



Les Dames d'Escoffier
INTERNATIONAL



Founded in 2013

Ideibirmingham.org

Summer 2020

President's Note

I hope this finds you safe and well.

Honestly, I have struggled with what to say beyond that.

But we're all struggling right now, aren't we? In one way or another.

Things are uncertain. First the pandemic, then the protests. It's like the world is broken. Some of us are scared; some of us are lonely. Some are really, really tired of homeschooling kids. Some are overwhelmed with worry about their businesses, their families, their friends, their employees, their community, their country, their health. In our struggles, we are most definitely in this together.

I've had moments when the present felt almost unbearable, the future unimaginable. And, yet I am hopeful because of the kindness and perseverance I've seen from my fellow Dames.

As I was writing this letter, I got an email from Idie Hastings saying that Hot & Hot's tomato stack is back. Curbside. And I know she and Chris teamed up with Senator Doug Jones and his wife, Louise, to deliver meals from OvenBird to the heroes taking care of the Covid-19 patients at St. Vincent's. That started me thinking about

A farm-fresh perspective at Snow's Bend Farm



Dame Margaret Ann Snow and her husband, David, started Snow's Bend Farm in 2004. Now, their produce is available in farmers' markets and on the menus of top Birmingham restaurants. Read her story on page 14.

continued on page 4, see Letter

\$20,000 in Scholarships and Grants Awarded

By Rosemary Dallam

LDEI Birmingham's scholarship and grant giving totaled \$20,000 in 2020, with \$17,000 of that in scholarships to young women attending community colleges and four-year universities throughout Alabama.

The chapter also awarded a \$3,000 entrepreneur grant to Jennifer Ryan who owns The Blueroot Company, a quick-healthy eatery specializing in fresh, colorful, produce-forward dishes including salads, grain bowls, breakfast bites, and superfood snacks.

LDEI 2020 Scholarship Recipients Community College

Tailynn Taylor is a culinary arts and hospitality management student at Lawson State Community College. She hopes to study abroad in different countries and ultimately graduate and own a food truck with her mother specializing in traditional soul food. Her GPA is 3.8.



Four Year Universities

Emily Kate Fontes is a junior at the University of Alabama majoring in food, nutrition, and dietetics. As a registered dietitian/nutritionist, she hopes to work with people who value food and see its importance in physical and emotional health. Her GPA is 4.0.



Brianna Fuchs plans to continue her studies and attend the Accelerated Master's Program at the University of Alabama. She plans to work as a clinical dietitian. Brianna has been an active member of UA's Global Café where she is a team leader of diverse student groups. Her GPA is 4.0.



Kiara Timmons is a junior dietetics major at Alabama A & M University. She plans to continue with a master of science degree and work as a community dietitian/nutritionist as well as encourage other African American women to pursue a career in nutrition and dietetics. Her GPA is 3.3.



Kayla Elise Tyrrell is a nutrition and dietetics major at Samford University. After completing a master of science degree, she plans to become a registered dietitian/nutritionist. Her desire is to educate children and adults by counseling them about wise food choices and nutritious meal planning. Her GPA is 3.7.



Samantha Rhodes is a junior at Jacksonville State University majoring in hospitality and culinary arts management. She earned her associate degree in baking and pastry from Jefferson State Community College and interned at Gigi's Cupcakes in Birmingham. Her goal is to operate a special needs cooking school to teach children and adults with special needs kitchen safety and how to follow recipes. Her GPA is 3.7.



Madison Tylicki is a junior majoring in nutrition and dietetics at Samford University. Her goal is to become a clinical dietitian/nutritionist and expand research development in the field of nutrition through wellness and disease treatment. Her GPA is 3.9.

Avery Lorio is a junior at Samford University majoring in nutrition and dietetics with a minor in Spanish. She wants to work as a community dietitian and focus on food insecurity. Her dream job would be to build community refrigerators to help reduce food waste and address food insecurity. Her GPA is 3.9.



Lauren Binnig is a junior nutrition and dietetics major at Auburn University. After completing her studies to become a registered dietitian/nutritionist, her goal is to tackle the epidemic of childhood obesity by teaching children and parents good eating habits. Her GPA is 3.62.



Ashlyn Dallas is a junior nutrition and dietetics major at Auburn University. She plans to continue with a master of science degree and work as a registered dietitian/nutritionist to prevent chronic disease and lead individuals to a greater quality of life. Her GPA is 3.34.



other ways Birmingham Dames are making people happy.

Kristen Farmer Hall has fed front-line workers at hospitals all over the city. Her pop-up dinners at The Essential are a throwback to how she first started her business; I imagine that's bittersweet. Becky Satterfield has sent food to healthcare workers, too, including the people working in UAB's Palliative and Comfort Care unit. For years, she has cooked with the fellows there and shared recipes for their own self-care as they care for others. They can't cook together right now, but she still sent them dinner.

Linda Croley sent baked ziti, made with her delicious handmade pasta, to St. Vincent's and fed 650 healthcare workers in 35 departments. She left them with gift bags of Bare Naked Noodles products to thank them for what they do each day.

Telia Johnson has made life sweeter for hundreds of frontline heroes with her amazing chocolate layer cakes. Some of the cakes she's making these days are decorated with icing that says: "Don't touch your face!"

Leigh Sloss-Corra reimagined the farmers' market at Pepper Place—so farmers can still sell, and customers can still get the local foods that make them happy. A drive-by connection is still a connection. Debbie Mar was at the forefront of an effort that started local and went national, as all Newk's Eatery locations teamed up with corporate and regular customers to get Hero Box Meals to essential workers across the country.

Maureen Holt delivered her Southern Graze meals to the family of a nurse at UAB so that healthcare hero had one less thing to worry about. Rebecca Williamson took

her young family to Birmingham's west end to box and deliver food to the residents there.

Barbara Gaines Kenyon is still spreading happiness. She came up with the Happy City Box filled with wonderful items from local makers and small businesses. Kay Bruno Reed's Iz granola is included; Linda Croley's pasta is, too, along with gift cards to Ashley McMakin's Ashley Mac's stores and Geri-Martha O'Hara's Big Spoon Creamery.

And we have our Les Dames Virtual Happy Hour on Mondays at 5 where we can see each other and laugh for a while together.

All these are reasons to celebrate.

Here's another: We're still funding the future of food in our state. We're meeting our mission of

philanthropy with scholarships going to several deserving young women who are part of a brighter future that, at times, seems so distance.

The protests here and elsewhere have started some important conversations and ushered in long-overdue changes. And the pandemic has reordered our world. Elegant meals come in boxes; cocktails come in kits. We aren't hugging much anymore. But we sign off on emails now with the words "stay safe" and "love." We do not apologize for this because we mean it, and it feels right.

