Dear Friends,

As I write this, we are having one of the coldest temperature weeks in a decade. It would naturally follow that people would stay in and keep warm – but not in Happy Valley! Our sports venues are brimming with fans who enjoy wrestling, hockey, basketball, gymnastics and other indoor competitions. Not to mention the many outdoor-related activities, including both downhill and cross-country skiing, ice skating and hiking in one of our many close state parks. Cold or not, this is a fantastic time to visit the Centre Region. We offer special sports packages, but we also invite you to experience our VIP Valentine’s Day package. Bring the person you love and experience the Nittany Lion Inn’s special romantic touch!

In this issue, you’ll find information about the Pennsylvania Association of Sustainable Agriculture (PASA) Conference, which is held every year on the Penn State Campus. We are big proponents of buying local and supporting sustainable farming practices and if you have eaten in one of our restaurants, you have no doubt experienced the difference. We also have two new staff members to introduce you to, and a “Where Are They Now?” that you don’t want to miss.

Remember to send back your suggestions and contest entry, and stop by to say hello. Share a beverage in front of our roaring fireplaces in either of Penn State’s hotels and meet new friends who share a love of the outdoors and winter in Happy Valley!

Sincerely,

Jim Purdum, General Manager
Welcome New Staff

Chuck Hacker
Assistant Restaurant Manager

Those of you who live in the Centre Region may recognize his name: For 40 years, Chuck and his parents owned Duffy's Tavern in Boalsburg. After the restaurant was sold, Chuck began a semi-retirement and was looking forward to doing something part-time, maybe at a State Park somewhere. He laughs as he notes that his wife had other ideas. “She said it was time for me to find a full-time job.”

The one thing he knew he didn’t want to do was to work in the food services industry. “And look where I ended up,” he says with another laugh. “Literally, working at Duffy’s was the only job I ever had,” Chuck added. “I wasn’t sure I could fit in; I was always confident as the owner of the business and just didn’t know how I was going to do this, but it has been amazing. This is what I know so it’s a natural fit.”

Since he began his job at the Penn Stater in October, Chuck has spent most of his time learning the ropes and fitting his experience and skills to the much larger conference center hotel environment. “My goal in this position is to help our service staff be the best they can be. These two restaurants are the best kept secrets in town, with superior food at a great value. But we need to be continually improving everything we do. It’s a challenge, but we keep at it and I can honestly say I want to be out front representing our food and service, because I’m very proud of it. I’ll be here for a very long time,” he adds with a big smile.

Lori Walker-Kalbfleisch
Sales Manager

It’s been a long and winding road for Lori, but she has finally returned home. Many years ago (she won’t divulge how many exactly), she began her Penn State college career, but as things happen sometimes, she left college to get married and start a family.

She moved to Florida, where she began working in the hospitality industry. She learned the business from the ground up working for a private beach front resort, a Disney area hotel, and later with Intercontinental Hotel Group (IHG), which took her to Chicago. After several more years, she decided it was time to finish her degree. Her first and only choice was Penn State’s World Campus. She enrolled in the College of Liberal Arts Organizational Leadership program. “I felt an immediate re-connection to Penn State. I didn’t realize how much I had missed it and it was at that point that I knew I would come back here. I grew up knowing about Penn State and all that it stands for. My father, my sister, and several other relatives are Penn State alums. It’s in my blood.”

“When this position was listed,” she notes, “there was no second thought. I applied for it. It’s not just because it’s a job in the hospitality industry. This is a unique place. The connection to the HRIM program is very important to me and my experiences will help me be an asset to the school.”

Lori feels her business experience will help her be an effective sales person in the corporate arena. “This market is wide open and I’m looking at corporate sales in a new way. I want to provide solutions at a good value, not just fill hotel rooms and meeting space. Anyone can do that. The bottom line is that we’re only as good as our last meeting, so we need to do it right . . . every time.”
Where Are They Now?

The Best Decision I Ever Made

In 2001, when Pamela began her Penn State student career in the College of Business Administration, she wasn’t even aware of the HRIM program. Friends told her about their experiences, and she got excited enough to change her major. “The rest is history,” she says. “Moving into the Hospitality program was the best decision I ever made.”

While in the program, she worked at The Penn Stater as a Front Desk Agent, and also as a Skybox Attendant at Beaver Stadium during the 2004 football season. “That was a really fun job,” Pamela notes. “The job was to help set up, service, and clean up the food and beverage in the individual suites at the stadium. It was exciting and very different than other jobs in the industry. I had been to the games as a student, but it was great to see a different side of how the stadium operates on game day.”

Since graduating in 2005, Pamela has been with ARAMARK. Even though her jobs while in college helped her to have “real-world” experiences, according to Pam, “nothing can really prepare you for some things that happen in this industry. I was surprised by the sheer diversity of people you get to meet and work with. I don’t think that in other industries one gets the opportunity to meet the people in charge. I have made life-long friends here and I love it.”

“My education definitely gave me the knowledge I needed, and my work experiences helped me really understand what I was learning in class. The two together prepared me to be a success.”

Pamela Breyne
Sales Manager, ARAMARK
The Villanova University Conference Center
Radnor, PA

continued from page 1

all benefit from the work PASA does to help farming remain economically viable.

