

Diners and donors

Celebrate food and friends while supporting a good cause

BY HERON

Can you possibly think of a better way to spend an evening? Dinner at My House for Our House invites you to enjoy fine dining in fabulous settings, have fun and meet fascinating people, all while making a contribution to AIDS patients' care.

The unique fund-raiser is in its ninth year. Area chefs again are offering their services to prepare and serve exquisite meals, many in their own homes. The hosts pay for all of the costs involved with their dinner parties and donate all of the proceeds raised to Our House.

Development director Lisa Logie reports generating about \$51,000 from last year's fund-raiser. That represents 6 percent of the organization's annual budget. This year it hopes to reach \$60,000.

Our House was founded in 1988 to serve as a hospice for AIDS patients. Since that time it has become a 12-bed residential care facility with 24-hour medical services. Located in Southeast Portland, it has served 370 men and women, providing specialized care for those in advanced stages of the disease.

Logie explains why Our House is no longer a hospice. "Back in the mid-'90s we averaged a death a week," she recalls. "Now people with AIDS live longer due to the improved medications available. Some people come here to get meds regularly. Some come for good nutrition. Some come to learn new life skills, then they return to the community. Still, 53 percent of people with AIDS do not respond to the new drugs or find the drugs too toxic. So they live out their remaining days at Our House."

A lot of other things have changed since the '90s. "People used to come to us in their 20s and 30s," Logie notes. "Now we see people in their 40s. Also, 25 percent of our clients are women."

Everyone at the organization is grateful for the generosity of the many people involved with Dinner at My House for Our House. Caprial Pence, famed chef and owner of Caprial's Bistro and Wine, and her husband, John, are in their third year as co-chairs of the event. They, like everyone involved, are donating



Pat Jeung loves to entertain in the garden of his home

PHOTO BY MARTY DAVIS

French and Italian foods. "We have something for everyone," he assures, "like rack of lamb with rosemary and thyme or Thai spicy peanut sauce on butternut squash ravioli."

He loves to experiment with textures and flavors. "I don't use a recipe. I create. My menus are always changing."

In fact, Jeung says he has a lot of fun when he is cooking and inventing new dishes. "You kind of know what makes a good combo after a while."

He is especially proud of his mixed drinks, which are similarly multicultural. His specialties include Spanish coffees, lemon drops, cosmopolitans and mai tais.

As his contribution to Dinner at My House for Our House, Jeung is inviting 10

lucky people to his home for an authentic taste of Italy. He will play host to "A 'Big Night' at 'La Dolce Vita'" at 6 p.m. Dec. 9 for \$70 a plate.

Last year he traveled to Italy and researched old recipes for a book he is writing called *Deep Roots*. In it he will share his experiences of shopping for, preparing and serving the food; the family history of each meal; and the recipes themselves.

Jeung, no doubt like all of the generous people involved with Dinner at My House for Our House, enjoys participating in the event. "It's fun," he says, "and it's for a worthy cause."

Reservations at these dinners fill up soon, so you'll want to reserve your choice right away. "We are already three-quarters sold out," Logie says. "We typically sell out all the dinners."

In addition to the 46 signature meals, Logie encourages volunteer hosts to participate in special "Private Events" in which they provide a dinner party for their friends. Each person pays a minimum of \$60, and all of the money is donated to Our House. □

For a brochure or reservations, call the DINNER AT MY HOUSE FOR OUR HOUSE hot line at 503-736-9276.

HERON is a Portland free-lance writer and artist who'd like to attend all of the dinners.

their time and talent. All of the money raised goes directly to patient care.

The planning committee has put together a colorful booklet to advertise the event and to explain how it works. Lucky diners can choose from among 46 meals offered from Sept. 22 through Feb. 16, 2002.

The sheer variety of choices is a challenge to describe. For example, you can spend a weekend at the beach, dine among original artwork, eat in an Italian garden, dine in a Mediterranean wine gallery, indulge in a Japanese tea ceremony or hang out at an Epicurean barbecue. You can step back in time to Mel's Diner in the '50s, share peasant fare in an artist's studio, take in the view from high atop the KOIN Tower, hobnob with area university presidents, participate in a traditional Tet celebration or be serenaded by famed musicians.

Besides fabulous food, atmosphere and fun, you can rub elbows with great chefs and community leaders including former Oregon Gov. Barbara Roberts, Human Rights Campaign founding board member Terry Bean or Oregonian columnist Margie Boule.

This will be the third time Pat Jeung has participated in the fund-raiser. The chef and owner of Chameleon restaurant grew up in Thailand and Laos but attended high school in Portland.

He started cooking when he was just 12. His parents believed their kids should learn to be self-sufficient.

"We all had chores," he relates. "We all

learned to cook and clean. There was no allowance without getting your chores done. Dad is a perfectionist. He cooked, too, and we often cooked for guests. The atmosphere was very disciplined, very old-fashioned."



Now in his 30s, Jeung is a world traveler and a self-taught chef. He bought Chameleon, located in the Hollywood District, five years ago.

"It had been a fast food joint," he explains. "I gutted it and invented what you see here."

What we see is an intimate, romantic place for fine dining "without the stuffy attitude," he says. "You can wear casual clothes here or come in evening dress."

Chameleon diners enjoy a fusion of Chinese, Thai and Laotian food as well as exotic European fare. Jeung especially loves to prepare

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