

ARTS

Monday Movie Matinees Twice monthly in the Community Room at the Ellenville Public Library and Museum. Call 647-5530 for dates and features.

Annette Chait Finestone Exhibiting photographs of Japan's American Occupation at Northern Spy Restaurant located on Rte. 213 in High Falls. Runs through April 14. For further information on this exhibition, please visit www.KaeteBrittinShaw.com, contact Kaete Brittin Shaw at 687-7828, or call The Northern Spy Restaurant at 687-7298. Restaurant open from Tuesday - Saturday from 5 p.m. through the evening.

The Rondout Business Association Is seeking artists for third annual Mardi Gras Ice Sculpturing Contest on Feb. 21. For more information call B.C. Gee 339-6925 or Nancy Donskoj 338-8473 or email info@krbaonline.org

Artist Soup Nights Held on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of every month including Feb. 22, March 8 and 22. Dot's Living Room is located at 101 B James St. (lower right apt.) in Rosendale and the nights begin at 6:30 p.m. There is a suggested donation of \$2 or a loaf of bread. For more information please call 214 - 7932 or e-mail Dorothy. regina@yahoo.com

Life Drawing Sessions at Unison On Tuesday & Thursday nights from 7:30 - 9:30 p.m., ongoing through June 2009. The cost is \$9 for members, \$12 for non-members per class or \$32 members, \$44 non-members for a series of 4 classes. Call Unison at 255 - 1559 to pre-register and for further information. Unison is a not-for-profit multi-arts center located at 68 Mountain Rest Rd. in New Paltz.

Looking Out, Looking In; Look out at the river with the "The Contemporary Hudson" exhibit. Come inside to the beauty of everyday objects with "Pastel Jewels: Still Lifes by Marianne Heigemeir," displaying March 7 - 28 at Arts Society of Kingston on 97 Broadway. The opening reception will be March 7 from 5 - 8 p.m. For information call the Arts Society of Kingston at 338-0331.

"Moments Caught" A warm exhibit of pastel and oil paintings by Dorothy Hellerman in New Paltz opening Feb. 22 with a reception from 4 - 6 p.m. at LaBella Bistro located at 194 Main St. Her exhibit closes April 17.

Wiltwyck Quilters Guild Meeting On Feb. 21 with 9:30 a.m. coffee and the meeting beginning at 10 a.m. at the Town of Ulster Town Hall in Lake Katrine. The event is free to members and \$15 for nonmembers. To register call Shirley at 876-2556 and see the guild's web page at <http://www.wiltwyckquilters.org/> for directions and supply.

THE MUSIC

Freestyle Frolic Winter and Spring 2009 Dances All-Volunteer Community Dances held twice monthly, Saturday evenings from 8:30 - 1 a.m. at 389 Broadway in midtown Kingston. Next events: Feb. 21, March 7 and 21. Barefoot dances, smoke free; no drugs or alcohol. Children must be supervised. Admission is \$5 for adults with teens and seniors at \$2 and children and volunteers free. For information on the Tillson organization call 658-8318, visit www.FreestyleFrolic.org, or theFrolic.tribe.net.

A Perfect Gift: All That Is Jazz Band Performing at the Ulster County SPCA Fur Ball Saturday on March 21 at 5:30 p.m. at the Holiday Inn located in Kingston.

Metropolitan Hot Club Performing on Feb. 28 at 8 p.m. at the Rosendale Café. Concert celebrates the music made popular by legendary guitarist Django Reinhardt, and jazz violinist Stephane Grappelli. An impressive repertoire of period music, newer favorites, and a growing body of original compositions makes for an unforgettable listening experience. Admission to this event is \$10.

See more **calendar** on the page 21



Thai Guest Chef Suntime Perkins will be the next guest chef in the Wednesday dinner series beginning Feb. 25 at the Depuy Canal House. Courtesy photo.

Novi hopes series will pay it forward

Donna Cohn Viertel
BSP Reporter

In an attempt to help the local chefs survive in this challenging economy, Chef John Novi, owner and operator of Chefs on Fire and the DePuy Canal House has started a guest chef series.

Each Wednesday, a local chef will host and prepare a three-course meal to be served that evening. That chef will continue his Wednesday dinners for the next two to four weeks. Novi, who is celebrating the 40th anniversary of the DePuy Canal House, felt it was a win/win situation for everyone and a nice way to commemorate his four decades of nourishing his community.

