In Touch
WITH THE GENERAL MANAGER

Dear Friends:

Even though the days are still warm, the unmistakable feel of fall is in the air, and with it comes the excitement of a new year of sports, events, good friends, and the hustle and bustle of the students on campus. It’s a great time of the year and I always look forward to it.

This issue contains our usual fare of a great recipe, beverage corner, and the calendar full of wonderful things to do. In addition, we have an exciting announcement about The Dining Room at the Inn, and an article about some strategies we’re taking to lesson our carbon footprint even further. It’s a challenge worth talking about and one that we are happy to take on. Our Where Are They Now candidate this time is Rachel Louie, a fantastic young woman making her mark in the Washington D.C. market.

Remember to send back your comments and story ideas. Don’t forget about our delicious holiday buffets and check out our special hotel packages for the holiday season. Why not let our staff help you plan the perfect Happy Valley getaway? Just let us know what you want to do, and we’ll make it happen.

Sincerely,
Jim Purdum, General Manager

THE CHALLENGE OF A LIFETIME

It isn’t easy being green . . . and that’s exactly how Smiley prefers it.

After 32 years of service to Hospitality, one would think that Jim Burket would be ready to slow down, maybe even retire. But this past July, he was given a new title – Director of Facilities – that will present him with an entirely new set of mandates. “One thing is for sure,” he says with a smile, “I’ve never had to step outside of this organization to be challenged.”

The task this time is to reduce energy cost enough to recover the full cost of several major energy conservation projects over the next several years. “What this means,” Burket says, “is that we are going to reduce our carbon footprint as much as possible with less waste going to the landfill, less water and less energy used for heating, cooling, and lighting. Everything is on the table, not just in The Inn and The Penn Stater but also in dining halls, restaurants, and other service areas.”

Two years ago, a building-by-building energy audit was done, and according to Burket, many issues were revealed. “We found lots of things that could be improved to save money. For example, all the light fixtures and bulbs were replaced and new shower heads and commodes were installed in every hotel room. In addition, a new energy management system for heating and air conditioning was put in place. Some of the savings come from just managing our schedules better; that is, not paying to heat or cool rooms not being used,” he said.

For this fiscal year, three goals have been set for Auxiliary and Business Services of which Hospitality Services is just one department.

continued on page 2
The Challenge...continued from page 1

(1) Increasing engagement – getting everyone involved in the sustainability effort. All staff will have to do one thing to help the process; (2) Communicating the mission to all staff and making them aware of the issues and solutions as well as making sure everyone is aware of the progress we’re making and the best practices in use around the institution; and (3) Reduce the environmental impact of printing across the enterprise.

Not the most glamorous, but certainly the biggest item to take on was the laundry. Penn State creates four million pounds of laundry each year . . . FOUR MILLION POUNDS . . . and cleaning it all is a formidable task. Burket notes: “We studied the laundry situation extensively looking for the best way to meet the needs of the hotels and the other departments that depend on laundry services. Ultimately the decision was made to refurbish some existing equipment and replace older, less efficient systems and relocate the operations to The Penn Stater. The reduction in utilities is projected to be substantial and eliminating trips from a central facility to the Penn Stater will also represent a substantial savings.

Steam consumption is another area of focus. Smiley explains: “You don’t think of steam as a utility, but we purchase the steam we use for heating and cooling from Penn State’s West Campus Power Plant. We’re looking at how we can use less by verifying and checking our equipment frequently to be sure it’s working the way it should; we’re also looking at putting meters on some equipment to see how it’s being used and work to minimize consumption which helps the system serve other campus needs more efficiently.

An important point to be made, says Burket, is the fact that after the energy audit, many projects were identified, but if a project could not generate a return on the investment, that project was dropped from consideration. “As an Auxiliary enterprise, we couldn’t justify everything,” he says, “but every project that we decided to do will not only help the environment but reduce utility bills as well which makes everyone happy to participate. It’s really exciting to actually see the positive results of these major projects.”

Smiley beams as he talks about this latest change in his career. “It fits me very well, and I’m excited and optimistic about the outcome. This kind of tough challenge is exactly what I like and keeps my job fresh. Literally no two days in 32 years have ever been the same, and I really like Jim’s (Purdum) style of leadership. There’s never a doubt about what he wants and that’s a good structure for me. We almost always see eye-to-eye, and if I can make this work, we’ll all benefit from the savings while helping the environment at the same time.”

Wine Corner

This issue includes a special lamb recipe from Chef Monk. When it comes to pairing wine with lamb a few guidelines are appropriate, but ultimately let your palate rule your choice.

Strong red wines are particularly delicious with lamb. Though lamb has a more subtle flavor, it is a red meat and does pair quite well with red wines.

Your preparation of your cut of lamb will alter the specific wine you need. For example I recommend a Pinot Noir with a lightly flavored preparation, such as a roast or a steak. Consider serving a stronger red wine such as Merlot, Syrah or Red Zinfandel with more strongly flavored dishes. Ethnic dishes with spices, and flavorful herbs and garlic partner well with very strong wines.

My pick for this coffee and cardamom lamb shank is a Casa Marin Syrah from Chile (The Wine Spectator 92 points). Serve it with any lamb dish and it will be a hit. Why? Lamb has a very robust and earthy flavor. Syrah is the lamb of wines. It is very earthy and complex flavors will partner well with the natural flavor of the meat and the rich spices.

So for your next dinner party sit down and relax and let the pairing to us.

