

Pigging out — an Aggie tradition

By RENEE HARRELL
Reporter

If you're looking for a good restaurant with new and different entrees you might have overlooked some restaurants that have been around for a while. Bryan-College Station's finer eating places are adding new entrees and changing some of the old ones on their fall menus.

Hoffbrau Steaks, 317 South College Avenue in College Station, has been in business for two years. This fall Hoffbrau has added a few new items to its menu. One is the 'soon-to-be-famous' enchiladas. They are stuffed with marinated fajita meat, covered with gaucamole and sell for \$4.95.

"We've got some super appetizers," says owner/manager Jack Miesch. "We have a new item called fajita skins for \$4.25. Its potato skins filled with fajita meat. Of course we have our chicken fried steaks for \$4.95, but we are trying to convince people that we're expanding. We are going to have a Sunday brunch with prime rib and champagne. We also have individual deep dish pies."

Hoffbrau Steaks is open Sunday through Wednesday from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. and Thursday until 12 p.m. Friday and Saturday it closes at 1 a.m.

Fish Richard's Half Century House, 801 Welborn Road., specializes in steaks and seafood. Prime rib is \$10.95 and a lunch entree with a vegetable and salad costs \$3.95. Owner/manager Bill Perry says Fish Richard's is an old remodeled house with early 1900 deacor. He says the seven-dining room restaurant also has an extensive wine list.

The well-established College Station restaurant is open for lunch Monday through Friday from 11:30 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. and for dinner Monday through Saturday from 5 p.m. until 10:30 p.m.

Another College Station restaurant is Interurban Eating House, 505 University Drive. Steaks range from \$6 to \$12 and burgers and sandwiches range from \$3.75 to \$5.25. Interurban is open from 11 a.m. until 12 p.m. weekdays and until 1 a.m. on weekends.

New restaurants in the area also could be possibilities if you're looking for something new and different.

JJ. Muggs Restaurant Bar and Grill, which opened in mid-August, is one of the newest dining places in College Station. One house special is the baby-back pork ribs which are slowly cooked for about eight hours. The cost — \$6.95. Another JJ. Muggs specialty is the Philly cheese steak, which is thinly sliced steak,

Thursday 11 a.m. until 11 p.m. and until 12 p.m. on Friday and Saturday.

Freddie Fuddrucker's, 2206 Texas Avenue South in College Station, is a unique restaurant specializing in self-service hamburgers. Customers line up to create their own hamburgers at the condiment bar.

p.m. and Sunday, 12 a.m. until 10 p.m.

If you're hungry for Chinese food, one of the options in College Station is Hunan Chinese Restaurant, 913-G Harvey Road.

Manager Howard Chiu says Hunan uses the Hunan cooking styles from midwest China to make their Chinese food unique.

"It makes a spicier hot dish, sauteed with hot peppers," Chiu says. "We have 14 new dishes out right now."

King crab legs with scallops cost \$7.95. The Hunan smoked duck half is \$9.25. Hunans also serves "shrimp crystal," a lightly fried shrimp dish.

Business hours during the week are from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 5 to 10 p.m. Weekend hours are 12 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. and 5 to 10 p.m.

The China Restaurant, 803 South Main in Bryan, serves the "aggie special" for \$3.95. This includes, wonton soup, sweet and sour pork or chicken, chicken chow mein, fried rice and an egg roll. 'Precious shrimp' is another specialty at The China Restaurant. The shrimp are fried and cooked with Chinese vegetables and sell for \$5.75. This Chinese restaurant is open everyday for supper from 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. and everyday except Tuesday and Saturday for lunch from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

If you're in the mood for seafood, Padre Cafe, 1601 Texas Avenue South in College Station, is open daily from 11 a.m. until 11 p.m. Although Padre Cafe is known for its fajitas, the fresh seafood is also a specialty.

"We get fresh seafood everyday from Shreveport, Louisiana," manager Ricky Martinez says. "It's very nutritious too."

The baked haddock with vegetables sauteed in butter and wine sauce is \$4.55. Shrimp and oysters are big sellers too, Martinez says. He says everything is made fresh daily at Padre Cafe.

"We have a pretty lively atmosphere," Martinez says. "We play '50's and '60's music and occasionally some jazz."

The specialty at Pelican's Wharf, 2500 Texas Avenue South in College Station, is mesquite broiled fresh fish. The cost of this with a baked potato, a salad, ice tea and a

bar drink is \$9.95. Pelican's Wharf has homemade desserts such as cheesecake and black russian cake. Prime rib is also a house specialty. Pelican's Wharf is open from 5 p.m. until 10:30 p.m. Sunday through Thursday and until 11:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday.

