

CH W *Line*

Culinary Historians of Washington, D.C.

November 2012

Volume XVII, Number 3

Welcome Back!

*Renew Your
Membership in
CHoW NOW!*

The membership year runs from September 1 to August 31. Annual dues are \$25 for individuals, households, or organizations. Dues include e-mail delivery of the newsletter *CHoW Line*.

Dues are \$35 for members who also wish to receive a mailed, paper copy of the newsletter.

In addition to receiving *CHoW Line*, other benefits of membership include priority registration for field trips, eligibility to vote, hold office, and serve on committees.

Members also receive all meeting notices, special interest notices via GoogleGroups, and a printed membership roster.

CHoW/DC publishes *CHoW Line* eight times each year. More information can be found at www.chowdc.org.

SEE PAGE 9 to join or renew your membership.

More Than Bars, Brats, and Beer: Wisconsin's Traditional Foods



Claire Cassidy was born in Madison, WI, to two professors, one fascinated by words, the other by foods, both immigrants, France and Jamaica.

Claire says, "At home we daily ate 'French,' which was difficult at a time when thyme and oregano were considered 'foreign.' For birthdays we ate 'Jamaican.'

At school I enjoyed saffron-rich Scandinavian goodies sent by home-based mothers, while restaurants introduced fried chicken and (eventually) pizza. Weekends we'd explore the countryside, my father an ace at finding wild foods, and equally willing to test country restaurants for pasties, bars, cheeses, and sausages, as long as he could interview the owners about their special names and origins." Eventually, Claire became a nutritional/medical anthropologist, traveling away from Wisconsin and realizing, in retrospect, how special both the foods, and the food-fascination, are, in her home state.

**Speakers: Shirley Cherkasky
and Claire Cassidy**
Sunday, November 11
2:30 to 4:30 p.m.

**Bethesda-Chevy Chase Services Center,
4805 Edgemoor Lane, Bethesda, MD**



Shirley Cherkasky was born in a small city on the northern edge of Wisconsin and the western shore of Lake Michigan. She has lived in several other places in Wisconsin's eastern and southern areas and enjoyed the wonderful things to eat and drink throughout the state.

She is fascinated with its residents' food obsession that has persisted during the more than 450 years from the time when its Native American peoples had to make room for immigrants from Europe, Asia, Latin America, and other parts of the world.



Culinary Historians of Washington, D.C. (CHoW/DC)

founded in 1996, is a nonprofit, educational organization dedicated to the study of the history of foodstuffs, cuisines, and culinary customs, both historical and contemporary, from all parts of the world.

www.chowdc.org

Dues to: Bruce Reynolds
6804 Hampshire Rd.
McLean, VA 22101

What Happened at the September 9 Meeting?

Vice President **Katy Hayes** called the meeting to order at 2:40 p.m. There were 36 attendees.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

To reach a wider audience on your announcements of events, symposiums, culinary tours, blogs, exhibits and other CHoW related matters, members are reminded and encouraged to submit the information in advance to *CHoW* Line Editor **Dianne Hennessy King** tuckking@aol.com or CiCi for the chow-dc@google-groups.com.

Treasurer **Bruce Reynolds** reported that CHoW received confirmation of its 501(c)(3) nonprofit classification from the IRS as of September 11, 2012. Thank you to Bruce for making this a reality.

The field trip to Claude Moore Colonial Farm is scheduled for November 3. Details were sent from the CHoW google-groups.com. Everyone is welcome. There is a small fee for each person attending.

The area premiere of "I Love to Eat" is a "zesty portrait of" James Beard, "America's first foodie." The play will be at the Round House Theatre from October 17 to November 4. For tickets: www.roundhousetheatre.org or 240-644-1100.

Katy Hayes brought a long wood handle which had carvings at its pointed end. It was identified as a Lithuanian cookie mold.

Katherine Livingston brought a spatula-looking tool with a narrow/slotted head that she bought recently in Istanbul. The Turkish tour guide had identified the implement as a cake knife.

DOOR PRIZES for CHoW members attending meetings: Thank you to Claudia Kousoulas for donating cookbooks as door prizes.

PROGRAM

Katy introduced speaker James G. Gibb, archaeologist, who spoke on "Making Cheese: From Kitchen to International Corporation, 1850-1900." He provided Katy with a hand-out for e-mail distribution.

Meeting adjourned 4:09 p.m. Thank you to members who assisted with resetting the meeting room.