—Shad Heim, Certified Hospitality Specialist
Providing a seamless visit is what Rachel Louie strives to do every day at her job as Conference Services Manager at the Monaco, Washington, D.C., Hotel (A Kimpton Hotel). “Once a client books at the hotel, it becomes my responsibility to arrange all the details and to service the group once they’ve arrived,” Rachel says. “I work closely with the front desk, housekeeping, banquets, and accounting departments to iron out any wrinkles in the planning.”

According to Rachel, when she began to think about going to college, she wanted to be in a career within which she could use her passion for making people feel important and comfortable. She notes: “I realized very early on that these were huge components of the hospitality industry, and I was hooked! The ability we have as hoteliers to create spectacular moments for guests is so strong and the satisfaction that comes from it is indescribable.”

When she first began as a student in the hospitality curriculum, her ultimate goal was to become a general manager at an eco-friendly hotel, but as her college career expanded, she realized that the industry and its opportunities are much more vast than she had originally thought and her aspirations have now grown. “My Penn State experience and education helped me grasp the bigger picture and to realize that the opportunities in this industry are endless.”

Rachel began at The Penn Stater where she was a front office intern from January to August of 2009. She was hired in August of 2010 to be a front desk agent. “Being in such a stable and professional setting,” she notes, “I really developed my professionalism and was able to create my management style based on the strong managers I had as my examples. Also, with so many repeat guests, I learned how to create connections and really provide a welcoming environment.”

After graduation in 2011, Rachel was hired by Kimpton as a manager-in-training. After training, she became Conference Services Manager, where she was surprised by the responsibilities entrusted to her. “I was surprised by the empowerment I had to shape my team and my own career,” she says. “At first I was shocked by the flexibility I had, but then I began to embrace it. I was truly able to apply everything I had learned through my HR&IM classes, my Penn Stater jobs, and the study abroad in my own way. These experiences created a phenomenal platform upon which to start my hospitality career!”

“I have realized,” Rachel adds, “that my biggest opportunities have been the ones I didn’t plan for. I strive to always be focused on advancing my career and developing my skills, even if it means taking advantage of an atypical opportunity.”
Andrew Monk has worked in kitchens around the world. But as The Nittany Lion Inn’s new executive chef, his focus is all local.

In May, Monk took the reins at The Inn, where he has served as sous chef for six years. Since being at The Inn, Monk’s focus has been on introducing fresh, local ingredients to the existing menus of both restaurants. “I’m looking forward to the opportunities, challenges, and possibilities this new position will give me,” he says, “and seeing what else our local market can provide.” In addition, Monk feels that working with local farmers and businesses fits with Penn State’s mission as a land-grant university.

Transitioning to a more locally focused menu offers many benefits for The Inn’s restaurants. Monk says it supports a healthy culture that addresses some of the health-related issues facing Americans today. It also exposes the mind-set to Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional Management students who are working or interning with The Inn.

“We can impact them, and they can carry it on to their careers,” Monk says. “They are always looking for ways to keep it fresh. We can lead by example and it spirals out.”

Monk was classically trained at The French Culinary Institute in New York. His real-world experience came from service in kitchens in Hawaii, Cannes, Istanbul, San Francisco, and Lima, but he now calls State College home and plans to stay.

---

InnSide News: Chef Monk Steps Into the Driver’s Seat
Cardamom and Coffee Lamb Shank

Ingredients:
- 5 lbs lamb shank
- 8 cups water or low sodium beef stock (to cover shank)

MIR POIX:
- ¼ lb carrots
- ¼ lb celery
- ½ lb onion
- 1 sprig rosemary
- 2 tsp thyme
- 2 cups red wine

Sauce Ingredients:
- braising liquid (see below)
- separated fat (see below)
- flour
- 2 cardamom pods
- 3 lbs whole coffee beans
- ½ lb tomatoes diced

Instructions:
1. Salt and pepper shanks
2. Add to a thick bottom pan pre-heated to medium
3. Sear on all sides
4. Add Mir Poix and lightly carmelize
5. Add red wine and reduce by ¾
6. Place in a crock pot set to low with water/stock just covering for 6-8 hours or until tender (or) Use sear pan with water/stock, cover with foil and place in a 325 degree oven for 2 hours or until tender.
7. Remove Shanks

Sauce:
1. Remove the fat from the braising (cooking pan/pot) with a ladle and mix with flour until a paste like consistency forms (AKA a Roux). This should be about a 1 to 1 ration by weight. Set aside.
2. In remaining braising liquid place coffee beans and cardamom pods in a tied sachet (coffee filter or cheese cloth). Simmer for 20 minutes
3. Whisk Roux into simmering braising liquid and mix well.
4. Add fresh diced tomatoes and simmer for another 10 – 15 minutes.

This dish goes well with rice, potatoes, or late summer and fall vegetables. Try a farmers’ market eggplant roasted with olive oil.
A HAPPY WEEKEND IN HAPPY VALLEY!

All you have to do is fill out the form below, clip it, and send it in. We’ll put all the names in a hat and in October, November, and December we’ll choose one lucky person to enjoy a free weekend here in the Centre Region (certain weekend restrictions may apply).

If you would like to receive periodic announcements from us about dining and event specials, please fill in your e-mail address below. Your e-mail address will be kept confidential and will not be used for any other purpose nor will it be given to anyone else for any reason.

Comments about our newsletter/your wine suggestions:

________________________
________________________
________________________

Name (please print)
________________________
Address
________________________
City/State/Zip
________________________
Phone/E-mail
________________________

Clip this coupon and mail to:
Norm Brown
Sales and Marketing
Penn State Hospitality Services
200 West Park Avenue
State College, PA 16803

WINNERS
Robert Liller
Philadelphia, PA
Eita Lee Nurick
Lafayette Hill, PA
Della Cohen
Woodbury, New York