



# The Maine Event

Autumn 2005

U.S. Route #1, Wells, Maine [www.mainediner.com](http://www.mainediner.com)

## On the Eve of Four Million Customers: Diner Delivers Two Decades of Food and Hospitality

By MARY RAITT JORDAN

On the eve of serving his four-millionth customer later this year, Myles Henry of the Maine Diner knows of only one recipe for success: serving up equal parts of delicious home-cooked food with the friendliest staff available.

Myles and his brother Dick are keeping a keen eye on the customer counts to welcome that special customer, which they think will arrive sometime after the leaves change. Open since 1983, the two have operated the classic blue-and-white local landmark Diner on Route 1 with their devoted staff of 75 employees, most of whom have been with the family for 10 years or more, including the first person they hired 22 years ago! In the restaurant business that type of dedication is rare.

"There's a special niche for us which separates us from the rest of Route 1," Henry says. "We're often imitated, but never duplicated."

While the people on the Diner staff are a key ingredient to success, Henry knows you don't serve three-million customers without good food and at the Diner he sees to it that they go the extra mile to offer the freshest food available and a variety of menu items to cover all palates. The Diner even hires a gardener and an assistant to tend to seasonally-grown items in their own garden out behind the restaurant.

The accolades for the food and the Diner's "culture" have poured in with highlights such as being showcased on NBC's Today Show. Bay State Diners will also recognize the significance of The Phantom Gourmet's rating of a "90", making the Diner one of approximately 70 restaurants out of 2,500 rated in New England to earn such a high score in the region. The Diner also catered a meal for the NESN TV Crew at a Red Sox game in Fenway in June. Jerry Remy and Don Orsillo and a crew of 25 ate the same lobster rolls and chowder that customers here have long-enjoyed.

"The fact that we've survived and grown is a great feeling," Henry says, reminiscing that the first 10 years were hard and lean, but persistence paid off. "It is also satisfying to me to see our employees go on vacation all over the place, wear their Maine Diner t-shirts, and be recognized. The other heart-warming thing is for me to get visits from former employees who worked for us as kids, to have them come in and positively reflect on their experience here, that the job motivated them. That's a nice feeling."

In the age of processed food, Henry says the Diner is sticking to its guns in preparing foods from scratch. No corners are cut in the preparation of favorite dishes. Here you will find pot roast, roast beef and turkey slow-cooked the traditional way; real mashed potatoes; and chowders

and soups made from scratch daily. A garden's been growing out behind the restaurant for close to 11 years, so produce in season is folded in to fresh recipes.

The Diner serves up three meals a day each day they are open and breakfast is available anytime. Three new exciting breakfast items were added to the menu this past summer: healthy fresh fruit with vanilla yogurt and granola; the zesty breakfast burrito, with scrambled eggs, cheddar, onions, peppers and bacon wrapped in a flour tortilla and served up with sour cream and salsa; and the savory almond-encrusted Texas-style French toast.

While most diners will know "The Dale Arnold," a scrumptious hot lobster roll named after the WEEI Boston sports radio personality, two other Diner favorites were re-named after favorite customers. "The Jim Nantz" is a serving of our award-winning seafood chowder with our famous Maine lobster roll. Jim, a good friend from CBS Sports, loves this combination. Then there's "The Peggy Sheehan." We named the selection after our dear friend, who savors a cup of our home-made soup-of-the-day with half a sandwich (your choice of chicken salad, egg salad, a toasted BLT, or Peg's favorite: tuna salad.) Order the choices by name!

The rest of the menu covers a broad-spectrum, from literally any breakfast item under the sun, to fresh seafood with its delicious lobster rolls, to home-made onion rings and pulled-pork sandwiches. Numerous delicious desserts are designed by a pastry chef who has prepared food for movie crews who have visited Maine.

Weekly specials include meatloaf on Monday; Shepard's Pie and Chicken a la King on Tuesday; beef stew and baked lasagna on Wednesday; New England boiled dinner on Thursday; lobster stew, escalloped seafood casserole and salmon pie on Friday; red flannel





## Recipe!

### Maine Diner Crabcakes

Myles Henry says he developed this recipe and tweaked it to his liking a few years back. Now it's a local favorite that is not to be confused with a "Maryland-style" crabcake.

So what's the difference?

According to Myles a "Maine-style" crabcake is made from only the freshest Maine crabmeat and then it is breaded and deep-fried. A Maryland crabcake is made from the meat of Maryland crabs and is pan-fried. The recipes, seasonings and the texture of the indigenous crab's meat are also completely different and lend themselves to a different flavor. Try ours once and you, too, will be hooked!