PASA’s purpose is something near and dear to Penn State Hospitality, whose chefs are working to incorporate fresh, local products into the menus at both The Nittany Lion Inn and The Penn Stater. “Supporting local producers and using sustainable food options is the right thing to do,” says Chef Kenneth Stout. “It’s fresher and quite often a better quality product.”

Today the public is far more aware than they were a decade ago of where their food comes from and how it is grown. Knowing that the ingredients on the average American dinner plate have traveled 1,500 miles makes the idea hit home that much more.

“When we support our regional farms, we’re not only keeping the money in our own community, but we’re also cutting down on the carbon footprint,” explains Smith. “People understand what it means to ‘Buy Fresh, Buy Local. It’s wonderful to use ingredients from our region.”

It can be challenging for restaurants, hotels, and institutions like Penn State to make changes to their operation in an effort to support local and regional farms. But hosting the annual PASA conference has helped Penn State Hospitality by connecting the chefs with the local producers whose products you can often enjoy on the restaurant menus.

If you’re interested in learning more about PASA, its goals, as well as its annual conference, visit www.pasafarming.org. And don’t forget to visit one (or all!) of Penn State Hospitality’s four great restaurants, including Legends and The Gardens at The Penn Stater and both Whiskers and The Dining Room at The Nittany Lion Inn. Check out their menus at www.pennstatehotels.com.
Each unique New Year often initiates reflection, renewal, and dare we say, decadence. To celebrate, we decided to pair Crème Brulee Sticky Buns, another amazing creation from Executive Chef Ken Stout, with Moet & Chandon Imperial Brut champagne. This combination will undoubtedly violate your New Year’s fitness resolution, but trust us when we say it’s worth it.

We selected the Brut for its floral nuances, fruity undertones and it’s nutty, almost buttery notes. Its fullness is balanced nicely by its crispness. This incredible coupling with the caramel and cream of the Stickies would dominate most wines, but we feel the Moet more than holds its ground. Its inherent dryness leads to a smooth finish on the palate.

Benoit Gouez, the Chef de cave for Moet & Chandon, explained, “We don’t ask the year to adapt to our wishes. We respect each year and try to give the best of ourselves without preconceptions, but with a clear vision. Each year deserves to be understood and accepted for what it is. We are giving ourselves more freedom in bringing out a particular grand aspect of a year. Our aim is not to be extreme, but to play on a particular characteristic, to stretch it somehow and reveals its grandeur.”

What a great philosophy on life in general! Begin 2014 with an attitude of both focus and flexibility. Look to enhance your life with the understanding that each year brings new views, challenges and hopes. Find out what the grand aspect of your year is going to be. But before you do that, make sure to enjoy the decadence of Crème Brulee Sticky Buns and Moet & Chandon champagne.

Cheers!
Rahul Shrivastav, Banquets and Joe Greenland, Culinary
# HOT DATES

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**Penn Stater Sticky Bun Crème Brulee Dessert**

Chef Stout

### From Our Kitchen To Yours

- 1 qt. whole milk
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 6 whole eggs (whipped)
- 4 egg yolks
- 1 cup sugar (plus sugar for coating and burning)
- 2 packs of 9 oz. Ye Olde College Diner sticky buns

#### The day prior:
- Scald milk with vanilla.
- Whip eggs, yolks and sugar together.
- Slowly whisk hot milk into egg mixture and let rest.
- Slice sticky buns into 1 inch slices and arrange like shingles in a buttered nonreactive baking pan.
- Pour ¾ of the milk and egg mixture over the sticky buns and let it rest in the refrigerator overnight. Reserve the other ¼ of the mix for the next day.

#### The following day:
- Preheat your oven to 325°F.
- Pour remaining custard mix over soaked stickies.
- Take another baking pan or sheet pan with sides, larger than your pan with the stickies, and use as a water bath to gently bake your stickies. The water should come up ¼ to ½ way up the outside of the pan of stickies. Use hot water to speed up cooking time.
- Bake at 325°F for 45 minutes or until custard is set. Gently press on the center of stickies to see if there is any custard not set and if the stickies spring back.
- When custard is set, let it rest for a few minutes then sprinkle a light coating of sugar over the entire dish.
- Finally, take a blow torch on a low setting and caramelize/gently burn the sugar on top of the dish. You should hold the flame a few inches away from the dish and pull it away as soon as you see the sugar start to turn golden brown. If you do not have access to a blow torch you can try to caramelize the sugar under the broiler in your oven. Be careful, it will go from sugary to scorched in an instant.

Serve hot and bon appetit!
Win!
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 we’ll choose three lucky winners 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/yours wine suggestions:

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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:
• Linda Penny
  Camp Hill, PA
• Glenwood Eaton
  Charlotte, NC
• Lydia Smith
  State College, PA

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Visit us online at www.pennstatehotels.com

State College Magazine’s 2013 “Best of State College” awards have been selected:
The Penn Stater was chosen as “Best Conference Center”, “Best Buffet” and “Best Sunday Brunch”.
The Nittany Lion Inn was selected as “Best Wedding Reception Location”.

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