REFRESHMENTS: Thank you to our members:
Francine Berkowitz Lemon Cookies
Audrey Hong Triple Ginger Bars
Claudia Kousoulas Cranberry Cheddar Cookies
Jane Olmsted Aztec Chocolate Cake
Amy Snyder Polly-o String Cheese

CHoW Programs 2012-2013

September 9, 2012. Deb Peterson, "Packaging in the 18th Century: What Came in What?"

October 14, 2012. Jim Gibb, "Making Cheese: Cheese Factories and the Transformation of New York State"

November 11, 2012. (Veteran's Day). Shirley Cherkasky & Claire Cassidy, "More Than Bars, Brats, and Beer: Wisconsin's Traditional Foods"

December 9, 2012. Michael Olmert, "The Architecture of Taste: Kitchens, Smokehouses, and Dairies in the 18th Century"

January 13, 2013. Regina Newport & Evelyn Bunoan, "Philippine Cuisine: History and Culture in a Caldero"

February 10, 2013. (Chinese New Year). Scott Seligman and Sasha Gong, "The Cultural Revolution" (their cookbook, recently published, on Chinese food in this period)

March 10, 2013. Pat Reber, "Civil War Bake Ovens in the U.S. Capitol Building in D.C."

April 14, 2013. Cooperative Supper (theme to be determined by members), Alexandria House

May 5, 2013. Amy Riolo & Sheilah Kaufman, "Turkish Cuisine and the Ottoman Culinary Legacy in the Arab World"

Thanks to Anne Whitaker for her continuous and generous monthly contribution of providing beverages and supplies.

Respectfully submitted,
Audrey Hong, Recording Secretary

We had a number of requests to print the recipes of two of the refreshments that were brought to the meeting. See the recipes on page 3.

Welcome, New Members!

- **Javier Cabezas** and **Audrey Staples** - World cuisines; sustainable agriculture
- **Jody** and **Isabel Cabezas** - Historical methods of cooking; food security & policy; sustainable agriculture
- **Katie Egan** - American cuisine--1950s to present; cook books; food science; nutrition
- **Elizabeth J. Nosek** - 17th Century; brewing; gardens
- **Ann Wass** - Early 19th century; open hearth
- **Diana Rodum & Michael Hoon**
- **Maureen Blum** - Became interested in food history from attending the meeting on rum



Culinary Humor

By Tom Weiland

On a free afternoon, or perhaps more likely, an afternoon when you're avoiding productivity, you may flip through the channels on TV. With hundreds of channels available, it's an ever more daunting task just to blow off time. Remember the era of black and white TVs? You may get lucky and find some old black and white sitcoms.

Certainly the queen of black and white comedy was Lucille Ball (1911-1989). Somehow, "I Love Lucy" managed to transcend years, generations, and cultures, and was mostly politically correct even by today's standards. Among the reasons for this: food comedy. Food unites people, and so does food comedy.

Off the top of your head, how many food-based skits do you remember from "I Love Lucy"? Of course you remember the most popular of all time, Lucy in the chocolate factory. www.youtube.com/watch?v=8NPzLBSBzPI But do you remember, in the same episode, her husband Ricky and neighbor Fred were staying home, learning domestic skills? Do you remember Fred's inch-high 7-layer cake ("...didn't rise very much."), Ricky's exploding chickens, or their inadvertent volcano of rice (about "one pound per person")? www.youtube.com/watch?v=tcmHUCB0HD4&feature=related

The food comedy certainly didn't stop there. Many of her most popular skits revolved around food. Do you remember her stomping grapes into wine, which eventually turned into a food fight? www.youtube.com/watch?v=8RMyyvF48GTg&feature=related Smuggling a large cheese, disguised as a baby, on board an aircraft (pre-9/11, of course)? www.youtube.com/watch?v=ujMpb6dLFOM How about sneaking eggs INTO a henhouse to motivate the hens – only to be diverted to Tango practice? www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fr7jcdqli08&feature=related Or hamburger competitions? www.youtube.com/watch?feature=endscreen&v=doUYH3Uria4&NR=1 Feeling run down? How about a big spoonful of Vitameatavegamin? With subtitles! www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Rvxxa66Co4

During your next down-time, look for the old sitcoms, and see how often they used food to get a laugh. You'll find them on TV, YouTube, TVLand, and DVDs at your local library.

Cheers! TW

Audrey Hong made Triple Ginger Bars. Audrey said, "I love ginger for both its flavor and its holistic value as a spice. Next time, I will add more ginger (probably the fresh ginger root) and not finely chop the crystallized ginger. I want more of the ginger zing!"