There's a lot that's wrong right now, but there's a lot that's right, too.

Stay safe. And love,

Susan Swagler

Dames Support ProStart Competition



LDEI Birmingham sponsored the Alabama ProStart Competition held March 8-10, 2020 at the Perdido Beach Resort in Orange Beach. The \$2,000 donation will be used to offset expenses the winning teams will have for the national competition.

Rebel Negley judged the Culinary Arts category, and Rosemary Dallam judged the Management category (both Dames are pictured above). They report that a new app was used to make the judging more accurate and efficient.

There were 33 schools registered to compete. The 2020 winners were:

- Culinary Arts: Huntsville Center for Technology, Karen, Rodriguez, Teacher
- Management: Moody High School, Melissa Alphin, Teacher

Celebrating Women Leaders with Bham Dames

By Leigh Sloss-Corra
(graduate of Momentum Executive Leadership Program, Class X)

Every two years, Momentum, one of the South's most prestigious leadership programs for professional women, hosts a major conference in downtown Birmingham. The two-day event offers top flight keynote speakers, panels, and interactive sessions presented by some of the most accomplished women in the U.S.

This year's Vision 2020 Leadership Conference was scheduled for early March, with close to 1,500 attendees expected. Because Birmingham LDEI had provided the food for the reportedly "most successful closing reception ever" at their conference two years ago, Momentum organizers reached out to the Dames to do it again, and present a culinary tasting experience for the closing reception that would prove definitively that Birmingham is a city with extraordinary women leaders not just in business, but also in food.

Coordinated by Dame Kathy Mezrano of Kathy G Catering, close to a dozen Birmingham Dames joined forces to create the event. Tasting tables showcased small bites prepared and served by LDEI member chefs and caterers as well as three of the chapter's Female Entrepreneur Award winners. It was a major undertaking at a very busy time of year for the Dames, but the conference was sold out and advance publicity guaranteed it would be a successful event.

In the weeks leading up to the conference, however, concern about Covid-19 began having an impact. At that time, there were no known cases yet in Alabama, but some

sponsor companies said they would no longer permit their volunteers or employees to attend. A few presenters travelling from New York and California cancelled. Conference organizers as well as the Dames involved in the closing reception were worried the entire event might be shut down.

Luckily, schedules were able to be juggled, replacement speakers stepped up, and the two-day conference went on. No handshakes or hugs were allowed, social distancing was enforced, and while attendance was effected, organizers estimated

that over 1,000 enthusiastic women participated. During the closing reception, there was a tone of foreboding in the air, but with a full selection of wines and craft beers flowing and powerhouse Dames at each tasting table sharing their own stories and serving up beautiful and vibrant small bites, attendees were wowed once again.

In the post-conference follow-up, reviews were glowing. No positive cases of Covid-19 came out of the event, and participants all said they can't wait for the next conference (and closing reception) in 2022.



Almost a dozen Birmingham Dames joined forces to offer a variety of small bites for the closing reception of the Momentum conference, which hosted more than 1,000 professional women for the two-day conference in March.



Reflections on the Pandemic

compiled and edited
by Martha Johnston

Birmingham Dames have been sharing their personal experiences during this time of distancing at our Monday afternoon happy hours. Each of us has learned from this openness. We appreciate our members who have been willing to share their living choices, challenges, and discoveries.

Kathy G. Mezrano:

I started doing food and entertaining videos at my home at the request of a local wedding designer who wanted to include a link to them in her newsletter. It seemed to be a great way to also tie into my own cookbook and catering/restaurant business. The videos are also running on my personal and business websites. They give us a presence in the industry and reassure customers that we are accessible and looking to the future.



Jan Gautro:

I have learned that I am a stress eater. I will take these new pounds with me unfortunately. I have grown basil, tomatoes, and zinnias from seed! I have rediscovered how much I like to cook. I have learned I enjoy my own company. I have learned how I don't need much to be happy! I will never take friendships for granted again!

Maureen Holt:

I was furloughed March 20th without a last paycheck, and I actually thought at the time, for lots of reasons, I was going to get out of the restaurant business altogether. The pandemic turned a lot of things upside down. I have struggled with keeping Jamie Jean at home and trying to help her do schoolwork. This really made me think about spending my time wisely and what I could do to bring back "my life." I prayed about what I had been missing, what I loved to do and am still capable of doing. Giving back seemed to be my answer.

Just before Easter, several of my peers encouraged me to cook for some of their families. As a result, Southern Graze, my old catering business, opened again to feed families across the city.

A friend gave me free boxes and put them all together. My daughter made my logo on paper with paint markers, and I already had containers. Within two days, I sent the new menu out. Next thing I knew, I had orders for 44 Easter suppers. It was

enough to hire someone to help cook, package, and deliver. Although I still struggle with the schoolwork, and a bored 10-year-old, I've been successful at working things out. Now I am thinking about the ideas of cooking videos and cooking with Jamie Jean. She has some interesting ideas too. So, I'm making margaritas this week—with the lemons of today's world!

Becky Satterfield:

As many of you already know, El ZunZún was struck by lightning during the evening on Sunday, April 19th, 2020. Apparently the strike ignited the wood on the front corner of our building and was smoldering for an estimated 12 hours. By 1:00 p.m. the following Monday, fire alarms were going off and smoke was coming from the front of our building. One of the gardeners next door at Leaf & Petal was watering the plants outside but saw the smoke coming from our building and began spraying the building where the smoke was wafting into the breeze. Jamie Pursell, owner of the garden shop, called me to tell me my building was on fire and of course, I had numerous phone calls coming in from my monitoring company as I made my way over there. Fire is never something anyone wants to experience, but life is uncertain and we have to be strong to handle all that comes with it.

We were already closed that Monday and closed Tuesday but reopened on Wednesday for lunch and dinner curbside. So many people came to our rescue—old friends and new friends. Somehow, many blessings flow after bad things hap-

pen. Fortunately, we began repair/restoration quickly. The lightning zapped our phone system and our a/c, but thank God for insurance. We were ready for business, at 50% occupancy, as soon as the Governor allowed it.

As I was thinking about all of us being survivors of this Covid-19 situation, I began to peruse the web looking for a statement about women surviving and found this interesting research done by Virginia Zarulli. According to her study conducted at the University of Southern Denmark's Institute of Public Health, women are more likely to survive than men during times of famine and epidemics. This is based on her analysis of historical records from 250 years ago. Her research indicates that the gender gap in life expectancy is associated with biological factors like the double X chromosome. If a bad mutation takes place in the X chromosome, we have an extra one to compensate when men don't. The list goes on and on with so many factors that back us as the stronger sex. Zarulli says that we are strong because apart from enduring physical or emotional abuse, sexual assault, child abuse, cancer, physical or mental illnesses, we thrive even with very little support, and we push through negative situations until we make it to the top, alive and better for it.