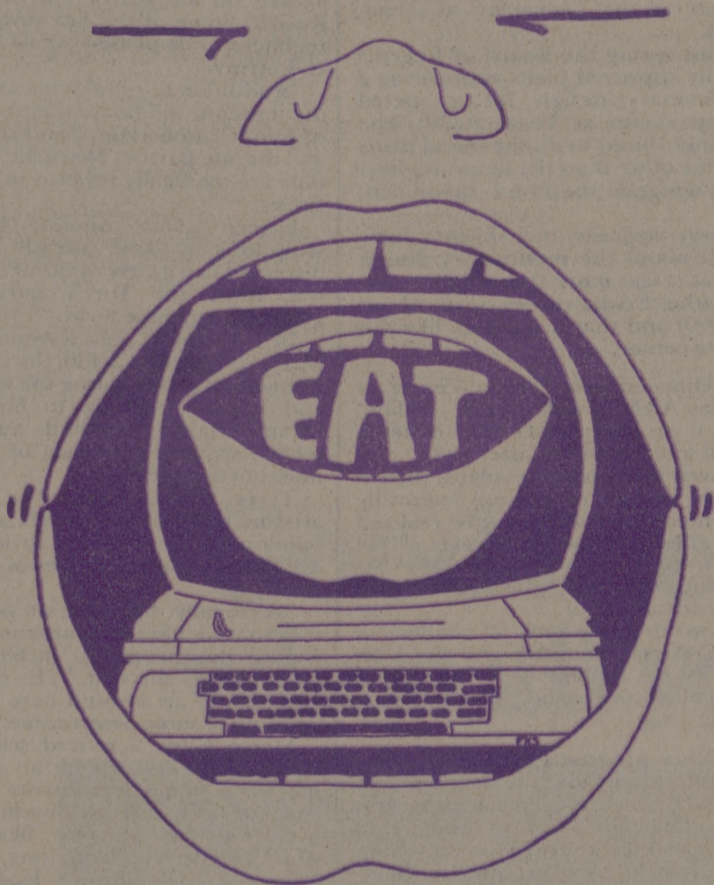
In Bryan, Maxi's, 112 South Main, specializes in crepes. Ranging in price from about \$2.75 to \$3.50, the crepe entrees include, creamy chicken, country beef, broccoli cream sauce and mushroom. Two dessert crepes are 'crepe suzette,' which is oranges, cinnamon and brandy for \$3.25 and 'bananas foster' for \$2.75.

This restaurant has live mellow music, says Diane Thornton, assis-

tant manager. Maxi's is open from 11 a.m. until 10 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday and 11 a.m. until 3 p.m. on Sunday.

J.T. McCords, 2232 Texas Avenue South in College Station, serves seven different burgers. The price range is from \$3.75 to \$4.25. J.T. McCords is also known for its fried vegetable basket. Rib eye steak and potato skins are other specialties at J.T. McCords. Happy hour is 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. everyday. Business hours are from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. Sunday through Thursday and 11 a.m. to 1 a.m. Friday and Saturday.

With the abundance of fine eating places in Bryan-College Station, residents shouldn't have a problem finding a restaurant to suit their taste.



sauteed mushrooms, cheese and a Philly-style roll for \$4.25. Manager Steve Whitis says everything is homemade. He says the casual atmosphere of JJ. Muggs makes it a "fun type place" that plays vintage rock 'n' roll from the late '60's to the mid '70's.

"The enthusiasm of our staff is what makes us stand apart from the rest," Whitis says.

JJ. Muggs, 1704 Kyle Avenue South, is open Sunday through

"We grind our own beef here," manager Gene Rouner says. "We have a glass-encased butcher shop where the customers can watch. Everyday we make our own buns. We have hamburgers, red wurst hickory-smoked sausage, hotdogs, sauteed onions, a bowl of pinto beans and jalapenos. That's our entire menu. We also have a bar here with all call drinks for \$1.50."

Fuddrucker's is open Monday through Saturday 11 a.m. until 11

Cafe lost in time warp

By ROBIN BLACK
Senior Staff Writer

The clock with the blue neon halo around its face reads 12:28 — lunchtime. People shuffle in and out of the restaurant while over in the corner the old Wurlitzer jukebox cranks out strains of Bing Crosby and Glenn Miller doing "Moonlight Cocktail."