Triple Ginger Bars

By Audrey Hong

- 1 package of white cake mix or made from scratch cake mixture
- 1/2 cup butter or margarine, melted
- 2 eggs
- 1/4 cup finely chopped crystallized ginger
- 1 tablespoon grated ginger root
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 2 tablespoons decorating sugar crystals

1. Heat oven to 350 degrees F. Grease bottom only of rectangular pan, 13x9x2 inches, with shortening or spray with cooking spray.
2. Stir cake mix, butter and eggs in large bowl with a spoon until well blended. Stir in the remaining ingredients except for the sugar. Press dough in pan with greased fingers. Sprinkle top of dough with sugar.
3. Bake 18 to 23 minutes or until edges are very light gold brown. Cool completely, about 2 hours. For bars, cut dessert into 6 rows by 4 rows.

Claudia Kousoulas brought Cheddar Cranberry "Cookies" that combined sweet cranberries with savory cheese, a treat in honor of our speaker's presentation about cheese.

Cheddar Cranberry "Cookies"

By Claudia Kousoulas

- 1/2 cup butter
- 1 1/2 cups grated cheddar
- 1 1/2 cups white flour
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/3 cup finely chopped dried cranberries

1. Cream the butter and cheese together. Sift together the flour, salt, and baking powder.
2. Combine the flour and butter mixtures, adding in the cranberries.
3. Shape the dough into a log, wrap in plastic wrap and chill for an hour or overnight. (Here's a nice tip--for very round logs, roll the wrapped dough in a paper towel tube that you've cut open along its length).
4. Slice and bake for about 9-10 minutes at 350 degrees F.

News from Culinary Associations

Culinary Historians of Chicago

Food Writing Workshop
Presented by Andrew Smith
Food Scholar, Editor and Author

Saturday, November 17, 2012, 10 a.m. to Noon
Kendall College, School of Culinary Arts
900 N. North Branch St., Chicago

This fast-paced workshop covers the basics: query letters, writing articles for newspapers and magazines, food book and cookbook proposals, ebooks, recipe writing, restaurant reviewing, blogging, etc. It is intended as a brief introduction for those interested in entering the field.

Andy Smith conducts the acclaimed Roger Smith Food Writing conference in New York City and teaches Food Studies at the New School University in New York. He is the editor of the *Oxford Encyclopedia of Food and Drink in America*, and has edited or authored more than 20 books. Mr. Smith will be conducting a Culinary Historians Program preceding the workshop.

www.greatermidwestfoodways.com/index.php/page/CHCNovember2012.html

Culinary Historians of New York

Ancestral Pots and Cucharamamas: A Personal Journey Through Latin American Cooking with Maricel Presilla

Wednesday, November 14, 2012, 6:30 p.m.
Park Avenue United Methodist Church, 106 East 86th Street, New York, NY 10028

From roots in medieval Spain, through Mexico, the Caribbean, and South America, the food of Latin America is rich and multilayered, with techniques and flavors that both distinguish and unify them. Maricel Presilla will take us on her journey into the homes and soup pots of every Latin American country, in search of the *cocina criolla*, “of the land.” From Brazilian feijoada, to Mexican moles, to the matriarchs of Ecuadorian Andes and their soup spoons or *cucharamamas*, she will describe the ways that these many cooking heritages are related and yet utterly individual. A reception featuring dishes from Maricel’s new book, *Gran Cocina Latina: The Food of Latin America* (W.W. Norton, 2012) will precede the lecture.

Maricel Presilla is a chef, restaurant-owner, and scholar. The James Beard Foundation named her Best Chef in the Mid-Atlantic Region for her work at *Cucharamama* and *Zafra*, her two restaurants in Hoboken, NJ. She has a doctorate from New York University in medieval history. It was through her research on medieval Spain that she came to explore the rich, multilayered world of Latin American cooking that she documents in her definitive, recently published book, *Gran Cocina Latina*. For further information, www.culinaryhistoriansny.org/events.html

Making Cheese: From Kitchen to International Corporation, 1850-1900

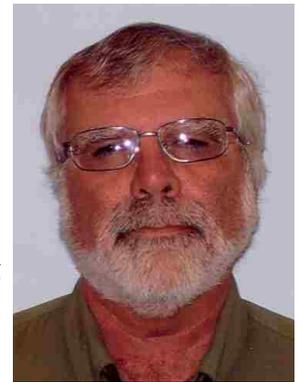
By James G. Gibb

The emergence of cooperative and privately owned cheese factories in the Northeastern and Upper Midwestern United States and in portions of Canada in the 1850s and 1860s lured cheddar cheese making out of farm kitchens. Farm families increasingly engaged in dairy farming to supply the new factories, abandoning sheep-raising and deemphasizing the regions’ staple crop, wheat. The transition resulted in higher land values and farm incomes, and the production of a vendible, transportable commodity of reliable quality and a ready international market.

