



**CHEF AT WORK** — Reb Wiesener prepares burgundy beef tips in the kitchen of the Holiday Inn and a specialty which is one of many that the young cook likes to serve to customers.



**LIKES FOOD HOT** — This Chef believes in serving food hot and enhancing it with special seasonings, which are cooking secrets passed down from his mother, father and grandfather.



**READY TO EAT** — This delicious dinner is straight from the oven and piping hot and ready to eat. Reb Wiesener likes to cook and gourmet dishes are his favorites.

## Reb's Still The Star, But This Time As Chef

Story And Photos By Lib Stewart

A local actor is still appearing nightly in a starring role, but not on the stage.

Reb Wiesener, who Kings Mountain audiences applauded as "John Sevier" in the recent outdoor production of "Then Conquer We Must," is the star of the kitchen at Holiday Inn, where he is the head chef.

The Kings Mountain native assumed his new duties the day after "Then Conquer We Must" closed a successful series of shows at the amphitheatre at Kings Mountain National Military Park.

Reb, who is performing nightly to the delight of his satisfied customers in the dining room, is as much at home in the kitchen as he is on the stage.

Grandson of the late Sam R. Suber Sr., veteran Mountain Rest Cemetery Superintendent and former local restaurant owner, he had his first experiences in a kitchen helping "Mr. Sam," a native of Beirut, Lebanon, preparing such Lebanese delicacies as Kibbie, a lamb and cracked wheat dish, and stuffed grape leaves. From his grandfather, Reb developed a preference for spiced foods and gourmet dishes.

While a Boy Scout, he helped his father, Carl Wiesener Sr., cook venison, bear meat, quail and squirrel in quantity for his fellow Scouts.

Since those early experiences, Wiesener says he has felt completely at home in a kitchen.

In the Marine Corps, he was transferred from supply clerical work to being one of two chief cooks who had to plan and serve from 300 to 1200 men a day, after the Dining Facility manager overhead Wiesener correcting a cook's error while he was on temporary K.P. duty. From his Marine experience he developed his techniques in buffet-style and quantity cooking.

"When I first came to the Holiday Inn, the standard rule was that the chef and kitchen personnel stayed out of the dining room," said Wiesener.

All that has changed now since the actor in him has surfaced. He now plays a starring role in the dining room itself, cooking over hickory-smoked charcoal and getting the attention of his customers.

He comments, "People seem to like knowing that they can actually watch their food being prepared and I like to see my customers to have their food when they're ready for their entrees to be served. I want my customers to have their food when they're ready for it so they can leisurely enjoy the food in a pleasant environment." He garnishes all his dishes so they'll

look as good as they taste and sees that hot foods are served hot and cold foods cold.

Wiesener has freedom of choice in his kitchen and his creativity has not been stifled. On any given night at the Holiday Inn you can order a burger and fries or a flaming beef-kabob. If your taste runs to sweeter delicacies, you can order his peach Melba flambe or a tasty parfait, or the mandarin orange cake, a local favorite which has been getting rave reviews.

He says, "I've found a second calling in cooking. It's really a pleasure to me, and I enjoy ad-

ding Specials to the menu like Burgundy Beef Tips." His cooking is a pleasure to others, too. No one goes away hungry from one of his meals because he serves generous portions and may even come over to your table to see that everything was to your liking.

Reb is one chef his customers can talk to. He likes to know if people enjoy the food he prepares - and he'll even give you a recipe if you find something you particularly enjoy. In turn he may also ask for one of your own recipes.

He is popular with his

customers because he does his job well and he enjoys being the star of the kitchen. He already has begun a collection of tokens from customers. He has cigars, a wooden Nickle, two-dollar bills, and trinkets given to him from people who want to show their appreciation for delicious meals and personal service.

What makes him a successful chef? Reb says, "I get personal with cooking. I try to prepare each dish so that I'd be impressed with it if I ordered it myself." His customers say his philosophy and gifted touch with food is working out very well!

## Kings Mountain Herald

SECTION B, THURSDAY, JANUARY 15, 1981

## Charlene Is Used To Surgery

Charlene Huskins, 24, of Ellison St., has been in and out of hospitals since a 1978 automobile accident left her with a damaged esophagus.

Delicate surgery performed recently in Boston, Mass. gave the young woman an artificial windpipe but in six months Charlene faces surgery again when a Boston surgeon will attempt to rebuild her windpipe.

"I've been told that this surgery has a 50-50 chance of success and I don't look forward to seven more hours on the operating table," said the petite young woman, who is adjusting to a changing voice and laugh and experiencing breathing difficulty. "It's something I will have to live with the rest of my life," said Charlene who was regarded as a "miracle child" by doctors who worked to keep her alive for months after the accident. Charlene fell out the door of a moving van in 1978 and sustained head injuries. She was in a coma for seven weeks and on a respirator for such a long time that her windpipe was damaged, explained her mother, Mrs. Betty Huskins Figueroa. She was hospitalized at Gaston Memorial Hospital three months and then transferred to Baptist Hospital in Winston-Salem where her trachea was removed during surgery and she was hospitalized a month. She recently spent six weeks in Boston where Dr. Grillo, the only surgeon in the United States recommended to perform such delicate surgery,

was her attending physician. Not many weeks have passed in the last three years that Charlene and her mother haven't been on the road going to and from hospitals for treatment.

Charlene also underwent successful plastic surgery on her face and the scars from her accident are not visible, except when she speaks and her voice changes. Much to her dismay,

her laugh has turned into a giggle and she declares that she's past the "giggling stage," although she belies her age and looks the age of the students in the KMSHS Fellowship of Christian Athletes who took the occasion at a meeting Monday night at the home of Myra Jenkins to present her a check for \$160, result of a one hour hot dog sale in which the young

people sold 225 hot dogs to help Charlene defray the costs of her increasing medical bills.

Kings Mountain citizens, including Macedonia Baptist Church and East Gold Street Wesleyan Church congregations, have raised nearly \$900 to help Charlene and her family during these difficult times. And Charlene says she is most appreciative.

A 1975 graduate of KMHS, Charlene was a short order cook until her accident. Now, she is unable to do little cooking because of her severe breathing difficulty. She helps her mother with housework and enjoys television, especially the soap operas. She likes to play checkers with friends and loves music. The stereo in her home is her favorite piece of furniture.

Sandra Cobb, vice president of Fellowship of Christian Athletes, said the school organization learned about Charlene's health problems from Robin Masters. Robin's father, Bennett Masters, local mortician who conducts an early morning radio program on weekends on Station WKMT, started the fund drive rolling on the air and invited contributions from the public. Soon, the 30 members of the FCA were planning a benefit for Charlene at school.

"People who haven't donated and would like to help Charlene with transportation to Boston and help defray costs of family members staying with her are asked to contact Bennett Masters at Masters Funeral Home. Mr. Masters said a member of his staff will pick up your donations," said Miss Cobb.

Mrs. Figueroa said that Charlene's sister, Rebecca Huskins, 23, will accompany her to Boston for surgery and remain there with her.

"Charlene has really been a (Turn To Page 5-B)



Photo by Lib Stewart

**YOUTH GROUP HELD BENEFIT** — Sandra Cobb, left, president of the KMSHS Fellowship of Christian Athletes, presents a check to

Charlene Huskins as Bennett Masters and Mrs. Betty Huskins Figueroa look on during a recent meeting of the youth group.