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Rice flour has important role

Cuisine Ameressence

Seven-Course dinner, seven wines and a four-hour meal: Still in Colorado County!

It is hard to say that metropolis has come to Colorado County; that may be offensive to long-time or newcomer residents. Also, it really doesn't truthfully describe the largest residential development in the county.

But, what Jeannine and I enjoyed Saturday night at The Falls Country Club near Frelburg certainly ushers in a new description of the "quality of life" heretofore unavailable so close to home.

By special invitation, the managers of The Falls and its country club, asked representatives of area newspapers to join club members and other guests last Saturday night for the first in what they hope will be many evenings this season featuring the talents of their executive chef, C.T. Nice. And talents they are.

Saturday's affair also was hosted by Beringer Winery. Altogether, Chef Nice and the Beringer wines of California made one of the most enjoyable meals I have had since dining in a very old and very small restaurant in Ontario, Canada, during Christmas of 1975. Both occasions were four-hour meals.

As described by club manager Ted Shaw (not the weatherman), the evening was patterned after the "direction the wine and food industry is taking today." Albert Faggard, the winery representative, not only narrated the meal but provided historical perspective of the winery and wines.

His term for the menu was "a marriage of wine and food." For further explanation, a briefing by the club explains that the concept of Cuisine Ameressence developed from two key beliefs. One, the quality and diversity of food products available in America is unequalled in the world and the sophistication of our transportation lines and storage techniques has made it possible to enjoy fresh food products from all parts of the country. Secondly, the preparation and presentation of this fresh food should be one that explores the natural characteristics of the item and marries other flavors to the food which accentuates and enhances these characteristics.

Family connection

Over the years, as members of my family, and my uncle's family, grew up and moved around, we lost track of each other, except with brief news notes from our parents about each other's activities. It was thus that I knew my cousin Dean Fearing had become a chef, studied at the American Culinary Institute (publishers of my favorite cookbook), and "entered" in one of the several five-star French restaurants in Cincinnati, Ohio, after continuing his studies in Paris, France.

So, when Jeannine and I were making plans to attend one of

the winter meetings of the Texas Press Association in Dallas several years ago, we included a stop at Agnew's, which was featured in an article my dad had sent me about Nouveau American Cuisine. Cousin Dean was the executive chef there. The thought at that time, as I recall, was that the new generation of chefs was turning away from the "classic" European ingredients and preparation methods, and exploring American ingredients as well as new combinations. Dean and fellow chefs called it Nouveau American Cuisine.

At the Falls, explanation of their term of Cuisine Ameressence said it became evident that the traditional methods of sauce preparation were resulting in products that masked, rather than enhanced, the characteristics of the prepared item. Consequently, it became necessary to minimize the use of starches and oils as thickening agents and develop techniques which allowed the creation of "new" mother sauces.

Rice flour's role:

In the production of these new sauces, essences (or foundations) are made, then clarified with a process similar to the clarification of a consommé, and the clarified stock is thickened, utilizing hydrated rice flour.

As the briefing from the Falls states: "It was found that the natural characteristics of rice flour provided a high level of thickening for a small amount of product and that the residual taste from the flour was minimal in comparison to other methods."

The essences which are now used are poultry, seafood, light veal, dark veal, lamb and game. They are modified using the major flavor groups, the utilization of which is similar in analogy to the use of pigments to derive paint colors. If the essence is thought of as the base, or plain white, and the flavor groups such as wines and spices are considered the coloring pigments, it can be seen that the combinations of these different flavors will have been segregated and refined. The chef then is able to "shade" his sauces in the same fashion that an artist shades his paints to fit the particular mood.

The end result of Cuisine Ameressence is a product in which the freshest possible food item is acquired and presented in a form where the sauce is tailored or shaded to enhance the unique characteristics of that item.

Putting it in practice

What we and some forty other people (including four other couples from Eagle Lake) enjoyed Saturday evening was an evening of palatable entertainment which indeed was a "marriage" of food and wine.

Consider the menu. After the first course of items served at the reception, the staff served sautéed medallions of veal with tomato fondue

swiss cheese, and a chardonnay veal essence with chateaufort.

Accompanying was Beringer's 1983 Chardonnay wine. To someone who may enjoy such a meal once or twice a decade, it is difficult to pick up the nuances described by the Beringer representative. I enjoy wine with a meal, but am not a student of the subtle tastes that may be there. Mr. Faggard described those tastes, thus his narration increased interest in the various courses and accompanying wines.