In this presentation, I tried to offer a coherent narrative about the advantages and limitations of factory production of cheese, the forces behind its meteoric rise, and the ways in which this new economic focus transformed the agriculture of New York State. Archaeological investigations at the Columbus Center Cheese Factory in the central part of the state, coupled with analyses of local farm census data, helped me to create a sense of what these factories were like, how they operated, and the great risk they posed to their communities.

Cheese factories developed decades before the invention and widespread adoption of the automobile. The distance that a farmer could reasonably transport milk on a daily basis – two to three miles – precluded factory expansion: unable to expand the milk sheds that provided the essential ingredient to cheese, factory owners did not expand their facilities. They expanded production by building additional facilities or buying those of their neighbors. Generally, they dumped whey (90% by weight of milk) into local creeks rather than using it as a nutritious food in promoting hog raising, with its attendant products of ham and bacon.

Factory owners consolidated cheese production in the 1870s and 1880s, with individual families and partnerships monopolizing production in their respective towns and counties. In central New York, they sold their factories to railroad companies. Those companies, interested in the fees their milk trains could earn shipping fluid milk, promptly locked the factory doors and told the farmers to bring their milk to the rail stations...they would not reopen the factories. Those farmers living within two or three miles of a station were forced to pay whatever rates the railroads chose to offer. Those living farther were out of business. Much of the depopulation of New York’s former “cheese basket” and abandonment of farm land is attributable to the concentration of production in the hands of the few who then profited through sale to the railroads, at the incalculable expense of their neighbors. The role of the railroads in this process contributed to the creation of the Interstate Commerce Commission to protect the interests of farmers by restraining the railroads.



Book Review

Hoppin' John's Low Country Cooking: Recipes and Ruminations from Charleston and the Carolina Coastal Plain

by John Martin Taylor
University of North Carolina Press
2012, \$25.00 paper, 345 pages

Review by **Claudia Kousoulas**

I'm sure more than one CHoW member can pull the 1992 edition of this book off their shelves, but for those who can't, here is an opportunity to discover a culinary history classic.

Today, talk of local produce, heirloom varieties, and authentic recipes is part of the common conversation, but when John Martin Taylor came upon *Old Receipts from Old St. John's*, even though he had grown up just a few miles from that church, he could recall very few of the book's recipes — rice bread, sorrel omelets, fennel soup.

Using that book and others, Taylor started on a journey to resurrect those lost dishes and ingredients. He did his research, but also talked to older cooks, only some of whom could recall dishes. Some dishes had been lost to post-Civil War poverty, and others were lost to the economic pressures of industrialized farming and food production.

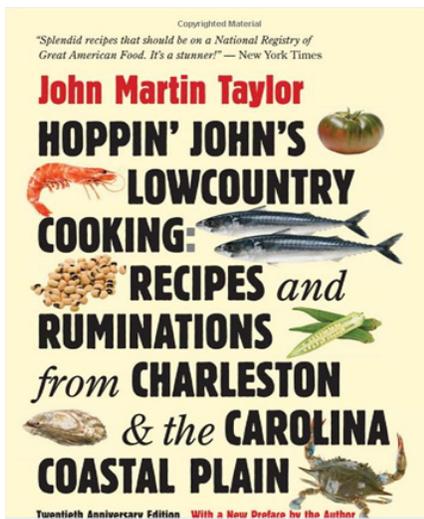
The distinctive foodways of the Lowcountry — the area from the coastline to the Fall Line — were the product of a brutal slave economy, reliant on the knowledge of enslaved West Africans who brought their rice growing knowledge, and whose foods drifted into plantation dishes, as Taylor notes, hot peppers tossed into a mild English stew. There are also West Indian flavors — nutmeg, coconut, and vanilla — that perfume the food.

As Taylor writes, "It is not European, African, or West Indian dishes specifically that characterize Lowcountry cooking; rather it is the nuances of combination and respect for the past that make the cuisine unique." Techniques and ingredients range from the Geechee dishes of the Sea Islands, which were long separated from the mainland by oceans and rivers, to the cooler hills of the Piedmont for apples and unique farm produce, such as Sieva beans, "the tiniest, most delicious of the butter beans and quite unlike any limas grown elsewhere."

With this book, Taylor can be held responsible for the delightful resurgence of shrimp and grits on menus around the country, for the availability of stone ground grits through his online store (and also at Anna St. John's booth at the Kensington Farm Market), and for the current interest in recapturing lost varieties and flavors.