I just had to share this with all of you and remember this: We will all be okay. Keep the faith. Take care.



Mary Esther Carpenter:

[Mary Esther's mother, Cecelia LaSusa Brocato, passed away May 31. Mary Esther had written this piece before her mother's passing, and we're running it as a remembrance.]

One thing for sure during this quarantine time is I miss seeing my Mom. Not knowing what she is thinking is both a blessing and curse. Being at the disposal of nursing home workers to FaceTime is always a challenge as my Mom doesn't have a phone. But missing my grandchildren is the most difficult part of this quarantine for me.

One positive thing I have learned during this time of isolation is to overcome my fear of posting on social media so that I could put my transformation to a healthy lifestyle out there for everyone to see.

Many of us know how to get healthy, but to have the resources to change your habits has been life changing for me. Because of the isolation that Covid-19 caused, I used

the time for achieving one healthy habit at a time and to pay it forward by becoming a health coach.

Telia Johnson:

After a week or two of anxiety, I embraced the quarantine. After all these weeks, I have yet to get to my closet, but I have made lots of cakes (including the one above) and had lots of great family time. Luckily, I had some 20-year-old elastic and was able to make some masks.

I have spent lots of time chasing all the different flours for some baking projects. One of our sweet members gave me some fabulous sourdough starter, and it has been really fun to use. Before I got the starter, I found a great recipe for a French loaf by Jim Lahey/Sullivan Street Bakery that the *New York Times* published called No-Knead Bread. Really impressive and really easy! I can't seem to stop and would love for everyone to try it, too!

continued



Susan Swagler:

I want nothing more than to go out to a restaurant and have dinner for a couple of hours. Close on the heels of that want is the desire to meet up with friends for a cocktail I cannot make at home. Also, I might enjoy shopping now.

In the meantime, I've been cleaning and organizing my house. Closets, junk drawers (yes, unfortunately, plural junk drawers), bags of cosmetics and skin care.

Addressing the junk drawers was especially rewarding. I took the advice of a friend and decided to "shop" these newly organized drawers for forgotten things to use around my house.

Here are three of the awesome things I found:

Coasters from Sepia in Chicago (above). Rick and I enjoyed a fantastic meal there a few years ago and left with two cool, sepia-colored Sepia coasters (which we did not steal). We're using them on a bistro table now.

Essential oils. I found some peppermint oil and an especially beautiful blend from Thistle Farms. I'm going to mix a few drops into the 160-proof hand sanitizer I found at the Piggly Wiggly in Crestline and refill my travel-size bottles of spray sanitizer.



A fossil (above). Years ago, my family went to a reclaimed coal-mining site in Walker County to look for fossils. We took a picnic and spent a day with hammers and chisels prying apart layers of slate to find beautiful imprints of prehistoric ferns. I put one of these fossils on my desk to remind me of that special day.

Barbara Gaines Kenyon:

My event design business, Happy Event Co., was created around the science of happiness. And now, I'm working with Alabama makers and small businesses to put together my line of Happy City boxes. It will assist smaller business and product manufacturers to continue with a revenue stream and put a smile on individual faces when received as a gift.

I have teamed up with fellow Birmingham Dames Kay Bruno Reed of Everything Iz to include Iz granola and Linda Croley's dry pasta from Bare Naked Noodles. I'm including gift cards from Ashley McMakin of Ashley Mac's and Geri-Martha O'Hara of Big Spoon Creamery.

Other partners include local makers and businesses such as The Happy Olive gourmet food store, Wax & Tin Candles, Sugar candy store, Shalla Wista Studio jewelry, Vulcan Apparel Co., Manhattan South boutique, and Hunter's Cleaners.

I include stationery and some stamped envelopes, too. I hope the box will start a chain reaction of happiness. People can write letters and reach out to those who cannot get out as much as before.

Sherron Goldstein:

For years, I have taught participation cooking classes at Temple Emanu-El. But when I responded to a request to do several Passover cooking videos for the Temple Emanu-El website, I had no idea I would be not only the on-camera talent but also the videographer, stylist, lighting expert, etc.

It was a real learning experience!

The good news is that I had a wonderful response to the recipes: Matzah Lasagna, Matzah Spinach Farfel, Charosis, Tzimmes, and Chocolate Matzah Toffee.

Cristina Almanza:

My world has definitely gone in a 180. I left Birmingham on February 27, to be married on March 7, in my hometown of Torreón, Mexico.

When I left, I was working on several events that Buffalo Rock sponsors. I had several restaurant owners struggling to find enough staff and looking for more people to work. Our economy was thriving.

On the personal end, we had an amazing wedding! We were lucky to have 50 family members and friends who came from the U.S. We had two good days of honeymooning in Jordan, and then reality set in: We had to find our way back to the United States as Jordan was closing its borders and airport. Long story short: We were on the last flight out of Jordan. Our plane left on March 17 at 11:45 p.m., and Jordan closed its airport at midnight on March 18.

When we came back, things were still fairly open in Atlanta. We were



tired and hoping we had not gotten sick. And we were told to self-isolate for 14 days.

My job, which normally handles community engagement, has changed. Most events have been cancelled or postponed. We have primarily focused on trying to support and help our customers. While I was quarantined, I tried to pass along any information that we were getting on financial help and support for the service industry.

However, most of this help was primarily for businesses in the city of Birmingham, so a lot of customers did not qualify. Some of our customers had to temporarily close.

I went back to work on April 2. I am working now on our vending side. I have to go to count inventory and also pick up product from accounts that have been closed so that it doesn't expire and then try to sell it to other accounts.

I struggle every day as I go through three primary emotions: I am thankful. I feel guilty. And I am nervous.

I am very thankful because Buffalo Rock has been great and extremely supportive to all of us, and I continue to have a job (though we sadly had some furloughs). I feel guilty because I know a lot of people are out of work (including my husband) and dear friends. And sometimes I am nervous and scared as I have gone into accounts where employees might not be socially distancing. I also have struggled because I feel like I have not been able to help in our community as much as I'd like.

