

P NORTHWEST PASSAGES

THE PEOPLE AND PLACES OF NORTHWEST WASHINGTON

JUNE 3, 2009 ■ PAGE 15

This little piggy went to the Mandarin Oriental

By **LINDA LOMBARDI**
Current Correspondent

At the “Cochon 555” cooking competition on Sunday, chef Jamie Leeds of Commonwealth Gastropub set the tone as she described her first dish to judges: “We tried to get as much fat into it as possible.”

The contest, one of 10 held throughout the country, offered five local chefs a chance to show off their skills with pork. The participants each got a whole pig a week in advance, and their kitchens set to work. There were no rules about the number or type of dishes to produce.

“It’s all about inspiration,” said Brady Lowe, whose Atlanta-based Taste Network produced the event held at the Mandarin Oriental hotel.

The competition wasn’t just about fatty deliciousness, though. Cochon 555 promotes heritage breed pigs — traditional varieties that were used on small farms before large-scale meat production narrowed the field to animals that produce leaner and, most chefs would say, drier and less-flavorful meat.

And organizer Lowe is passionate about what he calls “handshake sourcing”: having direct contact with the producers of food.

Awareness of food sources is a



serious issue to many these days, but with the fun of a cooking competition — and the scrumptiousness of pork — the message about preserving heritage livestock breeds and supporting small farms went down easily.

D.C.’s competitors were Leeds; Brian McBride and Mike Santoro of Blue Duck Tavern; R.J. Cooper of Vidalia; Nicholas Stefanelli of Mio; and John Manolatos of Cashion’s Eat Place.

Their dishes were judged on flavor and presentation, but also on how well the chefs utilized every part of the pig, so enthusi-



Bill Petros/The Current

Above, local chef Trey Massey prepares to demonstrate how to cut up a whole pig during the Cochon 555 event at the Mandarin Oriental. Far left, Hamilton Johnson of Vidalia offers tastes and other Vidalia chefs, left, create samples.



asm for unusual cuts was a must. Several produced headcheese, but each was different, from Blue Duck Tavern’s paper-thin slice to the small chunk served on a skewer with the Cashion’s Bloody Pig — a bloody mary made with reduced pork broth.

Scrapple made an appearance

front of one of the judges, he stopped her with an excited “Hey!”

The creative powers of some of the chefs even extended to dessert. Mio produced bacon gelato with peanut powder, and Vidalia offered bacon chocolate-chip cookies with bacon-onion ice

cream.

The pigs used came from EcoFriendly Foods, which supplies pasture-raised meat from small farms in the Shenandoah Valley to restaurants in the D.C. area. (You can also buy their products for home cooking at the Dupont Circle and Arlington farmers markets).

EcoFriendly is working on crossbreeding heritage breeds for increased flavor — taking what Lowe calls “the magical tasty animal” and trying to produce “the

See **Chefs**/Page 22

HOME & GARDEN

Glover Park joins local farm markets

By **BETH COPE**
Current Staff Writer

In a week and a half, the Glover Park farmers market will open its stalls for the first time. Organizer Lauren Shweder Biel has been planning for months, and June 13 is opening day.

The market will offer an assortment of locally produced goods, including bread, coffee beans, fruit, vegetables and meat. And in case that’s not enough of a draw, musicians will be playing acoustic bluegrass music.

Glover Park is one of the many Northwest neighborhoods to host a farmers market. Check out our list for a site near you:

- **Chevy Chase**

Location: Broad Branch Road and Northampton Street



Bill Petros/The Current

The farmers market at 14th and U streets is one of many offering local items.

Date/time: Saturday 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Season: April 25 through Nov. 28

Sells: Beef, bread, chicken, coffee beans, flowers, fruit, goat cheese, herbs, jams, jellies, lamb, pasta, pastries, pork, veal, vegeta-

See **Markets**/Page 36

Tenleytown resident peddles affordable housing in cross-country bike journey

By **OLGA KHAZAN**
Current Correspondent

In just 10 weeks last summer, Thomas

Mattera saw the lush swamps of Florida, the sweeping plains of Texas and the dense forests of Northern California — all from the seat of a bicycle. And, as if biking 3,500 miles weren’t enough of a challenge, he stopped in five states to build houses along the way.

