

Belgium House to fill restaurant void

Written by CAROL POMEDAY
Wednesday, 02 May 2012 17:29

Dining spot to be run by Grant Smith in partnership with operator of Prime Minister in Thiensville

An heir to the Smith Bros. fishing and restaurant tradition will bring his expertise to a Belgium restaurant and help revitalize the downtown.

Grant Smith, who used to bus tables, tend bar and work in the retail store at Smith Bros. restaurant in Port Washington before joining the family's fisheries business, will re-open the former Chrissy's Restaurant on Main Street as the Belgium House.

The name was a logical choice, Smith said, after he and his partner Esthimios "Tim" Triantafillou, owner of Prime Minister Restaurant in Thiensville, saw a large photograph behind the bar which depicts the building in the late 1800s. Belgium House is printed on the side of the building.

Smith said the goal is to open July 1 with dinners seven nights a week and gradually add lunches on weekends.

Triantafillou will provide cooks and other kitchen staff from his Thiensville restaurant, Smith said.

Smith, his wife Carla and their daughters Amanda, Nicole, Paige and Madalyn will all work at the restaurant, he said.

"Having a restaurant and having four daughters with weddings in the future is going to be very convenient," Smith said, noting there is a hall for weddings and other gatherings.

The restaurant building is owned by Port Washington developers Mike Speas and his son Matt, who also purchased two adjacent storefronts that they plan to turn into apartments.

"We couldn't be happier," Mike Speas said. "They have a great name and great experience. That's who we were looking for.

"The restaurant is our focus now. It's the anchor of the block. But the other part of the project continues to progress."

Smith said he and Triantafillou talked about being partners in a restaurant for several years and were looking for the right establishment.

"We looked at a couple other restaurants in the area. This one just stood out," Smith said.

"Tim and I fell in love with the character of the building. The old wooden floors are original. They're being resurfaced now. Mike and Matt have done a fabulous job restoring some of the

Belgium House to fill restaurant void

Written by CAROL POMEDAY
Wednesday, 02 May 2012 17:29

interior.”

A new kitchen will be installed, he said.

The menu will be similar to the one at Prime Minister, which features Greek and American food for reasonable prices and daily specials, Smith said.

“Of course, with my family past, we have to have a great fish fry on Fridays,” Smith said. “We plan to be very price conscious. We want to be the place to go for a quality meal and tasty appetizers that are affordable.”

Smith said he wants to forge a relationship with the Luxembourg American Cultural Center in Belgium. He has been talking with Kevin Wester, development director, and manager Sara Jacoby to display artifacts and photos at the restaurant.

Smith said he and his wife plan to keep their day jobs. Smith works for a seafood importer. Carla works at a car dealership.