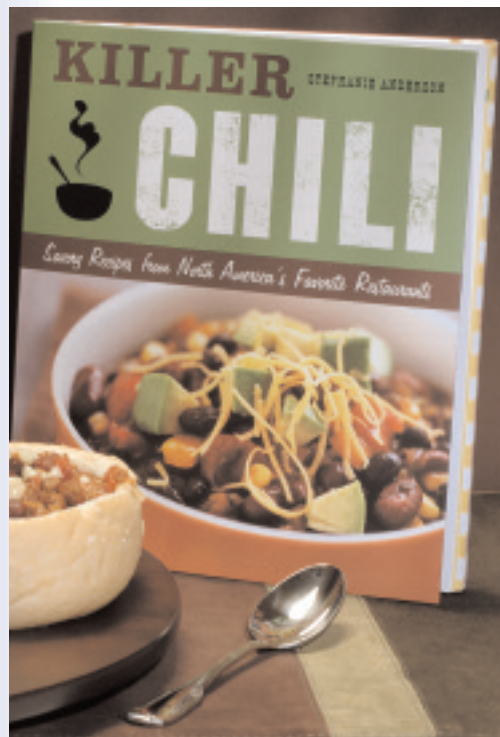
granddaughter Chanelle Mindy Gray on July 28.

Waitress Ronna Leighton welcomed her grandson Carter William Giroux October 29. He weighed in at 8 lbs 10 oz.

Waitress and now a new grandmother Allie Lazorchak welcomed her grandson Jeffrey Kenneth Lazorchak-Roubo on November 4. He weighed 7 lbs and 9 oz.

Others on our staff are just embarking on a family life together. Waitress Dawn Noble accepted Jay Brown's marriage proposal in January. Waitress Susan Alexandre wed Richard Bois on Valentine's Day, and line cook James Haskell Jr. married Jennifer Barse on October 13.

WORLD FAMOUS CHILI *Recipe!*



- 1 pound ground chuck
- 1 small onion, coarsely chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 tomato, diced
- 1 48 ounce can chili con carne
- 1 48 ounce can kidney beans, drained
- 1/3 cup prepared horseradish
- 2 cups water
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1 tablespoon dried thyme, crushed
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- 1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes
- 1 dash Tabasco sauce

In a large pot, saute the ground chuck over medium heat until cooked through, about 10-15 minutes. Drain and return to the pot. Add the onion and the garlic, cooking until the onion is transparent. Add the remaining ingredients and stir. Cook over low heat for three hours stirring occasionally. Serves 8.

Killer Chili Savory Recipes from North America's Favorite Restaurants

Killer Chili serves up the best, most appetizing chili recipes from fifty celebrated restaurants in the United States and Canada, including, of course, [The Maine Diner!!!](#) Written by Stephanie Anderson and complete with easy-to-follow instructions and full-color photographs, Killer Chili makes it simple to whip up a savory feast.

(BK21) **\$16.95**



In the spotlight: meet Dave Williams

Whether dishes need to be washed, food prepared, or orders made Dave Williams is the Maine Diner's "Jack-of-All-Trades."

Kennebunk-native Dave Williams, now of Sanford, joined the Maine Diner

team almost 10 years ago as a prep cook. Since that time he has done everything from washing dishes, to cooking on the line, to ordering food, paper goods and supplies –whatever it takes to keep the well-oiled Diner operation humming.

Williams got his start in the restaurant business helping his grandparents out with their restaurant "The Clam Shack" in Kennebunkport.

What does he like best about his job?

"I love the people I work with. Everyone gets along...You are never bored and there is always something to do!" Williams said. "I really enjoy all aspects of the work here and that we

operate as a team. I also love the fact that here at the Diner it is very family-oriented. I can put my family first. There are not a lot of places like that."

A point of pride with Williams is how successful the Maine Diner has been by serving millions of customers.

"There are not many places that are this busy that hit the numbers like we do. It's a great feeling to hear about us on the radio, or see us written about. It's nice knowing I'm a part of that," Williams said.

Myles Henry says it is has been very satisfying to see Williams evolve into some very important jobs within the Diner.

"Dave is wonderfully dedicated and open-minded," Henry said.

Williams and his wife Rachael have two daughters, Aidanne and Destiny. When he's not at work he loves to play golf, ride his motorcycle, or enjoy activities with his family.



Don't Just Take Our Word for It!

From California to England, Hear it Straight from the Horse's Mouth... Comments from our Customers

"Every restaurant should take lessons from you and your staff." Brian Fore, Danvers, MA.