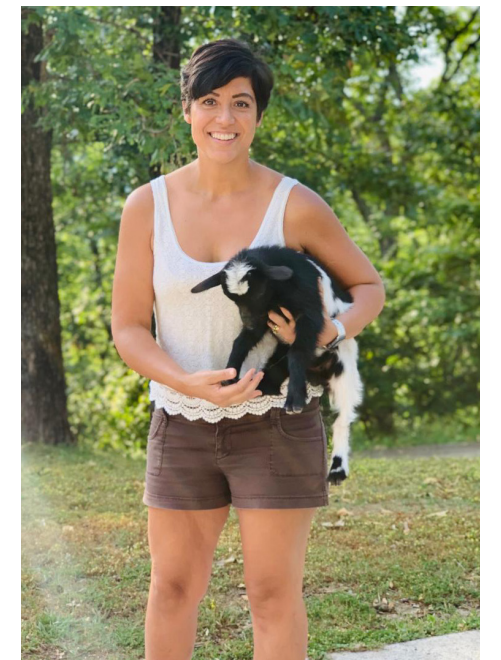
But above all, I am hopeful. This time has helped me explore and gain an appreciation for things that we took for granted and things that we did not value enough. It is my hope that, like any hurdle God puts in front of us, we will all learn from this and become stronger as a society.

Debbie Mar:

My dream has always been to have a farm to provide food for my family. And, let's be honest, to have all the farm animals because I love them so much.

As we have been navigating our way through building our farm, a bigger dream began to take shape. I began to dream of seeing my eggs and soaps in other people's homes. And then I began to dream of developing my own goat cheeses. And suddenly we have a bigger path because I just won't stop dreaming.

So in the midst of Covid-19, we're taking a leap of faith and making Mar Farm official. Stay tuned for up-to-date news on our shop (and all the Mar Farm animal antics).



Home Cooking Brings Comfort During Covid-19

Cooking and eating at home are on the rise as social distancing becomes a focus of today’s life. From my perspective, homemade gives me joy in the present and moves my emotional scale toward “serenity and comfort”. I find it reassuring that many are looking to batters, doughs, local ingredients, recipes from friends and family, new and cherished kitchen tools and cookware to define the new normal.

Take a look at some of the recipes for home cooking several of our Dames have been preparing in the last couple of months. I know you’ll try one or more. And you’ll feel the love!

—Martha Johnston

Onion Tart

When I suggested an onion tart for dinner, my husband was not very enthusiastic. After we enjoyed the onion tart for dinner, he asked how soon I would make it again.

The recipe is not my own. It comes from chef Jamie Oliver. It is delicious and beautiful, and the time it takes to glaze the onions and cook them down to sweetness is somewhat therapeutic.

—Susan Swagler



Jamie Oliver’s Sticky Onion Tart

- 4 medium onions
- 50g unsalted butter
- 4 sprigs of fresh thyme
- 4 fresh bay leaves
- 2 tablespoons soft dark brown sugar
- 4 tablespoons cider vinegar
- 8 cloves of garlic, peeled and cut in half
- 320g sheet of all-butter puff pastry, (cold)

1. Preheat the oven to 220°C/425°F.
2. Peel the onions, and halve across the middle.
3. Place the butter in a 26cm non-stick ovenproof frying pan on medium heat. Strip in the thyme leaves, and add the bay leaves. Shake the pan around and get it bubbling, then add the sugar, vinegar and 100ml of water.

4. Place the onion halves in the pan, cut side down. Place the garlic cloves in the gaps, then season generously with sea salt and freshly ground black pepper.
5. Cover, turn the heat down to low and leave to steam for 10 minutes to soften the onions slightly, then remove the lid, and cook until (this is very important!) the liquid starts to caramelize, gently shaking the pan occasionally to stop the onions from sticking.
6. Place the pastry over the onions, using a wooden spoon to push it right into the edges of the pan. Bake for 35 minutes, or until golden brown and puffed up (it will look quite dark, but don’t worry!).
7. Using oven gloves to protect your hands, put a large plate over the pan and—confidently, but very carefully—turn out.

Lunch of “All Things Pickled”

I love an easy lunch of ‘all the pickled things’ using what I have in the fridge and pantry, splashing with my best olive oil and/or vinegar and adding herbs, arranged in attractive dishes. It can take seemingly mundane food to another level. Here’s what I did last Sunday.

—Pardis Stitt

- I started with a jar of roasted peppers and added chopped curly parsley and mint, doused with olive oil.
- Castelvetrano olives and lemon peel
- Pickled okra (don’t mess with these since they are so good as is)
- Canned chickpeas drained and tossed with olive oil, red wine vinegar, a little chili, chopped sweet local bulb onion, and more curly parsley
- Pickled eggplant (from an unidentified source) that I found in the pantry
- Mushroom conserva from Highlands that I’ve been eating for the last six weeks
- Chilled roasted golden beets with more onions and dill
- Hearts of palm with chopped celery and a squeeze of lemon
- I also boiled eggs HARD, the way I like them (Frank thinks it’s sacrilege).
- Raw carrots and cucumbers
- A friend’s pimiento cheese that she had dropped off earlier in the week
- Add some crackers, and it’s a perfect meal!
- (I did include a tin of sardines for Frank.)

I have also been making a wonderful chowder from Deborah Madison’s *Vegetarian Cooking for Everyone*. If you enjoy sweet potatoes, spinach, and feta, look it up.

Orange Glazed Cornish Hen

This orange glazed Cornish hen recipe is one of my favorites when wanting to cook just enough to eat in one setting. It’s a great dish for a romantic date night or a fancy dinner party. It’s simple, elegant, and turns out perfect each time. For this recipe, I used mostly local ingredients and paired the hen with butter and herb couscous and roasted asparagus

—Raquel Ervin

- Hens: 2—1.5 lb each
- Fresh herbs: 4 sprigs rosemary
- Oil: Simply Infused Herbes de Provence (www.simply-infused.com)
- Seasoning: Chef’s Blend Original Sea Salt Seasoning (www.chefdougallen.com)
- Glaze: Orange Marmalade

1. Prep the hens: Dry the hens with a paper towel and coat the hens in Simply Infused Herbes de Provence. Season generously with Chef’s Blend Sea Salt.
2. Prep the pan: Coat the pan with butter and place the hens in the roasting pan.
3. Roast uncovered for 30 minutes in a preheated 425°F oven.
4. While the hens are roasting, melt 4-5 tbsp per hen of orange marmalade until it resembles syrup. (You can make your own but any store brand will do.)
5. Remove the hens and baste with marmalade.
6. Turn the oven down to 350°F and return to the oven for an additional 20 minutes or until a thermometer registers 165°F in the thickest part of the breast.
7. Baste the hens one last time and let the hens rest for 20 minutes.
8. Garnish with fresh herbs (optional).

Jalapeño Popcorn

It’s so easy—and spicy—and delicious! Just add your favorite beverage for a great snack.