#### INGREDIENTS (will yield 24 crabcakes)

- 2 pounds Maine crabmeat
- 1 cups tartar sauce
- 2 eggs
- 1 T jalapeño sauce
- 3/4 T parsley flakes
- 3/4 T Worcestershire sauce
- 1/2 pound Saltine crackers, finely crushed
- 1/2 cup green pepper, chopped finely
- 1/2 cup red pepper, chopped finely

Sauté the green and red peppers in a small amount of butter. Let cool.  
 Add remaining ingredients and mix well. Portion out with an ice cream scoop to 2.5 ounces.  
 Place portions on waxed paper, top and bottom, and press into 1/4-inch thick cakes with a rolling pin. Place on a cookie sheet and freeze.  
 Cook in a pan of 325-degree oil until golden brown on both sides. Garnish with a wedge of lemon and serve with tartar sauce.

Enjoy!

hash and Yankee pot roast on Saturday; and a roast pork dinner on Sunday.

"It is quite a challenge to consistently prepare fresh food for three meals a day with the tremendous volume that we do and the extensive menu that we offer. This is truly a credit to our dedicated and motivated staff," Henry says.

Typically the Diner serves 1,200 to 1,600 people a day in season; that translates into 300,000 to 325,000 diners a year. The Diner served their one-millionth customer after 12 years of business; their second-millionth four years later; and their third-millionth three-and-a-half years ago.

Henry says the Diner is on the brink of serving its four-millionth customer and will hail the event with a major celebration and will give the lucky customer a slew of prizes. There will also be a drawing for a Caribbean cruise for two. Past lucky winners were showered with media attention, free gifts and food - all when they stopped in for breakfast!

"It's great to still be here doing what we've done for the past 22 years... and we aren't going to change a thing," Henry says. "The formula works."

In addition to food, the Diner also has their Remember the Maine Gift Shoppe. A slew of new and intriguing items are in the shop next door, ready to discover and many are Maine-made. Favorites include their vintage t-shirt collection, blueberry products, delicious gourmet food items and jewelry. The Diner has a new catalog, too, just in time for holiday shopping! The shop can be reached at 646-0406.

For more information visit the Diner at 2265 Post Road (Route 1), or call 646-4441, or check out the Web site at: [www.mainediner.com](http://www.mainediner.com), or e-mail at [eat@mainediner.com](mailto:eat@mainediner.com). Hours are 7 am to 8 pm daily Sunday through Thursday, and 7 am to 9 pm Friday and Saturday.

## The Gift of Giving

### Our newest, snazziest catalog ever, chock-full of holiday choices!

The Remember the Maine Gift Shoppe has unleashed its newest and most colorful 16-page catalog in 10 years just in time for the holidays! Shoppers can choose from more than 30 vintage Maine Diner T-shirts, a perennial favorite with updated styles annually, or choose from a family of exclusive Maine Diner glassware amongst hundreds of gift items including jewelry, mugs, cookbooks, special souvenirs and delectable gourmet foods!

Manager Kristin Johnson says the Diner has come a long way in marketing its items. Ten years ago merchandise was wedged into the corner of the annual newsletter. Now the multi-page catalog is mailed annually to more than 18,000 customers! For copies of the catalog call 888-640-5814 to request a copy, visit our web site at [www.mainediner.com](http://www.mainediner.com), or email [gifts@mainediner.com](mailto:gifts@mainediner.com).



### Mid Winter Vacation for the Maine Diner!

All Good Things Come to an End... or at Least Temporarily!

The Maine Diner will be closed for a mid-winter break starting Wednesday, January 4, 2006 and will re-open Friday, January 13, 2006.

(We're not superstitious!)

See you then!

## In the Spotlight: Waitress Kathy Lovejoy



In a line of business where waitresses often come and go, one person has been a favorite fixture of the Diner for close to 23 years, almost as long as the Diner's been in business.

Kathy Lovejoy of South Berwick started waiting tables in March of 1983 and remembers the early, lean years of the Diner's history when some nights there was

practically nobody to serve. Now on the brink of serving its four millionth customer and with typical long lines of customers out the door, Lovejoy feels a deep commitment and sense of satisfaction in being part of the team that helped make the Maine Diner famous and successful.

"It's amazing how things have changed over the years. It used to be a ghost town after September and now it can be crazy and wonderful," Lovejoy said. "Having lived through the hard times the rest of it now is so great. I feel very proud of what we do."

When Lovejoy started working here years ago, she was a mother with three small children and her husband Larry had been hurt badly. She says owners Myles and Dick were extremely compassionate and understanding of her family's situation and were flexible with her scheduling so she could be with her family when she needed to be. Over the years she repaid them with her loyalty and even sent all three of her children to work at the Diner too, with daughter Carrie working the longest from age 14 to 29.