“A bicycle is a perfect medium,” Mattera said. “You educate people about affordable housing, but you also get to go on this life-altering, incredible journey.”

Mattera is a member of Bike & Build, an organization that sends troops of young people on cross-country bike trips to raise funds and awareness for affordable housing.

This summer, he will once again pedal across the nation, helping lead a team of bikers from Boston to Santa Barbara, Calif., and building houses en route.

A Tenleytown resident and 2006 graduate of Wilson High School, Mattera has long had an interest in affordable-housing

issues. At the University of North Carolina, where he is a senior, he is studying social and economic justice, and he once spent a spring

See **Biker**/Page 22



Courtesy of Thomas Mattera

Thomas Mattera celebrates a ride

NORTHWEST REAL ESTATE

CHEFS

From Page 15

magical super-tasty animal." Bev Eggleston of EcoFriendly, whose name may be familiar to readers of Michael Pollan's "The Omnivore's Dilemma," is concerned with more than tastiness, though.

A vegetarian for a decade — what he calls a "conscientious objector" to the treatment of factory-farmed animals — Eggleston is committed to the humane treatment of animals throughout their lives, including during

the slaughtering process. He's looking to breed "calm, cool, collected, laid-back fatty pigs," and to then treat them humanely, up to the last moment of their lives. (And he says that he pauses to give thanks before the slaughter of each animal.)

But while he wants every consumer to understand what's behind the meat on their plate, he also understands what attracted most of the attendees: "Happy pigs taste great," he told the judges.

The result of Eggleston's breeding and management techniques is an animal with a fantastic amount of fat compared with the

usual supermarket pig, which attendees could see for themselves via a demonstration of the butchering of a whole pig carcass — and of course, taste for themselves in the chefs' creations.

Those ticket-buying attendees, along with judges from the food industry and media, got to choose the winner of the competition — who would be crowned Prince of Pork.

Announced to a cheering crowd while waiters gave out caramel popcorn made with bacon fat, the honor went to R.J. Cooper of Vidalia, whose offerings included posole (Mexican pork and hominy soup)

and a stuffed pork loin — and whose victory was perhaps all the more impressive because his dishes were presented last to the already pork-stuffed panel of judges.

Washington's Cochon 555 contest — named for its components: five chefs, five pigs ("cochon" in French) and five wine-makers — was the ninth of 10 competitions throughout the country. The next will be held June 14 in San Francisco; the date for a "grand cochon" is to be determined.

For a list of restaurants in the D.C. area that serve EcoFriendly's products, visit ecofriendly.com.

REAL ESTATE LICENSE
2009 CLASSES NOW FORMING
Limited Seating!
 Call Brenda Small—Manager
brenda.small@prudentialcarruthers.com


Uptown Office
*Flexible Class Dates**
*Call For Details**

202.362.3400
 4050 Chesapeake St. NW

Capital Hill Office
July 20th
through August 28th

 **Prudential** | Carruthers
 REALTORS®

Thomas Corcoran CRS, GRI

 Fourth generation Washingtonian with over 20 years experience. Specializing in selling homes in NW DC, Chevy Chase and Bethesda.




301-229-4000
301-320-8352
CorcoranGalleryOfHomes.com

W.C. & A.N. MILLER
 REALTORS®
 A Long & Foster Co.

Adams Morgan
Commercial Condominium
1745 Kalorama Road #101 **for Sale or for Rent**

Over 1100 square feet on first floor, zoned C2B. Currently divided into 3 offices, conference room, reception/waiting area, abundance of storage, private bath, great light. \$439,000 or \$2650 ++.
 Move-in condition.

For appt call Brooke Myers, 202-445-1011
 City Houses LLC
 202-234-1784 x 110

"My Specialty... YOU!"

INTEGRITY - SERVICE - PROFESSIONALISM

BILL PANICI, GRI
 HISTORIC HOMES SPECIALIST
 LICENSED IN DC, MD & VA
 20+ YEARS EXPERIENCE



"I sell homes the old-fashioned way... one-at-a-time."