—Becky Satterfield

Serves 8 or more

- 1/4 cup coconut oil
- 1 large jalapeño pepper sliced into wheels, remove seeds
- 1/3 cup popcorn kernels
- Salt to taste
- 1/4 cup unsalted butter, melted

1. In large cooking pot over medium-high, heat the oil for a couple of minutes.
2. Add the pepper wheels into the oil and continue to heat the oil with the jalapeño wheels for another few minutes as the oil is hot enough to flash fry the peppers and to become infused with the pepper flavor. Remove the peppers while they are still green and place on paper towel to drain and cool.
3. Add the popcorn kernels to the infused oil and cover the cooking pot. Cook for approximately 5 minutes until the popping begins and shake the pot occasionally as the popcorn pops faster. As the popping slows down and then stops, remove from the heat and dump into a bowl.
4. Add the peppers and toss with the popcorn.
5. Add salt to taste. Drizzle with melted butter all over and toss again.
6. Enjoy!

Nutrition facts: 152 total calories; 13g total fat; 336mg sodium; 8.1g carbohydrates; 1.1g protein

Spaghetti with Pancetta and Garlic Greens

We’ve actually made this dish several times since the quarantine started. My kids really like it, and I generally have all of the ingredients on hand, which is nice. You can customize it to what you do have on hand: bacon instead of pancetta, any type of greens will work, and crushed red pepper if you like spice. We’ve added leftover smoked chicken to this, which is really good, too.

—Laura Zapalowski

SERVES: 6 TO 8

- 3/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 1 1/4 cups panko breadcrumbs
- Kosher salt, to taste
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 14 ounces spaghetti
- 4 ounces pancetta, thinly sliced
- 18 cloves garlic, peeled and thinly sliced
- 8 ounces cremini mushrooms, sliced
- 1 pound kale, stemmed and coarsely torn (about 12 cups)

1. Heat 1/4 cup of the olive oil in a small skillet over medium heat. Add panko and cook until toasted, stirring often. Remove from the heat and season with salt and pepper. Transfer to a paper towel-lined plate to drain; let cool.



- 2. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Cook spaghetti until al dente. Remove and reserve 1 cup of the pasta water before draining the pasta.
- 3. Heat remaining 1/2 cup oil in a large Dutch oven over medium-low heat. Add pancetta and cook 5-6 minutes until starting to brown. Stir in garlic and continue to cook, 5-6 more minutes or until garlic and pancetta are brown. Stir in mushrooms and sauté 2 minutes.
- 4. In batches, add the kale and cook, stirring until wilted, about 3 minutes. Add the pasta and reserved pasta water a little at a time until a sauce forms. Season with salt and pepper, to taste. Divide pasta among bowls and top with toasted panko.

Spicy Chicken with Vegetables

I have been creating recipes for the Samford Wellness Kitchen as the first project in my new retirement consulting business, The Wellness Kitchen LLC. I will also be doing a recipe column and online cooking classes for Alabama Baptist Churches and consulting for other teaching kitchen initiatives. I am attaching an example of the recipes for you all to try. I hope you will enjoy it!

—Pat Terry

Makes 4 servings

For the chicken use any or all of these dry spices to taste:

- 1 teaspoon ground coriander
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon ground turmeric
- 1 teaspoon ground cardamom
- 1 teaspoon curry powder
- 1 Tablespoon smoked paprika
- ½ teaspoon cayenne powder
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 Tablespoon fresh minced ginger or ½ teaspoon ground
- 2 Tablespoons lemon juice
- 2 Tablespoons olive oil
- 1 cup plain whole milk yogurt
- 2 lbs. (about 8) bone-in chicken thighs (1 ½ pounds, boneless, thighs)

For the vegetables

- 4 cups cauliflower or broccoli florets
- 1 lb. cut carrots
- Olive oil, salt, and pepper to taste

- 1. Place all marinade ingredients through yogurt in a blender and blend until smooth.
- 2. Place the chicken in a gallon freezer bag with the marinade and refrigerate for 1 hour (up to overnight).
- 3. Preheat oven to 425°F.
- 4. Toss vegetables in oil, salt, and pepper. Spread out on a rimmed sheet pan that is oiled.
- 5. Place drained chicken in between the vegetables.
- 6. Roast for 30 minutes on the center rack until chicken is cooked through and vegetables are tender. Boneless thighs will cook faster, so check after 25 minutes.
- 7. Eat as is or with brown rice, whole grains, chickpeas, etc.

[Adapted from Foodiecrush.com by Patricia Terry, PhD, RD, LD, FAND; The Wellness Kitchen, LLC]

Some of the Fun Things We’ve Done

Mayawell Bar

On March 15, a few Dames gathered for agave-based spirits and cocktails at Mayawell Bar in Lakeview.

Book Club Inspires Happy Hour!

When social distancing disrupted plans for the March 23 Book Club meeting, Jan Gautro organized a virtual meeting via Zoom.

The intent was to discuss “Last Chinese Chef” but the reality was those who met online that Monday had a chance to visit with other Dames to see how their businesses were doing and how all were faring.

Those attending this virtual meeting felt it was a wonderful opportunity to connect and listen to each other and lift each other up. And with that observation, Susan Swagler and Jan decided to begin hosting a weekly “virtual happy hour” on Mondays at 5 p.m. If you haven’t tried it yet, join in!

Favorite Things III

Dames gathered at IZ the Place on February 23, for our third annual “favorite things” party. Each attendee brought three items priced under \$10 each that she “can’t live without.” Each also contributed to the appetizer buffet and wine bar. Anne Cain and Andrea Kirkland compiled this list of “favorites” following the event:

Food Items

- Mike’s Hot Honey
- Spicy Chili Crisp
- Fresh rosemary sprigs
- Sachal Earl gray tea
- Shoreline Olive Oil from Crete
- Cranberry White Balsamic Vinegar with Milanese Olive Oil
- Cotes de Roses Rosé
- Celestial Seasonings Honey-Vanilla Chamomile Tea & Trader Joe’s Speculoos Crunchy Cookie Butter

- Belle Chevre Goat Cheese
- Olive oil from Sicily
- Asian cooking kit
- Kalocsa Hungarian Paprika with painted wooden spoon
- Harney & Sons Victorian London Fog Tea
- Homemade pound cake loaf (Martha Johnson’s grandmother’s recipe)
- Chocolate chip cookie dough (made by Telia Johnson)

Personal Care Items

- “She Dreams in Full Color” sachet; Rosebud salve; Vaseline Roselips Lip Therapy
- Laneige Lip Sleeping Mask
- Nourish Hyaluronic Acid (Trader Joe’s)
- Kush Mascara with CBD oil
- Native Deodorant: charcoal
- Goat’s Milk Shea Cream
- Counting Sheep Lavender Room Spray (1818 Farms)
- Garden Honey Bee Milk & Honey Heel Balm
- Electric Pedicure Device
- Diva Hand Lotion
- Black travel purse

