

Local business derived from hot dog stand

BY JARED WASHBURN
For the Dixie Sun

"No mystery meat! No mystery meal!"

That's the promise from The Dogfather owner Joe Kuzmanic.

"It's a phrase that resonates with both hot dog aficionados and those that delight in a neighborhood casual ambience, tainted with ethnic overtones," he said.

The restaurant is located at 1091 N. Bluff St. Unit 105, on the corner of Sunset Boulevard and Bluff Street. November will mark its third anniversary.

Kuzmanic promises hot dogs customers can't refuse, plus sausages, sandwiches, steak fries, beer battered onion rings and more.

The name The Dogfather stemmed from "The Godfather," and the thematic approach for the business is written on the walls. Paintings inside show images representing Italian mafia men and Molls (mafia sweethearts), just like the kind shown in the movies. The artwork captures the whole mafia genre of "The Godfather" and the sausage-style business.

The Dogfather was an idea that was conceived in the heart and imagination of Kuzmanic. His wife, Joyce, worked in real estate, business and tax law as a paralegal for more than two decades before marrying Joe and joining him in his business ventures.

Having previously resided and owned a business in St. George, Joe Kuzmanic sold his California business interests and returned to St. George in 2002. He was determined to introduce his new entrepreneurial idea in the restaurant business.

"I started The Dogfather with a classic hot dog cart in front of The Home Depot in Washington," he said. "My hot dogs were well received, and the

demand grew. As a result of the interest, The Dogfather restaurant at Sunset Corner was opened."

Joe Kuzmanic said he loves the St. George area, but he took a risk to start the business. After being in the business for 5 1/2 years he sees the potential and prospect in moving the business forward. Plans to expand the restaurant in the future are to multiply the business and target cities like Salt Lake City and Las Vegas.

"We expect to be in a position to offer such opportunities as early as 2008," Joe Kuzmanic said. "So many people have told us that they would love to have a business like ours. We are working with great care to meet those demands in a way that assures people far and wide enjoy the same ambience, personal attention, and fun and fabulous food that has originated right here in our own town."

Joyce Kuzmanic said hitting the 30s and 40s in age can be tough with a career change.

"This is America," she said. "We are not bound and chained. Spending two-thirds of our lives working demands, I think that we take risks (The other one-third is spent sleeping!). We sold out of a million-and-a-half dollar business to try something new. I encourage anyone to try it. What's the worst thing that can happen? We could fail! So what? Then we pick ourselves up and try again!"

The Kuzmanics said if the entire goal for The Dogfather was location, it may have been started on the boardwalk at the beach. They chose what they felt in their heart: St. George.

"It is one of the delights of this small little unimposing restaurant," Joyce Kuzmanic said. "All the comforts it affords to customers: coming alone, with a

friend or associate, or an entire party."

Manager Russ Smith said since the first day he came into the restaurant, he has not been able to leave.

"Now that [I'm] manager, I feel like I belong to something real important," he said. "I can't wait to see what the future

will bring."

Smith said the environment he helps The Dogfather serve is more like an intimate and personal relationship with the customers.

"They all know my name and are friendly," Smith said. "It's like sitting and having lunch with somebody."

He said a job is some

thing that a person has to do, and this job is something he looks forward to doing.

Joe Kuzmanic said students who bring this article and their ID card into the restaurant can add a free combo to their meal (small drink and fries).

"There are a myriad of ways you can build a hot dog," Joyce Kuzmanic

said. "Every region has its own unique style. We have pretty much all the ingredients available to you to get very, very close, if not better, than your favorite memory!"

The Dogfather is open Monday through Saturday 11 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.



Owner Joe Kuzmanic fries onion rings for a customer. The Dogfather offers a variety of hot dogs, sandwiches and other foods.

Find good holiday, regular desserts in town

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Sometimes the best thing to look forward to when the holidays roll around is the variety of delicious, fattening deserts that come with the change in weather.

Here is a list of some of some of the best treats of this year's holiday season, along with a few that are good any time of the year:

1. Pie: Croshaw's Gourmet Pies, located at 900 S. Bluff, is a great little shop and is well worth the gas money to get there. Croshaw's has 34 different flavors of pies, as well as soups, salads and sandwiches. Their pumpkin pie has just the right amount of spices without being too overpowering, and the crust is nice and flaky. The lemon cream cheese pie is also very good, with just a thin layer of lemon gelatin on top of the cream cheese. A single slice of pie ranges from \$2.19-2.39, a worthy sacrifice for any college student.

2. Holiday shakes: Iceberg Drive Inn, 222 E. St. George Blvd., has great shakes. They just don't have great holiday shakes. Their pumpkin shakes are either not mixed well or are not given enough flavoring. Either way, they taste more like vanilla shakes with just a hint of pump-



Pies are a No. 1 dessert for fall. Some of the favorites are pumpkin, pecan and lemon meringue.

kin spice. Perhaps their peppermint shake coming in December will prove more promising. Iceberg's shakes range from \$3 and up, depending on how many flavors one chooses to add. However, a really good pumpkin shake can be purchased at

Sconecutter, located at 700 S. 706 East. These shakes are really good and thick, especially with cheesecake chunks, which are only 50 cents to add. The price range for shakes there is just \$1.99-2.49.

3. Ice cream chimichangas: Anyone

who can say no to one of these needs to have his or her head and taste buds examined. This desert can only be purchased at Don Jose's Mexican restaurant, located at 1183 E. 100 South, and is currently free with the purchase of a meal. This desert is

basically heaven in a deep-fried, vanilla ice-cream-filled tortilla. The best part is the large amounts of caramel, fudge and whipped cream that cover the top. It is definitely big enough to feed two people. That is, if they are both willing to share.

4. Donuts: Daylight Donuts, 67 N. 700 East, is a quaint little store that packs a lot of competition for the donut world. Their prices are especially reasonable, ranging from 67-99 cents apiece for the fancy donuts. They have a wide-variety of donuts, including one that looks like a glazed blueberry muffin. This one is especially flavorful and better than one might expect.

5. Hot drinks: Starbucks has got to be proud of their fantastic pumpkin spice latte. With two locations of 85 N. Red Cliff Drive and 1091 N. Bluff, it's easy to see why people wait around for this seasonal classic with just the right amount of the beloved pumpkin taste. Prices for this drink range from \$3.50-4.35, depending on the size. Starbucks will also be coming out with its famous Christmas blends of coffee in the near future. While hot chocolate is not a complicated drink to make, there are certain locations that offer more than others. The best hot chocolate in St. George is found at (surprise) Chevron locations. Their hot chocolate is always richly flavored, and they offer a hot liquid marshmallow additive that reminds one of mom's best hot cocoa.