After the next course that was a consommé of Sole flavored with garlic, shallots, saffron and sweet basil garnished with lobster, shrimp and bay scallops finished with Chardonnay (and served with a 1982 private reserve Chardonnay) there was a 20 minute intermission. Actually, we enjoyed the opportunity to move around a bit, but I don't have the slightest idea of the time.

After resuming, we were served, as a palate cleanser, green Thompson and red flame grapes macerated in Cabernet Sauvignon and then frozen. That was followed by roast loin of red deer with venison essence and cabernet finished with a cranberry chignon with game glaze. A small salad was served followed by fan gaufrettes topped with cabernet port ice cream and macerated strawberries. The wines, in the order of service, were Beringer 1982 Knights Valley Cabernet Sauvignon, 1980 Private Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon, 1985 North Coast White Zinfandel, and 1983 Cabernet Sauvignon Port.

In summation

I probably could go on for another third of this page. It has been two years since I've really looked around in Dallas, and while I was impressed then because of what I could see under construction, the reality of enjoying the fruits of the developer's labors was immensely refreshing.

Carl Gully's land, shaped into a golf course by professional golfer Jay Kiviere (who lives in Cut Spring), and homes and buildings with a wonderful architectural touch to match the surroundings, is something Colorado County has not seen before. The fear that Houston would one day spread out and consume our rural lifestyle need not be a fear in this case. The county is constructing a road to the multi-million dollar complex nestled in the woods and rolling hills, and when the residential population there starts to flourish, it will be a valuable addition as much as it is an enjoyable one now.

One of these days, perhaps we too can enjoy it regularly with our family.

—John Fearing

Democratic County Commissioner Candidates Answer Questions

Voters in most of The Headlight's readership area will go to the election booth for the second time this spring, May 3rd to be exact. Their decision now concerns several county positions, including

that of Precinct Four commissioner. To help voters make their decision, we have asked the three Democratic candidates several questions. You can compare the answers. Because Bruce

Johnson is the lone Republican precinct four commissioner candidate, and faces no opposition in the primary, he was not questioned at this time. Mr. Johnson will be questioned in the Fall.

The Questions:

Paul Causey



L.J. Sonny Spanihel



Bill Stiles



1. Why are you seeking the job of county commissioner?

1. I am running for county commissioner because I intend to do more than maintain roads and levy taxes. Our county is faced with some very serious problems which will take innovative thinking and action to solve. We face a declining tax base, high unemployment and pollution of our lands and water resources. We must take steps now to provide a future for the young people of our county. We must take steps now to preserve the quality of life for all our citizens. The citizens of Precinct Four have the right to feel secure about their lives, hopes and future in Colorado County. I have the energy, enthusiasm, and integrity needed to help move this county forward.

1. Primarily, this has been a goal of mine for quite a number of years—to become involved in service to the people. I have had a number of years' involvement in semi-public work, as with the Eagle Lake Fire Department and Chamber of Commerce, and I have enjoyed working for and with people. The job is a full-time one, and I will be able to be a full time commissioner if elected. This would continue my belief that I should be doing things that I feel are contributions to the area in which I live. All this applies to running for the office of county commissioner, for which I am qualified, because of my previous experience with people and governmental functions.

1. I feel my experience in road maintenance and construction over the last 27 years will be beneficial in future.

Two things are of deep concern to me: One, is road projects that we have been able to keep up in the past.

As we look at the role of any elected official, the person not only is to serve the public with services they want, but give them services they can afford. In modern politics, people have been promised, and now expect, more than the tax base can pay for. It is my job in Colorado County to serve the people with a realistic view of what their tax money can buy.

Two, that our local criminal justice departments function well—county and justice courts—as well as the sheriff's department and constable force we pay for at local level... It is my feeling this portion of government will become more important to each individual in the future, so the commissioners need to see that these systems operate effectively.

2. After many years of relatively quiet election activity with the precinct four commissioner spot, why do you think there are three Democratic candidates this year?

2. I think the number of people running for this position is based on this fact that we have gone too long in Precinct Four without positive and receptive leadership, and without a plan for the future of our county.

2. I can only speak for myself. I felt this was a time when our county needed representation in all aspects of the responsibilities of a commissioner, not just in Precinct Four. Each commissioner is a part of the board of other precinct commissioners representing all citizens, whether they live in a city area or a rural area; each, and all, need representation.

2. I would hope there are at least three candidates in every election at all times... Democracy can only function with ideas and platforms presented to our constituents. I am unable to speak for the other candidates, but for myself, I want to continue to be the precinct four commissioner to be able to continue the work the electorate has trusted to me to do.