Household/Cooking

- Handmade children’s apron [vendor at Pepper Place Market]
- Pottery jewelry dish and vintage jewelry: Heather Hepp, Little Sandy Glass
- Journal Studio: Journal Stickers
- C.R. Gibson Memo Pad & Holder
- Candles-cardamom and cedar magnolia (Target)
- Skoy cloths: reusable and 100% biodegradable
- Skull Girl Handmade Oatmeal-Honey Bar Soap
- Set of 6 small glass milk bottles and tin carrier
- Insulated cup from Starbucks
- Set of 4 melamine bowls

Behind the Scenes with Dame Margaret Ann Snow of Snow’s Bend Farm

By Donna Cornelius

Margaret Ann Snow has a workplace that’s spread out over 15 acres in Coker, a community just outside of Tuscaloosa. From a hilltop high above Snow’s Bend Farm, she can see fields bursting with the organically grown vegetables, fruits, and flowers she and her husband, David, grow. The Black Warrior River with its sandy banks winds though the property, which also has a forested swamp, coves, and ridges. It’s a favorite swimming spot for the Snows and their children during warm weather.

The farm’s rich bottomland soil—it has its own name, Tuscaloosa Choccolocco—has made it a prime agricultural spot for centuries. A mound of earth built by the Mississippian people is a reminder that the land was being farmed more than 700 years ago. Pieces of pottery from long ago were discovered at Snow’s Bend in the 1930s. As Margaret Ann wrote in News from the Bend, a blog on the farm’s website: “We are not the first to farm Snow’s Bend and hopefully won’t be the last.”

The farm has been the perfect place for Margaret Ann to nurture not only gardens but also a career that she loves. She said she’s never been tempted to do anything other than farming since she and David opened Snow’s Bend Farm 16 years ago.

“Once we started, we never considered stopping,” she said. The two both grew up in Tuscaloosa and met when they were Central High School students. Margaret

Ann went to the University of Alabama, while David headed to the University of the South. After college, they worked at an organic farm near Seattle.

“We learned that we liked eating food we had helped to grow,” Margaret Ann said. “We came back to Tuscaloosa and started our own farm in 2004. We were both 24 years old.”

David’s family, which has owned the property that is now Snow’s Bend Farm for several generations, never actively farmed the land themselves but leased it to a commodity farmer.

“It was just the two of us working here for several years,” she said. Despite their experiences in Seattle and at other farms, the early days of owning their own place presented a bit of a learning curve.

“It’s totally different when someone is telling you what to do and when you’re managing things yourself,” Margaret Ann said.

These days, there’s usually a staff of nine people including Margaret Ann and David. Snow’s Bend produce can be found at the Market at Pepper Place on Saturdays and at Tuscaloosa’s River Market. It’s featured on the menus of highly regarded restaurants such as Bottega, Chez Fonfon, El ZunZún, Highlands Bar and Grill, Hot and Hot Fish Club, and Satterfield’s.

Snow’s Bend produces some 50 different vegetables of nearly 250 varieties as well as cut flowers. Most years, pigs are a part of the farm family, too. The humanely raised animals have plenty of pasture space—plus good food to eat.

After the pork is processed, individuals, families, and restaurants can buy quarter, half, or whole hogs.

In the farm’s early days, its first CSA—Community Sponsored Agriculture—list had only 12 members. Now, the program is so popular there’s a waiting list.

Margaret Ann became a Birmingham Dame last year.

“I already knew several restaurateurs and chefs in the group,” she said. “I felt so honored to be asked to be a member. I hope I can add a farmer’s perspective.”

She’s particularly interested in LDEI Birmingham’s mentoring and scholarship programs.

“I hope to help mentor other agricultural people,” she said. “And it’s always nice to be part of a group of strong women.”

What’s a typical day for Margaret Ann? It depends on the season. “We work as early as we can in the summer and try to work in our packing shed after lunch,” she said. “During the winter, we work more during the warmer part of the day.”

“We get into a steady routine fulfilling CSA orders. On Fridays, we prepare for farmers’ markets. We try to have a couple of days a week to plant and cultivate.”

Farming has changed a lot over the past decades.

“When we started, there wasn’t as much of a demand as there is today for local produce,” Margaret Ann said. “Now that market farms are so popular, there are new tools and growing practices.”

She said modern farmers have to use social media and marketing techniques, too.



For Dame Margaret Ann Snow, farming is a family affair. She and her husband, David, founded Snow’s Bend Farm in 2004. Once schools closed, her children completed their schoolwork under a tent in the fields.

More recently, the Covid-19 pandemic has created some challenges. Once Alabama schools closed in March, the couple’s children, 8-year-old Maxwell and 5-year-old Flora, started going to the farm with their parents and completing their schoolwork packets under a tent in the fields. And the Snows haven’t felt comfortable hiring new extra workers that they normally bring in this time of year.

But the pandemic’s effects haven’t all been negative. According to a recent *Forbes* magazine article, many Americans are making an effort to buy food closer to its source rather than risk infection with trips to the grocery store.

“For us and for small farms across the country, the demand has been up,” Margaret Ann said. “This is how it should be all the time.”

She said the hardest thing about being a farmer is the business side.

“When we started, we had to learn about bookkeeping, about keeping our employees happy, and that kind of thing,” she said.

She said it’s nice to meet first-time customers who stop by at a Snow’s Bend farmers’ market stand. She enjoys introducing them to farm-fresh delights like strawberries that are a pretty pink all the way through and not white in the middle like some supermarket varieties.

Not surprisingly, Margaret Ann loves cooking. You can find many of her favorite vegetable recipes, such as golden beet hummus and spicy mustard greens with cumin, on the farm’s website, www.snows-bendfarm.com.

But her favorite thing about the farming life?

“It’s working with the plants,” Margaret Ann said. “I’m almost the only office person on the farm, and I love it when I have time to actually work in the garden. I can look up and see ducks and great white egrets flying around. I love tending the plants. I’m happy as long as I’m in the garden.”

Memorable Flavors of Mexico

By Betsy McAtee

The Dames of the Mexico chapter take great pride in their country and have a passion for sharing its culinary treasures.

Mexico, large and diverse, has deep-rooted cultures that revolve around food and family. The various regions of Mexico reflect influences of other countries and migration patterns of people years ago. These influences are observed in not only Mexican cuisine but also the arts that are presented on each of the trips.

