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Cafe Talk

Spring 2009

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Ask Babs

This is a chance for you, our curious customers, to "Ask Babs" anything about the Halfway or life in general. Be fore-warned that Babs knows a little about a lot, and is an expert on nothing!

With that said, please email your questions to:
askbabs@thehalfwaycafe.com

Q: Babs, I have the worst case of the hiccups, and I have tried EVERYTHING to get rid of them. What do you suggest is the best way to rid myself of these dreaded hiccups?

—Mike Marlboro, MA

A: Well Mike, according to my mother, all you have to do is rub your left ear lobe with your right hand 37 times, while holding your breath. If that doesn't work, I suggest the old faithful...bitters and sugar on a lemon wedge and SUCK IT!

—Babs

Halfway in the News

The Halfway Cafe was recently written up in a great article by Susan Holaday in the Nation's Restaurant News. The title of the article is "Six-unit Halfway Cafe Concept Positioning to Go All the Way", and can be viewed by searching "Halfway Cafe" on www.nrn.com Here are a few excerpts from the article:

"There's nothing halfway about outpacing the field in sales, and Halfway Cafe, a six-unit casual-dining chain based here, is doing exactly that."

"Hospitality consultant David Shinney of DCS Associates LLC sees Halfway Cafe's pricing structure as "appealing in this kind of economy." (con't)

To Our Loyal Customers,

We have decided to organize a quarterly newsletter to keep you in the loop on Halfway Happenings. We will include everything from general Halfway Cafe news, to outstanding employee recognition, to various editorials articles written by Halfway Cafe staff.

We hope to hold your attention for longer than it takes you to drink that 20oz draft, and keep you coming back for more. We want to write about things that YOU want to read about, so if you have any suggestions, or questions, we will gladly welcome your input at comments@thehalfwaycafe.com.

Please enjoy,

From All of Us at the Halfway Cafe

Today's Halfway History Lesson: The Foot in the Ceiling

Ever walk into any of the Halfway Cafe locations and notice above the bar a foot hanging down from the ceiling? Why is that so? Where the hell did it come from? Here's the story....

In June 1991, Dedham being open for only nine months, there was a roof fire which closed the restaurant. All of the insulation in the attic had to be stripped out along with all of the electrical wiring having to be replaced. Under the direction of master electrician, George C.C. Diamond, a crew, inclusive of present Marshfield General Manager, Sean Finn went about the task of cleaning out the attic. It has never been determined where C.C. had been prior to his arrival at work that day but first thing he lectured Sean Finn and the cleanup crew about was paying close attention to staying on the walking beams as to not go through the floor and rip a hole in the restaurant's ceiling.

After disappearing for a brief period of time and no one knowing his whereabouts, George reappeared and immediately went up to the attic to inspect the work. Almost instantly, he fell off the walking beam and ripped a gaping hole in the bar ceiling above the service station.

Standing at the service station pouring himself a soda was David "Big Boy" Steen. Never one to cut C.C. any slack, Big Boy memorialized the moment forever by putting a permanent foot protruding from Dedham's ceiling.

Where Dedham became such a success, the foot was viewed as good luck. Thus there is a foot in all the Halfway ceilings.

Maybe it could be viewed as the positive curse of George C.C. Diamond ?? There you have A forgotten Halfway name but an important person in Halfway history..... George C.C. Diamond.



"They're positioned well because of the value they offer in terms of quality of product, portion and pricing," he said."

"David [Steen] believed that the Halfway Cafe is about its people," Grasso said. "People work with us, not for us."

Halfway Cafe Recipe for the Season

Our Corporate Chef, Steve Allegro, has provided a recipe for you to try at home!

Lemon Chicken Pasta

Ingredients:

1 oz Olive Oil

7 oz skinless chicken breast, cut into strips

2 thin slices lemon

3 oz sliced mushroom

3 oz sliced zucchini

4 oz chicken stock

1/2 fresh lemon

1 Tbsp chopped fresh cilantro

8 oz cooked penne pasta

Salt and Pepper to taste

Directions:

Heat saute pan. Add oil, get hot.