202-277-4675
 202-326-1300
billpanici@aol.com



BIKER

From Page 15

break in Mississippi volunteering with homeless victims of Hurricane Katrina.

"Having a safe place to live can have such a positive impact on people's lives," he said. "You shouldn't have to spend half your paycheck for somewhere decent to live."

It was at a campus meeting of Habitat for Humanity last year that Mattera heard about Bike & Build, which partners with Habitat for some of its building projects.

"It seemed like a great way to combat this huge problem and a great way to push myself," he said. "After the presentation, I was the first one up asking for more information."

Bike & Build asks all participants to raise \$4,000 for their trips — both to finance their voyage and to contribute to the hundreds of thousands that the organization donates each year to needy communities. Last year, Mattera had only six weeks to raise the funds.

He went on a vigorous letter-writing campaign, soliciting potential donors for \$5 or \$10 contributions, and he eventually reached his goal. "I'd like to say it was all my brilliant ingenuity, but I credit my parents," he said. "They're fantastically popular people and reached out to their friends, who all thought

the cause was fantastic."

But money wasn't even his biggest hurdle. When he signed up the first time, Mattera's biking experience was limited to riding around his neighborhood as a child. In the six weeks before his trip from Jacksonville, Fla., to San Francisco, he had to learn how to handle himself on a road bike and stay energized on hours-long rides.

"I showed up at our orientation having no idea what to expect," he said.

The first few weeks on the road were grueling, but Mattera's body adapted quickly. "I regretted not training, but before I knew it, my body was used to going 70 to 80 miles per day."

On the road, the bikers rise at around 5 a.m. and pedal at their own pace until lunch. After a quick break, they ride on to their overnight host site, arriving at around 4 p.m. to cook, tune up their bikes or do other chores. The group also spends at least a dozen days of the trip constructing affordable homes.

"We put up walls, we paint, we dry-wall. Whoever is running that site tells us what they want us to do and we do it," Mattera said.

During the trip, bikers are encouraged to take their time. Along last year's hot southern route, Mattera's team occasionally stopped — to take a swim in a nearby stream or to eat fresh peaches from Georgia trees.

"It's really all about soaking in this gorgeous country," Mattera said. "Last year, we got into New Mexico and suddenly had to climb these enormous mountains. Then we had 20 miles with just us in the desert — it gives you an incredible sense of freedom."

Since its start in 2003 with two routes, Bike & Build has expanded to seven cross-country rides, each with four leaders and 28 riders. Last year's experience was so memorable that it prompted Mattera to sign up again — this time as a leader on the 3,707-mile route through the country's middle.

One of Mattera's jobs as leader is to find host sites that can offer his team lodging each night — usually a church or a community center. In return, the bikers give presentations and offer bike clinics in their host communities.

Now a seasoned cyclist, Mattera hopes to help new participants feel more confident about the journey.

"Being a leader, I'm equal parts excited and terrified," he said. "The same reason that the journey is so incredible is the same reason why it's so vulnerable. People get lost. Bikes break down. But the little things that can and do go wrong become the things that make the trip so fantastic in the end."


Mattera's trip will begin June 17, and he is still short of his fundraising goal. To donate or for more information, visit bikeand-build.org.

CHEVY CHASE
Open Sunday, June 7th 1-4 pm

NEW PRICE! JUST 3 BLOCKS TO METRO!
 Bright, charming, lovingly updated 4 BR/3.5 BA Colonial w/beautiful, serene yard & garden. Lovely LR w/frpl, formal DR overlooking deck & lush yard. Updated eat-in kitchen, 3 BR/2 BA on 2nd floor, spacious 4th BR w/skylights & excellent storage on 3rd. Finished lower level offers Rec room with fireplace, guest suite and exit to side yard. Off-street parking. Minutes to neighborhood amenities.

Offered at \$949,900

5113 42nd Street - Dir: N. Wisconsin, R. Garrison, L. 42nd to 5113


202-276-6902
202-234-4100 (o)
Pam.Ryan-Brye@longandfoster.com

PROVEN RESULTS • CREATIVE MARKETING
INTERIOR DESIGN • 24 YEARS EXPERIENCE