3. What are the major responsibilities of a county commissioner?

3. The major responsibility of any elected county official is to represent all the citizens of the precinct by being accessible and receptive to the ideas and programs that will benefit this county. A commissioner is responsible, as mandated by the state, to take care of county roads and provide for adequate drainage and other projects with regard to citizens' safety and well being. But a commissioner can do more.

As Precinct Four commissioner I will act as a watchdog to see that our land and water resources are protected from hazardous waste and pollution; I will make Precinct Four an example of cleanliness and organization, and I will represent Precinct Four far beyond the boundaries of the territory.

3. All of the services to the people in the precinct have to be considered and overseen what has to be done. This includes not only road building, but also drainage work. In the Newtown and in the Matthews areas drainage is a big problem. The people in Alletton and Altair have to be considered for their needs too. A commissioner has a responsibility, too, with the people of Eagle Lake, through a cooperative agreement (between the city and county) some services can be provided as long as one stays within guidelines and applicable laws.

I feel, as commissioner, one represents all the people. They are all taxpayers. Not too many years ago a commissioner was strictly a maintenance person for a precinct. Today, there is much more responsibility. During commissioners' meetings many proposals are made; it is important to know regulations and laws affecting each proposal so decisions can be made in the best interest of all the county as well as the constituents of one's precinct.

3. There are four primary services that the county taxpayers are furnishing for their citizens... law enforcement (Sheriff and constables, courts of the county, road maintenance and construction of county roads, and your county and district clerks which are the record keepers. It is the commissioner's responsibility to assess the taxes from our citizens to furnish these services and to provide guidance and management.

4. Should the county have a role in economic development, which some citizens are interested in promoting, to spur controlled future growth?

4. The county should play an active role in economic development. Our citizens have the right to expect the highest quality plan for well-managed economic growth. At all times we should strive to enhance our existing businesses. I have the interest and the desire to pursue such a plan. The services provided by our county government are directly related to the well being of our citizens.

4. I think the county should be involved in economic development of the area as much as possible. The commissioner should support efforts to develop different types of economic growth.

I feel that more could be done in cooperation with the city and, as a taxpayer, personally feel that city residents may not be getting their share of the tax benefits. Again, laws are specific about what a county can and cannot do within a city, but the spirit of cooperation should be there, and will be there should I be elected.

4. Yes, in some areas the state constitution allows counties to provide services, for instance, in the past, Precinct Four has provided paved roads to the three major gravel company operations in our county. While the plans now are closed, I would be glad to do similar things in the future... after all it helped those employees get to work which is the base of any economy.

One thing I am particularly proud of... Precinct Four paved two runways of our airport early in my administration. That gave the Eagle Lake area, at that time, the only paved runway in 40 miles.

So you see there are things a county commissioner can do to help local economy. However, I don't think it is the role of the tax payer to pay his portion of the taxes, while companies are given "tax free status" just to attract them here. That is not fair. The companies that will be looking at locating here will be looking at our tax rate, and the fact that our county, for many years, was one of five in 254 that was debt free. Those companies then know that the taxes they are asked to pay are fair.

5. Because of the steep decline in taxable property, especially in the mineral (Oil & Gas) and gravel areas, what is going to happen to county taxes, and county services, in the next year?

5. The decline in taxable property will be a loss in the area of \$131,000 revenue to the county. I believe it will be possible to supply the services now available without raising taxes. It will be difficult to expand and fund any new programs. I am quite confident that we can find solutions to these problems and ensure future prosperity.

5. I would like to think an increase in taxes would not be necessary; I am against raising taxes. I believe a review of all programs in the county with an eye to holding the line is in order before we look toward raising taxes. I have had the opportunity to review the present county budget, and feel familiar with how the county is operating at this time.

5. I would hope we would look further into the future than one year.

I am committed to keeping our county taxes from going up. My record in the courthouse has been to find cost-effective measures to operate. I feel we can ask all departments to operate with a reduced budget—which will provide necessary services, but perhaps at a slower pace.

Miss Frnka to compete on state level

(4-29-1938)

In the regional meet at San Marcos, Martha Grace Killough and Evelyn Mae Frnka of the Eagle Lake High School won the right to enter the state finals to be held in Austin on May 6-7, by defeating Georgetown entry of E. Cook and E. Black by scores of 6-0, 6-1... Little Miss Alyne Wink was painfully injured in a fall from her bicycle Friday striking her face with force on the pavement near the home of Mrs. Horace McRee. Two of Alyne's front teeth were knocked out and two others were broken.

Mrs. O.J. Wintermann was severely injured Saturday when a horse she was riding fell with her out in the Cavendish Addition...