Add chicken meat, sear to brown well.

When half cooked, turn chicken, add mushrooms and zucchini. When chicken is almost done, squeeze the juice of the lemon in and add the chicken broth.

Bring to a boil and reduce slightly.

Add cilantro, pasta, toss well. Season, put in serving bowl. Garnish with fresh cilantro sprig and lemon slices.

Happy Birthday Marlboro!

There are few milestones in the restaurant business as special as the 10th Anniversary. It is as much a sign of perseverance as it is a sign of success. So it is with great pride that we announce the 10th Anniversary of our Marlboro store. Every restaurant goes through its ups and downs, but we are still going strong in Metrowest and we couldn't have done it without YOU! As a gesture of appreciation for all of our loyal customers over the years, we will be turning back the clock TEN YEARS on the prices of some of our most popular menu items. From tips to wings to pizzas, there is a bargain to be had for everyone. Our special menu pricing will last all week starting Memorial Day, Monday, May 25th and the festivities will culminate with our Birthday Party on Sunday, May 31st at 1 pm. It will be a day for all ages with food, fun, and ... of course... cake!

Milky's Useless Facts

By John "Milky" Adams

For my first installment of Milky's Useless Facts, I'm going to focus on September 14, 1990 when we opened our doors to the flagship Halfway in Dedham. Other interesting but useless events that occurred on this date are:

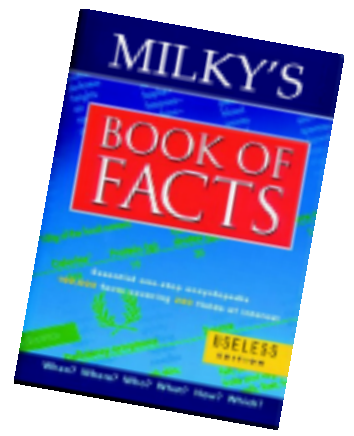
The Red Sox were shut out 4-0 by the White Sox but still maintain a 3 game lead in the A.L. East.

Ken Griffey Ken Griffey Jr. become the first Father-Son duo in Major League history to hit back-to-back home runs.

The Patriots continue their workout in Indianapolis for Sunday's game against the Colts. They will win the game 16-14 but it turns out to be their only victory of the season.

Former Red Sox relief pitcher Chad Bradford turns 16.

Troubled British singer Amy Winehouse turns a very innocent 7 yrs old.



Hall of Fame Party

This year we will hold our 2nd Annual Halfway Cafe Hall of Fame Party. We host this event to honor Halfway Cafe employees and customers who have been a part of the Halfway Cafe family for five years or more.

This year the event will be held on Sunday May 3rd at our Holbrook location. All previous inductees, along with all other staff members are invited to attend. All new members being inducted into the Hall of Fame are introduced we will all have a few laughs in regards to stories that involve each individual from those past 5 years! There are well over 25 people in the Halfway Hall of Fame.



New staff inductees into the Hall of Fame this year are:

Shannon Baiona (Dedham), Bobby Donato (Dedham), Rachel Dubin (Marlboro), Stephanie Carmel (Marlboro), Kristen Killeen (Dedham), Diana Lederman (Dedham Office), Karen Schredni (Dedham)

If you see any of these people please congratulate them, and perhaps ask them about their funniest Halfway memory!



Featured Halfway Cafe Employee: Steve Allegro, Corporate Chef

Allow us to introduce one of the master minds behind all of our Halfway Cafe kitchens...

Brought up in Boston, Steve graduated Boston Latin School class of 1978. From there he went on to graduate from Cornell University School of Hotel Administration in 1983. He also graduated The Culinary Institute of America in 1985.

Steve has worked in kitchens since the age of 15, all through high school and college, and attained his first chef job at age 25. Steve successfully ran many kitchens in California, Seattle, Texas, and mostly the Boston area. These restaurants included small upscale bistros, large hotels, a large delicatessen, and various other style restaurants. Prior to coming to work with the Halfway Cafe, Steve owned and operated his own cafe and takeout operation for 4 years. We have been lucky to have had Steve working with the Halfway Cafe since July 2007.