

Business: Rosati's brings tastes of Chicago to Newville

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With the opening of Rosati's Sports Pub in Newville, four experienced restaurant franchise owners, including two Rosati family members, are bringing traditional Italian-style cooking to a new location.

In recent years, the building at 723 E. Ellendale Road has been a number of bar and grills. Finn's Bar and Grill closed in 2011, Dockside Bar and Grill opened in 2013, then closed; Shipwreck Cove opened and closed a year later.

The restaurant's new owners are Dave Naskrent, John Horner, David Rosati, and his son Andrew Rosati. Naskrent and Horner, who have been visiting the Newville area for about 10 years, plan to bring customers back for return visits with good service and quality food.

Naskrent and Horner sat down for an interview after a joint ribbon cutting with the Milton Area Chamber of Commerce and the Edgerton Chamber of Commerce. Both men each have about 25 years in the restaurant business and about 15 years' experience as restaurant owners. The owners/operators own eight Rosati's, including franchises in Madison, Milwaukee, Chicago (south side) and Phoenix, and plan to add seven more by the end of the year.

ITALIAN TRADITION

Why Rosati's?

"The quality of the food," Naskrent said.

"The company. It's been around for 50 years," Horner said.

At the corporate level, Naskrent, who is a Rosati's franchise developer and corporate adviser, said the goal by the end of 2015 is to have another 16 to 18 franchises come online. Today there about 250 Rosati's stores nationwide.

They all have similar menus and food with consistent ingredients, portions and flavor.

"The brand recognition seems to work," Horner said, adding, "we can't do John and Dave's Pizza and be



Ribbon Cutting

The Milton Area Chamber of Commerce and the Edgerton Chamber of Commerce held a joint ribbon-cutting ceremony to welcome Rosati's Sports Pub in Newville.

as successful.”

The Rosati’s tagline is “Celebrating over 50 years of quality and tradition!”

More than 100 years ago Fred Rosati introduced his authentic Italian cooking style to New Yorkers. After the turn of the century, the family moved to Chicago. Five generations later, the Rosati family is still in the pizza business. The first restaurant with the name “Rosati’s Pizza” opened its doors in a Chicago suburb in 1964.

Black and white photos of Rosati’s family members welcome guests to the Newville location, which offers dine-in, catering and carryout options, as well as delivery to Milton and Edgerton areas and about 10 miles into Janesville.

To make the Shipwreck Cove into a Rosati’s, several changes were made inside and out. The Rosati’s logo has the Italian red and green. New seating was added. Sports memorabilia decorates the walls. Black and white checkered table cloths decorate the tables. Two indoor bars now have granite tops. An outdoor bar will be added as the weather warms to look out on the Rock River. Gone is the brick oven. Fresh dough is baked in an oven with a rotating pizza deck that cooks 25 pizzas at a time. Flooring is new throughout. There’s also a new HVAC system, soda dispenser and point of sale system that allows online ordering.

Within the bar areas, there are 36 TVs. At the center of the building, there’s room for dancing to music from a live band. For those who have no interest in watching TV or dancing, there’s a separate dining area.

“We want our customers to come and have an experience, whether that’s socializing or catching up on a game,” Naskrent said.

Rosati’s is a restaurant with a bar, not the other way around, they said.

Naskrent, who lives in the Chicago area, said the Chicago-style food will resonate with the Chicagoans staying at area campgrounds and provide a new taste for locals.

CHICAGO-STYLE

For those who are unfamiliar with Rosati’s pizza, Horner starts by describing the sauce (a sweet, tangy combination of vine-ripened tomatoes, herbs and spices). While the recipe is Italian Chicago, the cheese is comes from Reedsburg.

“Chicago-style” pizza to some means “deep dish.” Made in a pan, with more ingredients, and sauce on top, Horner said it’s like a pie. Rosati’s offers four styles of Chicago pizza (including deep dish). Thin crust is the most popular, Horner reports. There’s also “double dough” and authentic stuffed.

Pizza is the signature dish. Others include “The Cheef” (not “chef”), an Italian beef sandwich baked with mozzarella, and a Chicago-style hot dog. A Vienna all-beef hot dog is served in a steamed poppy seed

bun with mustard, onion, sweet green pickle relish, a dill pickle spear, sliced tomatoes, Sport (medium hot) peppers and a dash of celery salt.

Specialty pastas and salads are also featured. For dessert, there's cannoli or a deep dish cookie with ice cream.

To staff the restaurant, Horner said Rosati's will employ about 60 people, including 25 full-time, depending on the season.

Saverio (Sam) Rosati, the son of Fred Rosati, was known to have said, "Give the people what they want."

With a focus on adequate staffing levels and a variety of food options, Rosati's Sports Pub in Newville seems to fit that motto.