In another corner, an aquarium full of goldfish gurgles away as groups, couples and loners are led to tables by menu-toting waitresses.

Beer coasters line the fluorescent lights. Three ceiling fans whirrr overhead and a lighted sign by a cooler full of beer tells the crowd that Hires Rootbeer is the best in the world.

What seems like a scene from a 1950s B-movie is just everyday traffic in the Deluxe Burger Bar. The Deluxe is a semi-fast-food restaurant with a flavor of some decade past, although it's hard to tell if that decade is supposed to be the '40s, '50s, '60s or '70s.

The song list in the old Wurlitzer — no quarters, please, all plays are free — boasts a repertoire of selections spanning half a century: Glenn Miller and the Andrews Sisters representing the 40s; Sam Cooke and Elvis Presley from the 50s; Sam the Sham and Bob Dylan bringing back the 60s; Bruce Springsteen for the 70s and Cyndi Lauper and the Thompson Twins for the 80s-minded crowd.

The customers, too, seem to range in variety as much as the music.

Two old men sit at a table by the pink neon-bordered windows, one sporting a new-looking straw cowboy hat, looking quite the part of the rancher or some facsimile thereof.

Over at the fountain counter, a young couple is oblivious to everything but each other and their cherry cokes.

At another table a group of five Young Urban Professionals enjoy their lunch hour and each other's company.

Still other people dash hurriedly in and out, taking advantage of the take-out counter.

An old wooden Richardson Rootbeer barrel squats on the take-out counter by the computerized cash register, which seems alien to all other decor save the video games that sit unplayed, beeping to no one in particular.

Sitting under the menu on the counter by the computerized cash register is a glass case displaying the endless variety of English, German, Argentinian, Australian and other exotic beers.

The bottles are laid out on a bed of ice cubes reminiscent of the way fresh fish are displayed in the seafood section of a supermarket.

Things start to slow down a little and the take-out counter waits for business as the waitresses catch their breath.

As the blue-haloed clock points out that it's almost 1:30 p.m., the crowd thins noticeably as the Beatles echo "Nowhere Man" from the old jukebox.

Nearby inn has down-home food, down-home service for small cost

By KAREN GILES
Reporter

It's easy to miss, but well worth noticing.

It was renamed the Hempstead Inn 50 years ago, but it's not an inn at all.

The dark blue, white trimmed, wooden framed two-story structure was once a country boarding house until about two years ago. Now it is noted for its country style cooking.

In 1901, the Hempstead Inn, originally named the Pecan Inn, was built facing the railroad tracks.

The locals say the town of Hempstead was nicknamed Six-Shooter Junction, because whenever the train approached, the conductor would insist that the passengers duck down since residents at the inn liked to lean over the balcony and shoot at the train windows.

Since then the inn has been moved to a nearby location in Hempstead, but assistant manager, Holly Joy, says it looks just the same.

With a little imagination, you can

picture yourself approaching a home right out of Huckleberry Finn, but don't take the front walkway because it drops off onto U.S Highway 6. The entrance is easier to reach from the small worn dirt path leading from the parking lot around the side. There are vines entwining the rungs of the little white picket fence that frames the front porch.

Within the two whitewashed wooden front doors, there's a waiting room-gift shop available for guests to browse in if the tables are full. The shop includes a postcard stand featuring various sites in nearby towns, shelves filled with ceramic and fabric hens, wire and wicker baskets, colorful canisters, and bears, bears, bears — ceramic, plastic, big, and little, dozens and dozens of teddy bears.

Visitors can also catch up on their history reading since there's an enormous book resting heavily on the coffee table in the center of the room, filled with yellowed N.Y. Times newspapers from 1949.

A red carpeted staircase leads up to eight unoccupied bedrooms, but Issa Ghazi, the owner, says that sometimes he likes to stay overnight.

The seating arrangement at dinner is family style. Tables accommodate from 12 to 16 people, and the menu features country cooking, all you can eat, and you can shop while you eat, since the walls are decorated with prints that are for sale.

Once you've had your fill, a cashier will be waiting for you near the front door, under a mirrored sign that reads "No smoking, spitting or cussing."

You'll find that the meal will not pinch your pocketbook too much. Lunch is \$6, dinner \$8. Children under 10 eat for half price.

A faded plaster frog sits patiently by the two front doors, just as the regular customers do on the two whitewashed swinging chairs and the two benches.