I continue to travel with LDEI on the Flavors of Mexico trips because each is a new adventure! Every minute of the trip is curated for maximum exploration of the specific region. Each year I say, “This was the best trip yet!!” And each year, the trips get better and better!!

One highlight of the March 2020 trip (because there were two especially memorable events) was a private tour and dinner at Casa Azul (the blue house), the home where Frida Kahlo was born and where she died. It became a museum in 1958, four years after her death. Today it is one of the most famous museums in Mexico City. Executive Chef Luisteen Gonzalez and Pastry Chef Erik Aronow from the renowned Mexican Street Food, LLC Puesto Restaurant prepared a fabulous six-course meal, and Dames dined in the private garden under the stars—it was a magical evening.

For me, highlight number two was Sabor es Polanco, a food festival in the Mexico City neighborhood of Polanco. Although it was described as “a local food and wine festival,” it was much more—it was



Above: Dame Betsy McAtee has attended several of the Flavors of Mexico trips hosted by the Mexico chapter, and she says they only get better each year. Right: The menu from a dinner event at Casa Azul, the home of the well-known Mexican artist Frida Kahlo.



an EXTRAVAGANZA. We sampled the best dishes and amazing wines from 75 of the top restaurants and chefs in Mexico City!

Whether it's making fresh salsa in a molcajete, charring peppers

on an open-flame grill, or drinking 100-year-old tequila from the private cellar of Mundo Cuervo, it is special to be among Dames from all over the world who share the same passion for food!

Nominating Prospective Members Under Way

By Leigh Sloss-Corra

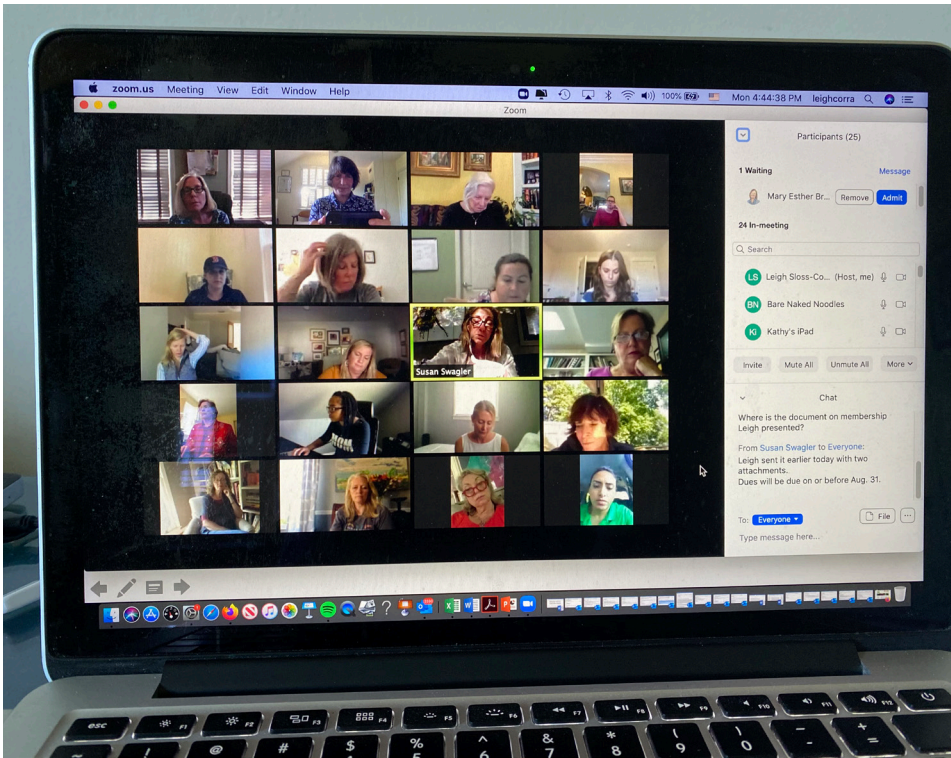
With spring and early summer comes the season to nominate prospective members to the Birmingham Chapter of LDEI.

This year, because of Covid-19, the nomination period was a bit delayed, so Mother's Day, May 10, served as the official kickoff day. On May 11, a chapter-wide orientation meeting was held via Zoom to walk members through the nomination process and updated timeline, which was set by the Membership Committee in an earlier meeting.

Some of the highlights of this year's membership process include: There is no “quota” for new members this year. Last year, it was a goal to grow significantly, and our chapter added 14 new members. This year, with the stresses of Covid-19 on the food community, the committee expects to review a smaller number of nominees, focusing on qualifications, professional commitment, diversity, and especially the willingness to get involved and raise money.

Chapter President Susan Swagler stated that, in light of Covid-19, the Board had agreed to lower annual dues from \$200 to \$150 this year, to provide some relief to existing members and perhaps present less of a barrier to new ones.

The nomination period is set as May 10-June 15. ALL applications and letters of recommendation must be completed and received by the Membership Chair by 5 p.m. on June 15. Nominating Dames should make all efforts to help their



Dames gathered on May 11 via Zoom to review this year's membership process for nominating potential members.

nominees get to know other Dames through virtual meet-ups, socially distanced in-person meetings, and the regular Zoom happy hour being organized by Program Chair Jan Gautro and President Susan Swagler. Individual interviews of nominees will be conducted virtually in June and July via Zoom, and all members will vote on the proposed slate of new members at the Annual Meeting on August 16. New members will be officially welcomed into the chapter at a New Member Reception to be held September 13.

Finally, it is everyone's responsibility to insure the chapter's survival and good health by being involved and bringing in new members. If all members pitch in and work

together AND we bring in new members who are excited about being involved, we can achieve our philanthropy and outreach goals, and transform the food community in our city and state. A PowerPoint, which clarifies the membership process, as well as the policies and procedures and application packet is available to anyone who requests it. Email Leigh at leigh@pepper-placemarket.com.

Special thanks to Membership Committee members: Leigh Sloss-Corra (Committee Chair), Brooke Bell, Mary Esther Carpenter, Linda Croley, Susan Gilpin, Sherron Goldstein, Martha Johnston, Gia McCollister, Kathy Mezrano, Becky Satterfield and Susan Swagler.

Learning from Farmers' Markets

By Leigh Sloss-Corra

In early February, I was invited to Intents: A Farmers Market Conference. It is an annual gathering of farmers' market managers, vendors, marketing experts, and related business professionals, held in a seaside resort in the heart of San Diego. As Executive Director of the Market at Pepper Place, a non-profit market in downtown Birmingham celebrating its 20th anniversary and embarking on an ambitious plan to design and build a market pavilion and pocket park, I was invited to give a talk on fundraising tips and the challenges of planning for the future.