All her hard work paid off and Lovejoy now enjoys spending her time between Maine and Florida, where she stays for part of the winter before returning to work at the Diner in the spring. When she's not working, she enjoys spending time with her children and grandchildren.

"It's amazing I've been here this long, but really it has been a great place to work, allowing me the time to raise my family. Now I'm helping with my grandchildren, who are so sweet!" Lovejoy said. "This has just been the greatest job for me. There are a lot of good people, a great kitchen crew...the people here are like my family. I thank God for it everyday."



## Recent Sightings

Recently seen at the Maine Diner... why the undefeated Harlem Rockets! Too cool.



## What's for Dinner? Something good everyday of the week!

### MONDAY

Meatloaf Madness

### TUESDAY

Shepard's Pie  
Chicken a la King

### WEDNESDAY

Beef Stew with Salad  
Baked Lasagna with Salad

### THURSDAY

New England Boiled Dinner  
A local favorite

### FRIDAY

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

### SATURDAY

Red Flannel Hash - while it lasts!  
Yankee Pot Roast

### SUNDAY

Roast Pork Dinner



## Local Diners Join Artist for 7th Annual "Derek's Days" Benefit

Roadside Artist "Diner Don Sawyer" hosted "Derek's Days" Make-A-Wish Benefit Art Show September 10 at the Maine Diner and September 11 at Becky's Diner in Portland, raising \$2,500. The money raised from both events will support a child's wish.

Sawyer, a self-taught artist, was on site selling his original artwork and signing autographs. The event is a "deeply personal thing" 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.

According to Sawyer, at the time of Derek's death there were no organizations like Make-A-Wish in existence to aid children with life-threatening illnesses. He adds the foundation's efforts are especially wonderful in what they can offer children in rural areas.

Make-A-Wish Foundation of Maine offices are located in Camden and Portland and have volunteers throughout the state. They encourage groups of employees, students and others to join the organization as "Wishmakers" to help children's wishes come true.


For more information, visit [www.wish.org/maine](http://www.wish.org/maine), or call 1-800-491-3171.

Or visit us on the internet:  
Web Site: [www.mainediner.com](http://www.mainediner.com)  
E-mail: [eat@mainediner.com](mailto:eat@mainediner.com)

Order Toll-free: (888) 640-5814

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## Relax, Re-Energise and Re-Charge! The Maine Diner Gift Card!

Give the gift that keeps on giving!

Ever wonder what to give that special friend or relative who's on the go and forgets to eat? Now they'll have no excuse! The

Maine Diner just released its handsome renewable gift card that can be charged up with any dollar amount you set for our fabulous home-cooked food! Order one via our web site, by phone or just by stopping in. In the convenient size and shape of a credit card it has a beautiful picture of our

classic blue and white diner on it and comes in a nice envelope. Makes a perfect gift for any traveler to Maine, or keep one for yourself! You'll never go hungry!

Call 207-646-4441, or visit us at [www.mainediner.com](http://www.mainediner.com)



## Don't Just Take Our Word for It!

We love to share "Comment's from Our Customers".

"We love to visit your restaurant every time we get to Maine. The service and the food are wonderful. We want to move in."

John Murray and Fran Tritle, Kutztown, PA

"Three cheers for the waitresses. Your fame is well-deserved."

J.E.McFaul, Hopkinton, MA

"We were so impressed with the chowder. The potato salad that came with the sandwich was also very good. Loved the pickle (very crunchy). This is the food we came to Maine for!"

Dana and Robbie Leftwich, Colorado Springs, CO

"The best restaurant we have visited. We're so excited to know about you."

Beth Davenport, Greensboro, N.C.

"Keep up the good work, as no matter what you eat here the meals are excellent, along with the help."

Mr. and Mrs. Morris V. Webber, Ellington, CT

"Bring Maine and yourself to Virginia!"

Jacki Stinchcomb, Unionville, VA

"My husband, sister-in-law, brother-in-law and I had dinner in your wonderful diner recently. We not only thoroughly enjoyed the food, but the service was outstanding. Ronna, our waitress, was great. When we asked, she guided us with our selections and everything was delicious. She wrapped the extra muffins we purchased well, because she knew we would be traveling with them. She searched for two cook-books for us when we discovered the gift shop was closed, and when none were found, she gave us business cards with the website on them so we could order them on-line. We have only been home one day, but have already recommended your diner to several friends who are regular Maine travelers. Thank you for being there."

Donna Yamin, Loudonville, N.Y.

"When we come up here we always look forward to coming here. We give you five stars and then some. You are Number One on our list."

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Lucey, Greenville, NH

"Darn good diner."

Bethany Messer, South Portland, ME