"What a great place to eat. Ever thought about opening up in Manchester, England?" Stuart and Juliet, Manchester, England, United Kingdom

"This is the best place to eat – the people are the nicest in the world. When we are home we dream about the Maine Diner." Mary Ewing, Norwich, CT.

"Vacation wouldn't be the same without a trip or two to the Maine Diner." Claire Roman, Stratford, CT.

"Fantastic food. Being a former restaurant owner, this was great." Melissa Pruetting, Kansas City, MO.

"I live in Massachusetts, but don't give a hoot –I'm coming again tomorrow for breakfast. I LOVE breakfast!!" Corey Dana Kneeland, West Boylston, MA.

"Sinfully good. Felt like I committed a crime." Waterford, CT.

"Too good to be true! Can't keep my appetite under control!" Paulette Moretti, Quaker Hill, CT.

"Plentiful portion. Felt like a float in the Rose Bowl Parade. Five stars!!!" Dean Moretti, Waterford, CT.

"Best seafood chowder on earth." James Conway, South Walpole, MA.

"We really loved the place. We are thinking of moving here and coming to breakfast everyday." Mr. & Mrs. Raymond Berndt, Morro Bay, CA.

"We drove all the way here for the Indian pudding!" April Arrasate, Surfside Beach, S.C.

"I wanna stand up and shout, 'The place to pig out is the Maine Diner!' " Fred and Dottie Brush, New Canaan, CT.

"Best breakfast we've had, ever! Food was perfect. We'll be back!" James Landry, Acton, MA.

"Service with a smile. Food always arrives fast and hot. We are never disappointed." Frank and Jayne Donchez, Bethlehem, PA.

"You are awesome! Wow!! You need to be on the food network." Caroline Mauger, Corpus Christi, Texas



Make a Wish: Making Dreams Come True: Diners Support the 10th Annual "Derek's Day" Benefit

Despite a drizzling rain, no spirits were dampened as patrons once again enthusiastically turned out to support "Derek's Days," a Make-A-Wish Benefit Art Show on September 15 at the Maine Diner and September 16 at Becky's Diner in Portland, raising \$2,000 over the two days.

After a decade of good will the event that was started by artist "Diner Don Sawyer" has raised close to \$16,000 since its inception. Donations from the event help support the wish of a child with a life-threatening medical condition.

Sawyer, a self-taught artist, was on location selling his original artwork and signing autographs. The event is deeply personal for Sawyer, who donates proceeds to the Make-A-Wish Foundation of Maine in honor of his son Derek, who lost his battle with leukemia at age 11. His mission for this year's event was to bring forth

greater awareness to parents and families of children with life-threatening illnesses.

Since the Maine chapter opened in 1992 it has granted more than 500 wishes. The average cost of a wish is \$5,000. Sawyer says a great deal of money is raised for research, but it is equally important to raise money for the organization that fuels dreams and provides hope. The experience enriches ailing children suffering from illnesses with joy and strength, providing them with a glimmer of fun despite their often bleak circumstances.

Diner Don Sawyer is extremely grateful to the Henry brothers, the entire Maine Diner family, and the staff of Becky's for their support throughout the years. In 2008 Don promises to add another Maine Diner print to his collection in time for the event, which is tentatively scheduled for next September.



Co-owner, Dick Henry, pictured here with Colonel Bob Sheridan. Bob, an International Boxing celebrity, has broadcast over 10,000 fights on radio and television during the course of his career spanning from the 1960s to the new millennium. Watch out Dick, this guy really knows how to pack a punch!

celebrity sightings

Many a famous traveler has passed through our front door on Route 1... Here's who we saw in 2007:

- Neil Bush, President George W's younger brother... probably on his way to Kennebunkport
- Pro golfer Brad Faxon
- Baseball player Johnny Damon, formerly of the Boston Red Sox now playing for the New York Yankees (ouch!)
- Boxing Hall-of-Fame Commentator Bob "The Colonel" Sheridan
 - NESN TV-host Tom Caron
 - Sports Radio Personality Eddie Andelman
 - Sports Radio Talk Show Host Dale Arnold
- President of the University of Kentucky Dr. Lee Todd Jr.
 - Authors Jane and Michael Stern

mid-winter holiday for the maine diner

❄️ At the Maine Diner we love what we do in serving millions of customers our home-cooked food, but our labor of love can take its toll on the restaurant itself! So while the winter winds are blowing and the snowbirds have safely nestled in the sunny south we here at the Diner will sprucing up the place with painting and other renovations to the countertops and flooring during this quiet time.

As a result, the Maine Diner will be closed for a mid-winter break starting Thursday, January 3, 2008 and will re-open Friday, January 25, 2008.

Stay warm, stay happy and we will see you after the holidays!