I had met the conference organizer, Catt White, who manages three farmers' markets in San Diego, when she was visiting the Market at Pepper Place a few years ago during a trip to her husband's family in Tuscaloosa. I was surprised to run into Catt again last summer, at the 10th Annual Public Markets Conference in London, which we both attended, and where, I discovered, Catt's Intents Conference and Vendor Training Program was a sponsor.

The caliber and depth of Catt's connections should have given me a clue that her San Diego conference would be a bigger deal, but Catt is so relaxed and easy-going. She's a market manager who hauls barricades when she has to, is on her feet for long hours, and handles her own social media. I said I'd be happy to present at her conference, which I thought might be attended by 50 to 75 people. I thought I might sit in on one or two of the sessions and otherwise use the trip to explore and enjoy Southern California.



Catt White, the conference organizer for Intents, opens the three-day farmers' market conference in San Diego.

Once we arrived in San Diego, I headed over for the opening afternoon of the conference, expecting to check in, grab my badge, and head out to a fun eatery downtown. Instead, I found myself in a lively room with over 100 attendees from markets all over the country. The following day there were close to 200. The setting was casual, with windows open wide to let in the cool sea breezes, but each of the presentations was tightly organized, given by terrific speakers with amazing credentials. The President of the American Farmland Trust was one. Cat Neville, host of PBS's Tastemakers, was another. Beverly Grant of Mo'Betta Greens in Denver brought the audience to tears. Food photographer Lori Rice offered tips on capturing food for social media. Pascale la Draoulec had everyone in stitches when she shared how she fought—and won—against the toughest little old lady in her town who was determined to

shut down the farmers' market. Conference sessions started early in the morning and ended in time for evening festivities at outdoor markets or in cool beachside breweries. It was a jam-packed three days that I am still thinking about and learning from. The big takeaway was that farmers' markets are like street universities. If you take the opportunity to learn from your experience with them, you can become an expert at marketing, social media, psychology, logistics, branding, insurance liability, conflict resolution, finance, raising capital, and planning for the future.

Intents is a conference I think literally any professional person could enjoy and learn from. In fact, had it not been for Covid-19, Catt was planning to bring a mini-version of the conference to Birmingham, with the Market at Pepper Place as co-host. Maybe in the fall or next year!

Curbside Pick-up and Online Ordering: A Silver Lining

By Alexis Douglas,
certified sommelier

With curbside pick-up being the new norm, I've relied on my favorite wine shops' recommendations more than usual. It's been a silver lining (and let's face it, a source of joy and entertainment) over the past few months to branch out and try more new wines. However, my two favorite wine shops (Golden Age and Hop City) are now offering online ordering! While I love trying new wines, it's also comforting to choose for myself and drink familiar wines. Here are a few of my current favorites, a mix of new discoveries and old favorites:

- J. Lassalle Premier Cru Brut, Champagne, France \$47.99, Hop City. The tastiest NV (non-vintage) brut I've tasted lately, especially for the price. Fruit-forward and rich, and perfect with grilled lobster. This small grower-producer is run by the third generation of WOMEN of the family—another reason to support them. Their motto is “une femme, un esprit, un style.” Enough said!



- Lieu-Dit Melon, Santa Maria Valley, CA \$21.99, Golden Age. Crisp, minerally, refreshing, and all-around perfect for the warmer weather. Gorgeous label featuring the classic pairing with this grape: oysters. Melon is the grape used to make Muscadet in the Loire Valley of France; this Cali version is a bit more round (meaning less acidity) and drinkable.



- Elizabeth Spencer Rosé of Grenache, Mendocino, CA \$16.99, Hop City. Think watermelon juice, only not as sweet and with a little hint of herbs. Be careful because it is dangerously drinkable and almost TOO tasty. Perfect pool/boat/gardening wine and super versatile with food. Look for a limited number of magnums available as well!



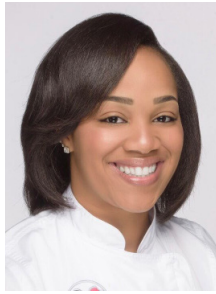
- Ken Wright Pinot Noir, Willamette Valley, Oregon \$22.99, Hop City. From one of the most fabulous and historic single-vineyard Pinot Noir producers in Oregon, this is an easier-drinking and affordable blend from their single vineyard sites. Generous and vibrant fruit, with just the right amount of floral and earthy notes. Tastes a lot more expensive, while still maintaining approachability. Incredible value!



- Stolpman “La Cuadrilla” Red Blend, Santa Ynez, CA \$21.99, Hop City. A year-round favorite of mine with an incredible story, too: Stolpman vineyards employs their vineyard workers year-round (not just for harvest, like most wineries), and the profits from this wine go to them. The label and the blend changes every vintage and is a reflection of what's happening with “the crew” (la cuadrilla) that year. The 2017 is an intense, tasty, balanced blend of Syrah, Sangiovese and Grenache. It is surprisingly versatile, but especially great with grilled meats.

Let's Toast

Raquel Ervin, executive chef and owner of Panoptic Catering, will add a food truck to her catering business in early July 2020. Eat At Panoptic will be the new corporate branding message reflecting the expansion according to this entrepreneur.



Cristina Almanza was selected Corporate Volunteer of the Year for the fourth annual IGNITE Volunteer Awards Celebration, presented by United Way Hands On. The April 23, 2020 function was an entirely virtual celebration on Facebook and Swell. The IGNITE Awards recognize the amazing group of volunteers from across Central Alabama who embody UWCA's mission of caring for one another and improving our community.



Pat Terry, a professor of nutrition and dietetics at Samford University since 1990, retired on May 31, 2020. Having served as director of the undergraduate Didactic Program in Dietetics for 25 years and twice as department chair, Pat was instrumental in moving the department to the new College of Health Sciences and helping establish and recruit faculty for the Samford



Dietetic Internship and the Master of Science in Nutrition graduate program. She has also served as the director of the two Samford Food Production Labs and The Samford Wellness Kitchen, a community teaching kitchen.

Pat has been a registered and licensed dietitian for 45 years, having spent 12 of those years as a missionary and community nutritionist in Venezuela. In 2006, the Patricia H. Terry Scholarship in Nutrition and Dietetics was established for nutrition majors in the department who exemplify leadership in community service and cross-cultural ministry. For 20 years she taught study abroad classes in London and Costa Rica, introducing students to other cultures and languages and making life-long friends.

Pat says that "one of the greatest highlights of my career has

been seeing our graduates become professionals in many areas using their foods, nutrition, and dietetics degrees.

In retirement, Pat will remain active in the profession of dietetics and work as a consultant for teaching kitchens with her new business, The Wellness Kitchen, LLC.

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