



THE LATEST BUZZ FROM THE BIRCHWOOD CAFE

good real food

C A F E

February • 2010

3311 East 25th Street • Minneapolis • 612 722 4474 • www.birchwoodcafe.com

Birchwood Buzz/What's Happening!

Fri, Sat & Sun, Feb 12th, 13th & 14th • Love is in the air!

Come on by with a special someone for aphrodisiac delights, wine pairings and decadent desserts all weekend long! **Friday and Saturday evening** try our small plate menu — romantic savories loaded with aphrodisiacs (we claim no responsibility for actions after eating!) Don't forget **Saturday Night Pizza Party!** 2 pizzas + bottle of wine for \$30. Lastly, we're marking Valentine's Day proper with **Sunday Date Night** specials: either 2 pizzas + bottle of wine OR 2 burgers + pitcher of beer for \$30. **Come hungry for love; the fun starts @ 5pm!**

Sat. Feb. 20th Farmer Meet-n-Eat; Lori Karis, creator of Sweet Cheeks Baby Food 1-3pm.

I'm a cyclist, we have a Bike Team. I own a dog, we bake dog treats. I have a baby and Birchwood Cafe serves Sweet Cheeks locally sourced, locally made organic Baby Food! Lori Karis' passion for healthy babies is readily apparent in her "farm to cradle" approach to feeding babies, kids & grown ups too! Starting with *Newbies* (single, easy to digest fruits & veggies,) progressing to *Combos* (fruits & veggies mixed) then for toddlers, *Baby Roles'* (adding in grains and legumes-Lily LOVES the parsnip pear & millet) and *Sweet Sneaks* for older kids (veggies purees to "sneak" into your child's fave foods for added nutrition). So bring your tiny tot...or not. Lori will also be sampling her *Sweet Simmers*, tasty soups for us grown ups. We feel good serving Sweet Cheeks baby food; one less thing for busy parents dining out to worry about AND you can feel good about what every family member is eating. Birchwood babies have SWEET CHEEKS!

The Story of Shepherd's Way Farms

If you've eaten it you know! Jodie and Steven of Shepherd's Way Farm produce some of the most rich and flavorful artisan cheeses to be found. The story behind their cheese—how it led to their pioneering role in Slow Money, makes it seem that much more miraculous. In 1994 Steven and Jodi Ohlsen Read created Shepherd's Way Farms, a values driven, farmstead cheese dairy. Beginning with just a small flock of sheep they created one of the largest dairy flocks in the country. Their sheep's milk cheese, naturally richer and more flavorful, quickly found national awards and praises. In the midst of their success disaster struck—in 2005 an arson fire destroyed their livestock housing and tragically killed a large number of their flock. Despite the adversity, Jodi, Steven and their family continue to make a limited quantity of cheese and work to rebuild their farm. In their efforts to fund their restoration they have held to the same values with which operate their farm. This path led them to be local pioneers in what would become Slow Money, a concept that extends sustainability and connectedness into the financial world. We applaud Shepherd's Way Farms for their deep rooted values and their wonderful cheese. You can find it at specialty food stores and food coops; at farmers markets in Minneapolis and St. Paul; and of course at Birchwood, where we serve it on the menu and host a monthly drop site for their growing cheese CSA.

An Interview with Steven Read

We're rooting for you and Jodi and your rebuilding efforts, can you give us an update? It has been a really exciting time at the farm recently. We have been lambing for three weeks, making cheese, having cheese classes and tours and working on Farm Haven, the LLC we established to help secure the real estate. In fact, this week we had our first two commitments

for membership in Farm Haven. The first member, I should mention, we met at the Birchwood's "We HEART our Community" dinner last month. Since the fire five years ago, we've worked hard to slowly rebuild. The next steps are to replacing the sheep and barns that were lost in the fire, increase cheese making, and fund the real estate. **What is slow money & what are you hoping to accomplish with your slow money effort?** Slow Money is an effort founded by Woody Tasch to change the way people look at money, food, farming and the environment and how they are all related. Can someone accept a lower return or a longer payback if there is an important principle or belief that is being strengthened? How can non-monetary benefits be valued in addition to traditional financial considerations? Shepherd's Way was using Slow Money principles before there was a name for it. We organized Farm Haven to help facilitate the participation of people who share our beliefs in family farms, sustainable agriculture, slow food and a healthier world. We would rather have our customers and supporters be our bankers, knowing that together we are pooling our efforts to feed our world, in many ways. **How can people get involved with Shepherd's Way Farms or slow money?** People can get involved with Shepherd's Way Farm by beginning a conversation with us, learning more about what we are doing and the opportunities we are developing. If they want to know more about Slow Money specifically, there is a Slow Money blog online (blog.slowmoneyalliance.org) and Woody Tasch's book is a great starting point. **What sets your cheese making and farming practices apart from others?** We see the whole process at Shepherd's Way, from grass to milk to cheese to customer. This is true for our chickens and our pigs as well. Each step is done with sustainable principles in mind and we are always challenging ourselves to find new ways to better our farm and our community. Before we bought our first ewe, Jodi and I created a vision for Shepherd's Way that reflects the holistic nature of what we do and fifteen years later we still use that same vision, word for word: *"At Shepherd's Way Farms, we believe that there is a way to live that combines hard work, creativity, respect for the land and animals, and a focus on family and friends. We believe the small family-based farm still has a place in our society. Everything we do, everything we make, is in pursuit of this goal."* **How has the CSA been received by customers, what feedback are you getting?** Our Cheese CSA has been really well received. Customers love picking up their shares and discovering what is inside each month. We have nearly seventy members and hope to keep growing. We love hearing how people have been using the cheeses. **What has it been like working with restaurants?** We have great restaurant customers throughout the United States. It is always fun to hear back from customers who have had our cheeses at restaurants in Portland, San Francisco, Chicago or D.C. There are few restaurants like the Birchwood, however, where we have a chance to really get to know and to work with the staff. **Tell us more about the cheesemaking classes at the farm.** We just held two classes, one in January and one in February. Due to demand, a March class is likely. Check the website for upcoming classes or sign up as a Farm Friend to receive regular email updates. People can also schedule a group class at the farm or a location of their choice. Just call or email for more information. **Learn more at www.shepherdswayfarms.com or email Steven & Jodi at farm-friends@earthlink.net.**