"After eating, it's sort of a ritual for customers to sit out here one the benches and enjoy the breeze," Joy said.

Cookie companies battle over America's sweet tooth

By RENEE HARRELL
Reporter

Soft cookies — chocolate chip, almond fudge, butterscotch, mint chocolate chip, peanut butter 'n' fudge, coconut, iced oatmeal...

You may have tried one or all of the chewy homemade-tasting cookies that are finding their way into Bryan-College Station supermarkets. You also may have noticed the increasing shelf space the new soft cookies are getting. It looks as if three consumer product giants are bringing a cookie war to Bryan-College Station.

Soft cookie manufacturers fighting for shelf space are the Keebler Co., which makes Soft Batch cookies, Nabisco Brands Inc., which makes Almost Home cookies and Procter & Gamble Co., which makes Duncan Hines cookies.

P&G has filed suit against Keebler, Nabisco and the Dallas-based Frito-Lay division of PepsiCo. Frito-Lay does not distribute its Grandma's Rich 'n' Chewy line of cookies in Bryan-College Station. P&G is charging its three rivals with stealing the patented secrets of its Duncan Hines cookies.

"The secret behind our soft cookie is the crispy outside and chewy inside," says Linda Appleby, public relations manager for P&G. "It's a mixture of two different sugars. They form two slightly different doughs and one is wrapped around the other. The outer dough turns crispy while the inner dough stays soft and chewy."

Appleby says P&G filed the lawsuit last June.

"We filed suit for a patent infringement immediately upon receipt of the patent," Appleby says. "We've had a patent pending since 1979, but just received the patent in June."

A spokesman for Nabisco says a denial of the charge was filed on July 19.

"We have denied all of the allegations in the law suit brought by P&G," says Caroline See, a Nabisco public relations manager. "We filed a denial concerning the patent infringement and unfair competition on July 19."

Keebler has not yet filed a denial. "We've been served with a copy of the complaint," says Craig Stevens, general counselor and secretary for Keebler. "We find it lacks no merit,

therefore, we'll defend it vigorously."

A Keebler spokesman tells Keebler's baking secret.

"They are made with Elfin magic," the Keebler spokesman says. "You know they're made by Elves. We have eight soft cookies out right now. I think our experience with the product is just too brief at this time to be expanding. The soft cookies are a rather new phenomenon."

A Safeway assistant manager says the three rivals have been strongly promoting their products.

"All of them have been promoting their soft cookies," says K.C. Mitch-

ell, assistant manager of the College Station Safeway on South Texas Avenue. "All of the soft cookies have been on sale at different times the last three or four weeks. They're giving us in-store specials to put up somewhere else in the store, not just in the cookie section. Keebler has made a successful attempt at getting their stuff on the shelf. Archway is starting to get pushed out, but I don't think they will. We put up an Archway display last week."

Soft cookie manufacturers fighting for shelf space are the Keebler Co., which makes Soft Batch cookies, Nabisco Brands Inc., which makes Almost Home cookies and Procter & Gamble Co., which makes Duncan Hines cookies.

While Duncan Hines and Almost Home cookies go through distributors, Keebler is a "store-door" distributor for itself. Local distributors say they haven't stopped carrying any of the traditional cookies yet.

Brenham Wholesale, which serves areas of Bryan-College Station, hasn't discontinued any traditional cookies. Head buyer John Schaefer says some stores have just added to their cookie sections. Brenham Wholesale has been carrying Duncan Hines about two months and Almost Home about two weeks.

"They were new products so I went ahead and got them," Schaefer says. "We're real successful with the Duncan Hines. We really can't tell with the Nabisco yet because we've just been carrying them about two weeks. The movement has been more than I thought it would be. They're ordering every week. I know my sales have tripled on the Duncan Hines."

Promotional measures being taken by Nabisco, Keebler and P&G include coupons and free mailing samples. All three are putting out coupons. Duncan Hines is the only one of the three that has sent out free samples.

"We have a sampling 2.3 ounce box of plain chocolate chip cookies that have been sent to a percentage of homes," Appleby of P&G says. In most Bryan-College Station supermarkets, soft cookies cost between \$1.49 and \$1.79 for a 12 ounce bag. Soft Batch is presently having a special for \$1.49, Duncan Hines' regular price is \$1.69 and Almost Home's regular price is \$1.79.



The elegant Fish Richards...



...or the more affordable Charlie's grocery on University Drive, where a scoop of Bluebell ice cream is always served with a friendly smile.