Engstrom appointed to Naval ROTC

(4-26-1962)

John T. Engstrom, Garwood High School senior, has been appointed to the U.S. Navy ROTC at the University of Texas... Mr. and Mrs. Paul Cherry will open Skull Creek Restaurant in the Skull Creek building, in Altair Sunday... Stromquist Farm Dairy, located 15 miles northeast of Eagle Lake, will begin home deliveries in the area...

Les Eiers, owner of the Latta Drug Store, has erected a new sign for the store which will operate as the Eagle Lake Drugs... Mrs. H.L. Parker and Mrs. L.M. Green honor high school seniors with a backyard party April 17...

Lets Look Back...

48 years ago

Willie Hodge was bitten on the right hand by a black tail moccasin, while he was pulling strips for planting from a sweet potato bed... A pretty and charming complement of last week was the formal dancing party given on Friday evening by Misses Erlene Austin and Eula Reiger at the Austin Hall. It included members of the high school set and a few of their out of town friends.

Lets Look Back...

24 years ago

Mr. and Mrs. B.D. Anderson honored their daughter, Alice, with a barbecue dinner. She is a senior at Eagle Lake High School... Herbie Hanks of Eagle Lake and Roy Forester of Lissie were among the five boys voted as most handsome at Wharton County Junior College.

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Property owners may face tax hike

State Capitol Highlights

Officials split

Several state officials are still split over how to spend \$424.8 million offshore oil windfall, but the courts will decide.

The difference of opinion pits Gov. White, Lt. Gov. Bill Hobby, Speaker Gib Lewis and Treasurer Ann Richards on one side with Bullock and Land Commissioner Gary Maun on the other.

Where does Attorney General Jim Mattox stand? He's the man caught in the middle. Mattox will issue a legal opinion on the complicated

issue, but the courts may still have to rule.

Mauro filed suit in state district court to keep Richards from depositing the check in the state's general revenue fund.

He contends the state's original lawsuit to claim the offshore money from the feds was filed on behalf of the Permanent School Fund. He and Bullock want the money deposited there, and Bullock said he won't certify it as general revenue.

Farmers quitting Agriculture Commissioner Jim Hightower reported 9,000 Texas farmers were driven out of business last year, and that one in six believes 1986 will be his last year to farm.

Hightower said last year was the worst for farmers since the Great Depression. The loss rate in Texas is

more than 173 farmers each week.

Hightower also agreed to have his agency sponsor the July 4 Farm Aid concert planned by Willie Nelson. He asked University of Texas officials to let Willie use Memorial Stadium. They're thinking about it.

Teacher make-up test

The Texas Education Agency has agreed to let some 1,400 Texas teachers who want to retake the controversial state literacy test.

Meanwhile, teachers should begin learning by May 1 whether they passed the test. A North Carolina firm is grading the exams. Teachers who flunk can get a second chance on June 28.

The agency reported complaints from more than 300 test sites about adverse test conditions.

Texas farmers marked: endangered species

To the Editor:

With the loud sounds and cries of terrorism ringing there is a silent tragedy that still hangs over Texas and America. The crisis of the American farmer is still very real and not gone away.

Agriculture Commissioner Jim Hightower has called Texas farmers the "endangered species." Texas farmers just finished their worst year since the Great Depression, the farm crisis in Texas will be worse in 1986.

The Midwest was the hardest hit and the first to make national headlines in the fall of 1985 and spring of 1986. Then it began happening in all rural America. Bank notes were due and no extensions to plant new crops. Families were losing land inherited for two and three generations, with a tremendous sense of failure.

How did this happen? It was not suddenly. In the early 1970's there was formed the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). In the early 70's farm profits were good. Suddenly inflation began to grow, and...

Our Secretary of State made some bad calls, farmers over extended themselves and their bankers and loan agencies went along with their decisions. There, also, have been five grain embargoes. Farmers were selling at very low prices, having to buy with extremely high interest rates, while the storage bins were overflowing. We are the only country which has a major program of reducing production, yet we import alot of farm commodities.

In the United States agriculture is the nation's largest industry, exceeding one trillion dollars. It has been said agriculture is the mother of industry. Yet, across the nation, farm bankruptcies continue to increase, rural banks continue to fail, and the entire farm credit system is in trouble. This affects the entire economy and is felt at every level.

The silent tragedy is the pain and stress experienced within the farm family. This unique and basic way of life is being disrupted. Stress between husband and wife, divorce, suicide, loss of farm, income, self respect

Mrs. Frank (Anna Lee) Higgins