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Meet Birchwood All-Star Chef Marshall Paulsen

A story you haven't heard: Quite a lot of luck and happenstance brought Marshall to be our Chief Culinary Officer. Back in mid 2007 we suddenly lost our previous chef. Restaurants can be difficult and unpredictable, they'll keep you on your toes! Thus early that spring morning, Tracy donned a chef coat and planted herself in the kitchen, ready to face the new challenge as any restaurateur worth their salt must. Then a twist of fate...a smiling Marshall walks in at 6am, clad in chef attire and ready for a full days work. Unbeknownst to us, he had set up a working interview with the previous chef as a sous chef applicant. The timing was uncanny, his skills self-evident and his resume spoke for itself (Marshall, a St. Paul Native, had most recently been the Chef at the venerable Creamery in Wisconsin.) Yet it has been the 2 1/2 years of hard work that has really shown us how lucky we were. With his talents and abilities, Marshall quickly learned the Birchwood way and improved on it. He brought great new menu ideas, more farmer relationships and some classic St. Paul style. Though he has written features in the Newsletter many times, Marshall has never been interviewed as our all star...well better late than never! Thanks for all the good real food!

What is your favorite thing about working at the Birchwood?

There are many great things about working here; the employees, the customers, the farmers... but I think the best thing for me is the opportunity for continual growth. Working with the changing growing seasons to develop menus & use fresh ingredients and to work with so many different people on the Birchwood team gives me the feeling that I'm in a constant state of improvement & growth as a chef in many different ways. It's never been boring and there are opportunities to learn something new every day. **What was a favorite day @ Birchwood?** The We HEART Our Community dinner this past December stands out for me in particular. It was great seeing so many of our friends, families, coworkers & farmers all interacting and dining with each other that night. **What is your dream job?** Chef! **If you could be on any reality TV show, what would it be?** The Jersey Shore. **What is your Hollywood theme song?** I'm Not Like Everybody Else, by The Kinks **What do you do when you're not at work?** Eat! **Which other twin city restaurants do you like?** I love The Craftsman, Grand Café, Strip Club, The Creamery in Downsville, WI, The Nook in St. Paul, Aqua in White Bear, 112 Eatery, Brasa, Lucia's, Sanctuary, and I did have one of the best dinners of my entire life at Alma last month. The list is long and it all depends on who I'm with and what kind of mood I'm in.

What is your fondest memory of a meal you've made at the Birchwood? Every time we do a big Earth Day or Anniversary dinner. The kitchen really works & grooves well together and the guests are always so gracious & appreciative. **Favorite Birchwood Dessert?** Hmm... Gotta go with the Carrot Cake. **Where do you get your inspiration to create an ever changing menu of Good Real Food?** Farmers, friends, cookbooks, other chefs, past meals, cooking shows, websites, flavor affinities (what ingredients work well with each other), my mom, my grandma, an unfamiliar ingredient or technique, old classics, new trends, intense brainstorming, random thoughts that just

pop into my head, and the collaboration of everyone here at the Birchwood with whom I work! **If you could have any superpower, what would it be?** I'd be a Fire starter. Some of our pilot lights go out at times. **Want to give a shout out to a coworker?** Yeah, Zach for being a hard, fast worker, who's been here for some time and has always been able to lighten the mood & make everyone laugh.

Eating Local During the Winter? How you ask? Easy!

I've been asked plenty of times how we're able to change our menu so frequently during the cold months of January, February & March while still staying true to our commitment to using locally grown ingredients. It's true that the summer months (especially August & September) bring a much larger abundance of freshly picked fruits & vegetables, however there is still much to choose from around this time. Along with all of the always-in-season Wild Acres turkey & chicken, Minnesota & Wisconsin cheeses, milk, Whole Grain Milling flours, beans & grains, Fischer Farm pork, Shepherd's Way lamb, Hope butter & Thousand Hills beef available, there are also the storage crops that DragSmith, Featherstone & Earthen Path store up for us during the growing season so we'll have something tasty to eat in the winter. Some of these include apples, squashes, pears & kale but also many root vegetables like radishes, beets, celery root, carrots... all of which actually get sweeter in the colder months. The reason for the sweetening? The colder weather converts the starches into sugars to help the vegetables get through the colder months. Their survival technique is our flavor gain. So rest assured, that if you're worried about eating local in the winter months, Birchwood will have your fix. But where else you ask? You'll find a local bounty for the pantry and the crisper drawer at local coops. The Saint Paul & Minneapolis farmers market's go all year round (www.mplsfarmersmarket.com & www.stpaulfarmersmarket.com)! And if you're jonesing for some Farmer CSA, you should know that the Birchwood Cafe is also a pick-up site for Shepherd's Way Cheese CSA. For more even more information on eating locally year-round (and kind of a gourmet locavore support group), check out Simple, Good & Tasty at simplegoodandtasty.com. *Marshall

Where is the Birchwood Cafe? ... and where does their food come from?

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Mon thru Fri • 7am - 9pm
 Sat • 8am - 9pm Sun • 9am - 8pm C A F E
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