



STEVE STOVER

THE COLUMBUS RESTAURANT SCENE - TIPS & TRENDS

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Rich Simpson introduced today's speaker, **Steve Stover**. Steve is a long time UA resident and a "recovering lawyer". Today he focuses on the food and restaurant scene in Columbus and central Ohio. He teaches cooking at the Franklin Park Conservatory and judges for many charity events. He previously made regular contributions to the Bob Connors show on WTVN and was the Ohio editor for Zagat Restaurants Guides.

Steve noted that there are 100+ reviews on the wosu.org/chef website. There are many recipes that have been added over many years.

There has been an absolute sea change in the Columbus restaurant scene in the past ten years. We have gone from Midwestern meat and potatoes to world cuisine with excellent Japanese, Thai, Vietnamese and Tibetan options. In addition, there's a Filipino restaurant at North Star and King Avenue as well as African/Somali and more choices.

Thirty five year ago Cincinnati was the Queen City of Ohio restaurants. We used to drive there to go to the Maisonette and the Terrace Room at the top of the Hilton hotel. Columbus began to arrive about this time. We are now the top restaurant city in Ohio. We have had an explosion of chef driven restaurants. Many restaurants are relatively new. The Columbus Monthly top 10 restaurants include 8 which are less than 10 years old and,

among the group there are four restaurants less than two years old and two which are less than one year old.

Eight of the top ten are among the newer restaurants. They include Veritas, Watershed Kitchen and Bar, Wolf's Ridge Brewing, Service Bar, Commune, Gallerie Bar & Bistro, Guild House and Ambrose & Eve. Two older restaurants round out the top ten - The Refectory and G Michaels.

Steve mentioned many restaurants from high end to everyday dining spots which exemplify the variety and diversity of the Columbus restaurant scene. He noted that Columbus has begun to claim a spot in the regional and national spotlight for its dining scene. He cited positive articles which have appeared in Forbes, the New York Times, Open Table and the Chicago Tribune about the Columbus restaurant scene.

There were 100 new restaurants and bars in Columbus in 2019 and about three dozen closings of significance.

Steve mentioned DelMar SolCal Kitchen and Lincoln Social as newer entries into the foodie scene in Columbus. He also discussed Fireproof, Nosh on High (in the old Lazarus building), Woodhouse and the restaurant at RH (Restoration Hardware) at Easton.

Steve talked about Degrees at Columbus State Community College - in the Mitchell building. The recently opened restaurant is operated by CSCC students. The existence of Mitchell Hall and its accompanying programs promise to take Columbus' food and Beverage and hospitality industry to new heights. Degrees received good reviews from Stover. The menu is very straightforward, "nothing fancy but really well done".

Among the upcoming restaurants are Preston's, Pearl in Bridge Park, No Soliciting (members only), TownHall and the Budd Dairy Food Hall. The Budd Dairy Food Hall features nine entrepreneurs (not all of whom are brand new) and several bars.



GREETERS

February 4

Matt Hare
Steven Schoeny

February 11

Dan Ralley
Jack Cotter

February 18

Barri Jones
Sandra Cotter

REGISTRATION DESK

February 4

Chris Taylor
Tracy Harbold

February 11

Andy Livingston
Tom Westfall

February 18

Jim Winfree
Kevin Brown

CALENDAR

February 4 | Scioto CC

Dina Lopez, Mid-Ohio Regional
Planning Commission
*Columbus to Chicago in 35 minutes? The Hyperloop and Rapid
Speed Transportation Initiative*
Host: Milt Lustnauer

February 11 | Scioto CC

Todd Yaross, CEO
Terrasana Cannabis Co.
*The Business of
Medical Marijuana*
Host: Brad DeHays

February 18 | Scioto CC

Dr. Brian Griffin,
The Arnold Sports Festival
Host: Rudy Whipp

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OUR NEXT MEETING

February 4th
Scioto Country Club

Upper Arlington
Rotary
Club



STEVE STOVER

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Significant closings last year include Worthington Inn and China Dynasty.

Trends in the restaurant/dining industry include rooftop bars (Columbus now has more than two dozens), distillery dining, delivery dining and, ultimately, virtual restaurants which have a kitchen but no accompanying dining facility. Steve has friends who predict that we'll have the "Amazonization" of the food business which will

feature online ordering of our food needs except for fresh foods like vegetable, dairy and meats. In this scenario, smaller, local retailers (such as Huffman's) might thrive as the preferred source for the fresh items.

Steve's Valentine's Day recommendations included The Refectory, G Michaels, Ocean Club, Hyde Park and Barcelona.