Like so many others, he too has felt the bite of the economic decline with the closing, "at least for the season, maybe forever," of his third business, the New York Store, which sold homemade baked goods, Canal House coffee and specialty gifts. "Many of us are going through this economic trauma, trying to survive and I thought this series would be a good way to help share the talents of the local chefs with their community."

The three-course, reasonably priced guest chef series began this past January, with Chef Graziano Tecchio of the Downtown Cafe, located on the Strand in Kingston. Graziano also had a tough time with his business. Initially, in an effort to spend more time with his family, he hired a staff to take over in the kitchen and increased his number of seats to 220 only to have to go back down to his original 30 seats and cut the kitchen staff down to himself once again. "It's difficult to be a small business owner," he said, "and compete with the bigger conglomerates."

The Downtown Cafe, once thought to be closed because the phone was disconnected, is still open every day, "but now I operate on my time, doing what I can to share my love with the community, but still realizing that my wife and kids are what is most important."

"I met Graziano 14 years ago," said Novi, "and I liked his Northern Italian cooking."

Graziano, who has been in the business for 30 years admitted that it's

impossible, what a restaurant has to go through to survive. "It has been very difficult, these past two years. I've had to turn off the phone, because I just can't afford it. But I am still here."

As the first guest chef in the series, he said that he did well. "Lots of people approached me and asked when I would be here again, but the idea that the people need to understand is that we must provide for each other. If we don't support each other, then these great times are just memories."

Graziano explained that he did not want to seem pessimistic and emphasized that he was looking forward to being a guest again in the series. "I understand that in this economy, dining out is a luxury, but I am also saying that if people go local, they are making a commitment to empowering the survival of their community. In short, if you shop and dine elsewhere, your community may disappear."

"This series is a way for the chefs of this community to promote themselves and to reach out to their neighbors to share their talents so they may always feel their vitality and their importance," said Graziano. "So that they can do what they love and still provide for their family."

Next up in the series for the next four Wednesdays beginning Feb. 25 is Thai Chef, Suntime (Subkaew) Perkins. As native of Nakhon Sawan, Thailand, she traveled all over the world, "making friends and exchanging recipes of Indian, East Asian, Southeast Asian and Western cuisine." She now resides in Saugerties full time. Suntime moved to the area just eight months ago. "I have family here," she said. "My husband is from New York."

She explained how she met Novi thorough mutual friends. "We talked of food and discussed maybe doing a cooking class together," she said. "He is a very generous man, offering this guest series to the chefs and the people of the community. And I look forward to bringing something new to the table."

"With Thai cuisine, you can enjoy healthy eating," said Suntime. She uses certain herbs and ingredients that benefit the body. With each of her meals served during the series, Suntime will also print a handout with the health

benefits of the items that she put into the menu. "I make lemongrass tea because it has good cleansing properties," she said. "If you've eaten too much or have a hangover, it helps a lot."

Suntime, inspired by the talents of her two grandmothers, who were well respected cooks in their city and by her grandfather, a doctor of herbal medicine, attended Kasetsart University in Bangkok to study Food and Animal Science. Upon returning home, she opened her own restaurant, Yeeseen. Her place soon received nationwide attention, with her appearance on the morning television show, Aroi Nawg Bahn. Since moving locally, she offers both catering and cooking classes. "I love sharing my knowledge with the people of my community," she said. "It's important to teach what you love."

Novi will continue to offer the Wednesday guest chef series to the chefs around the area who are interested in sharing their style of cuisine and also to other area alumni who have since moved to other places in the world. Roy Yamaguchi, who opened the first Roy's in Honolulu, Hawaii, did his externship at the Canal House. Today there are over 36 Roy's locations around the world - 27 in the continental US, seven in Hawaii, one in Japan and one in Guam. Roy will appear on Oct. 21 for the series. Novi was proud and excited that Roy was going back to his old stomping ground. "He told me that he wanted to help celebrate our 40th anniversary this year and would somehow find a day that he could do so."

In addition to helping the chefs of the area, Novi will also begin a guest musician series beginning in May for Canal House alumni and friends. He expressed how he hoped the two series would pay it forward. "It's important to me to do what I can to give back to the community that help sustain my dream these past 40 years and the many more years to come."

For more information on the guest chef series, call the Depuy Canal House at 687-7700 or e-mail office@depuycanalhouse.net or jnovi@hvc.rr.com.