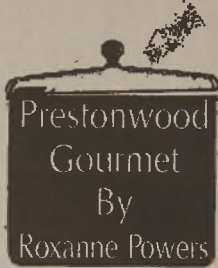


A night at the club, coffee with James

This month is the second birthday of this column, and James and I made the brave decision to celebrate it in the Prestonwood formal dining room simply as a twosome. While we often have lunch in this fashion, we rarely have dinner without at least one other couple or several children along. We tend to need the back-up because normally by 8 p.m., we are bleary-eyed and yawning.

Tonight was no exception. James refused coffee when it was offered, but on his third yawn, I went over his head and ordered him some away. Don't get me wrong. I do believe in the freedom of choice, and I did offer him one. Coffee in a cup or an I.V.?

I was relieved to see that the little crosses (I still believe Edward Simpkins planted them there!) that were planted on the grounds when we celebrated my fortieth birthday were gone for this occasion. The message seems to be that my body may be over the hill, but at least this column appears to be safe...or at least, it may be if I make it through



the weekend of Oct. 4, which is the day I've agreed to operate a bobcat...er, that is, a Skid Steer Loader, in formal attire, in the Lowe's Foods parking lot.

Among the other fun offerings, you can also look for a fully attired Chef to be outside preparing hors d'oeuvres for your enjoyment. What's the occasion? To call attention to the Carpenter Ruritans Harvest Days festival coming up on

Oct. 11. All proceeds from this event will go toward their college scholarship fund, and since I have four children who may some day apply for one of these scholarships, it's a really good cause...come out and join us for both events.

The format for the formal dining room has changed. The appetizer and soup selections are now pre-established, leaving clients with only two decisions to make, the first course selection, and the entrée selection. For the first course, James chose the sautéed Helix snails, which were nestled in red bliss potato shells resting in a thick, creamy sauce laced with garlic. I had the cornmeal dusted soft-shell crabs served with seared spinach drizzled with a garlic/lemon infused Ornelia's extra virgin olive oil. Delicious.

Before our entrée selections were brought out, we were served a palate-cleansing, strawberry-kiwi sorbet with a nicely balanced flavor. James enjoyed the pan-seared tenderloin of beef with a roasted garlic demi-glace, served with Alsatian

potato salad and pencil-thin Carolina asparagus that I accused of being green onions (based on their truly thin appearance) but James assured me that they were indeed asparagus.

I had the char-grilled Black Angus sirloin strip with seared spinach and what was supposed to be a White Truffle/Lobster laced Yukon gold potato puree. I say "supposed," because with Truffles being the rare item that they are, I've never had the pleasure of meeting one; but before exiting to the ladies room to check my teeth for stray spinach, I made the mistake of trying to label an ingredient as such. It's a good thing that I did have the pleasure of meeting Jo Melanowski while there, for upon my return, my husband greeted me with the quite public demand that I owed him an apology for mistakenly labeling my Truffles. Well, imagine that. I've never told him, but just wait until he hears that what he has always referred to as bouillabaisse is actually bouillon.

Roberts Bros. Circus coming to town

The Roberts Bros. Circus will be setting up its big top tent for a 3-Ring Circus performance on Monday, Sept. 29 at Lumley Community Park.

It will feature such events as the flying trapeze act, elephant rides, python holding, and clowns, which bring a large turnout yearly.

The Morrisville Parks and Recreation and Cultural Resources department is selling banners to be displayed on the night of the circus for \$50. The banners are 30-by-48 inches, and may be increased in size at additional cost.

Part of the proceeds will benefit the Parks and Recreation Department budget.

Parks and Recreation Director Alan Carroll said the circus is an enjoyable, old-fashioned three-ring event. They are out of Sarasota, Fla., and they travel the whole East Coast, Florida to Maine.

Advanced tickets are \$4 per child, and \$6 per adult. Tickets at the door will be \$5 per child and \$7 per adult. They can be purchased at the community center, the Morrisville Cafe, and the Morrisville Chamber of Commerce building.

For more information, please call the Parks and Recreation Department at 469-9760.

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Resident says businesses should pay higher rates

BY MARY BETH PHILLIPS

After one resident complained about the town's high sewer rates, another resident "jumped on the bandwagon" during the public comment portion of the town board meeting at the end of August.

Biff Ufferman asked the board to restudy the sewer rates now that the hookup with Cary is complete.

"It would be better off for me for the town to raise the tax rates than to keep the high sewer rates," he said.

"It's not our job to pay for the overruns for Cedar Fork sewer line," he said, referring to a \$160,000 change order that was needed to complete the sewer line extension

that extends to the Enterprise Center on Airport Boulevard.

"That the town's job, not our job," he said.

Harry Clew, who had come to the meeting to give input to changing his street from Greenview Drive in Preston, then took the podium and said, "My wife and I have lived in many places throughout the United States. This is the first place we have ever lived anywhere where sewer rates were as high, and also where sewer was more than water."

"I want to jump on the bandwagon and say they need to be looked at," he said.

He said businesses should pay a

greater share of the rates. "They can deduct it. Residents don't get that opportunity," he said.

Town Manager David Hodgkins said later that the current rate of \$6.06 per 1,000 gallons is higher than other jurisdictions in the area.

They are high because "we don't have a large customer base," he said. He said the town has supplemented paying for sewer services from the general fund for the past few years, even though water and sewer funds are supposed to be self-sufficient.

The connection with Cary is only partially complete, he added. The plant at Aviation Parkway has been hooked up to the Cary plant, but town officials are still working on hooking up the plant at Perimeter Park.

"We don't know what savings we'll have," Hodgkins said. "It's premature to adjust the rates down

until we know what the connection with Cary will do."

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