The Meeting



President **Herb Gillen** opened the meeting and asked **John Cleland** to offer the invocation and lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

John Hansel introduced visiting Rotarian **Jim Lynch** from the Tri Village club.

Molly Fontana introduced her guest **Peggy Bellows**; **Tracy Harbold** introduced **Amberly Wolber**; **Michelle Hoyle** introduced **Cindy Kirkland** and **Bob Long** introduced his guest **Tina Husted**.

Prior to the meeting's start, **Mike Kull** renamed the folks sitting at the registration desk as the "Peanut Gallery". The "gallery" felt compelled to applaud and react in unison to the festivities from that point forward.

President Gillen reminded us of the upcoming Rotary Roundtable next week – on February 4 at 10:30 Am. We'll hear from **Dr Mike Jopling**, Anesthesiologist who will discuss the effects of Anesthesia on brain health following surgery.

The next club social event will be held at Pins Mechanical in downtown Columbus on Saturday, February 8 from 6:30 to 8:30. Spouses and kids are certainly welcome. Details and costs will be forthcoming in an email. In the meantime, please mark your calendar. You can contact **Matt Penrod** for additional details.

Save the date of February 11 for a service opportunity at the Homeless Families Foundation.

We were reminded about the Membership Madness Campaign which is currently underway. Information about the campaign was distributed last week via email. Everyone in the club has been assigned to a team to help bring in new members. In an effort to help the campaign the club's Board has designated February as "Free Guest February". Every member is allowed to bring up to two guests at no charge during the month of February.

We had a new twist on our "Getting to Know You" segment this week. Herb resisted the notion that the session be called a "Senior Moment". Today we heard from one of our senior members rather than from a newer member.

Don Trotier was asked to help us get to know a little bit more about him. He shared details about growing up in northern Wisconsin – about 200 miles north of Madison. He was the first member of his family to graduate from high school and college. It took some serious persuasion by his paternal grandmother to convince his father that he should be allowed to go to college. He graduated from Eau Claire State Teachers College (now the University of Wisconsin Eau Claire).

While he was growing up Don worked at riding stables where he did everything from mucking stalls to eventually leading riders on the local trails. He also did barrel racing and quarter horse racing. When he was 14 he suffered major injuries and there was some thought that he would not walk again. He recovered sooner and more completely than expected and returned to barrel and quarter horse racing. Don shared his career path which included coaching at the high school level (he had been a multi-sport athlete during his school days). His stops along the way included Dow Corning in Midland, Michigan; Chemical Abstracts; the American Chemical Society; Philips Industries and the Ohio College Library Center (now OCLC) in Columbus.



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Notes and Announcements



Don Trotier shared the difficult news that **Wendell Ellenwood** has relapsed after what appeared to be a successful pacemaker implant. He is now in palliative care where he will spend the rest of his days with us. (Editor's note: Wendell passed away the afternoon of 1/28. We will send out information about services, which are expected to be held sometime Saturday 2/1 at Trinity United Methodist)



John Huneck announced a meal service date next Wednesday, February 5 at the YWCA Family Center. Signup sheets were on the tables or contact John if you can help. Time commitment is roughly 5:30 to 7:30 PM.

Steve Lichtblau introduced **Dr. Jack Popovich** who shared some facts about Columbus state community college and the first-ever Franklin County bond issue on the upcoming March ballot. Handouts were provided with additional details.

February 4th Rotary Roundtable:

BRAIN HEALTH AND CHANGES FOLLOWING SURGERY AND ANESTHESIA

Please join Rotary Roundtable February 4th at 10:30 at Scioto CC as Dr. Mike Jopling, Anesthesiologist, will be discussing postsurgery mental changes and confusion following surgery. He will help provide some insight on how the brain responds to the stress of surgery and anesthesia and what can be done before, during and after surgery to minimize the problem.

Homeless Families Foundation February Volunteer Support

Tuesday, February 11th 5:30 – 7:30

We need 8-10 Rotarians, family members or guests to help at HFF, To do: needs within the HFF food pantry, move-in kit supply room and potentially cleaning/sanitizing Dowd Education Center classrooms. Children 11 and older are welcome to help with this. Contact **Herb Gillen** at herb@herbgillen.com to register to help.



Rotary February Social Pins Mechanical Downtown

February 8 @ 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm

Join your Rotarian friends at Pins Mechanical for an evening of fun and fellowship at Pins Mechanical Downtown (141 N 4th St, Columbus, OH 43215). Spouses, kids and grandkids are also invited for this social and this would be a great opportunity to invite a guest and their family.

Cost and registration information will be posted soon.
Contact **Matt Penrod** for additional information at mattpenrod@me.com