Claudia Kousoulas is an urban planner who also writes cookbook reviews.

Note: John Martin Taylor was a speaker at CHoW.



A Sampling of Culinary History organizations

Compiled by **Dianne Hennessy King**

The Culinary Historians of Boston
www.culinaryhistoriansboston.com

The Culinary Historians of New York (CHNY)
www.culinaryhistoriansny.org

Historic Foodways Society of the Delaware Valley (HFSDV)
www.facebook.com/pages/Historic-Foodways-Society-of-the-Delaware-Valley/295749427142739

Culinary Historians of Washington, D.C.
www.chowdc.org

Culinary Historians of Piedmont North Carolina
www.chopnc.com

Culinary Historians of Ann Arbor
www.culinaryhistoriansannarbor.org

The Culinary History Enthusiasts of Wisconsin (CHEW)
www.chew.wisconsincooks.org

Culinary Historians of Chicago
www.culinaryhistorians.org

The Southern Foodways Alliance (SFA)
www.southernfoodways.org

The New Orleans Culinary History Group
www.tulane.edu/~wclib/culinary.html

The Center for the Study of Southern Culture
www.olemiss.edu/depts/south/foodways/code/home.htm

Association for the Study of Food and Society
www.food-culture.org

Culinary Historians of Canada
www.culinaryhistorians.ca

Greater Midwest Foodways Alliance
www.GreaterMidwestFoodWays.com



Walking (and Eating!) Italian Tour of St. Louis' "The Hill" District

Culinary Byways

By CiCi Williamson

The colors of the Italian flag – red, white, and green – pervade “The Hill” district in its banners, storefronts, and even its fire hydrants. These same colors also represent the foods I experienced on a culinary tour of St. Louis’ Italian neighborhood: white for pasta, ravioli, and Provel cheese; red for marinara sauce and sausages; and green for, well, greens.

“The Hill is within the city’s highest elevation, a “lofty” 614-feet above the Mississippi River. The area was settled mostly by Northern Italians with some Sicilians. I was with a group of culinary professionals taking a pre-conference tour prior to Les Dames d’Escoffier International’s annual meeting.



At Mama Toscano’s Ravioli, we picked up our tour guide Joseph De Gregorio, who did not seem to know we were food experts, and did seem to be related to most of the purveyors we visited. Mama Toscano’s, a fifth-generation “mom-and-pop” shop, turns out almost 7,000 handmade

ravioli per day under the watchful eye of USDA inspector Kendall Osborn. Workers roll a giant dough ball to 4x6-ft. on a floured marble work surface. Half the dough is spread with a cooked meat mixture of beef, pork, spinach, eggs, celery, onions, and Romano cheese in a ratio of 2/3 filling to 1/3 dough. After the dough is folded over the filling, the run is cut into 240 ravioli using a wooden ravioli rolling pin. Some ravioli are sold fresh and frozen; some are dipped in egg wash and crumb coated to make the toasted (fried) ravioli invented here in the 1940s.

By special permission, we were allowed to tour the Volpi Foods Italian Meat Company, begun in 1902. John Moellering guided my group as we saw being made *mortadella*, *coppa*, *capocollo*, *salamì*, *spinata* (flat salami), *pancetta*, *sopressata*, *prosciutto*, and *culatello*. The products are made from fresh meat delivered by local suppliers.



Garbed in hairnets and white disposable coats, we traipsed from cold curing rooms to warm fermenting rooms to hotter smoking rooms. Weekly, Volpi turns out 8,000 pounds of *pancetta* (un-smoked bacon cured for three weeks) and 200,000 pounds of salami along with 100,000 hams in various stages of production. A fresh ham weighing 28 pounds ends its 170-day curing at 15 pounds.



While touring the various rooms where salamis are fermenting, we noticed a difference in aroma as the meat products mature. John said, “Dry curing is one of the least understood processes. It is dependent on the water, protein, and fat content and its pH.” The salamis are hung on sticks that have been used more than 100 years, but the *spinata* are laid on racks to keep their flat shape.



After the tour, we sampled various Italian-style meat products, and then headed for lunch at Mama Campisi’s, a restaurant owned by De-Gregorio’s cousin. As my son would say, “It is what it is.” The restaurant food typifies traditional Italian-American fare of the mid-20th century and is not representative of authentic regional cuisine in Italy. We ate toasted ravioli, an iceberg lettuce salad with

a very sweet dressing, and chicken speidini atop spaghetti. The salad also contained Provel cheese, a processed mixture of provolone, Swiss, and white cheddar. The bland, buttery cheese is a St. Louis creation and is rarely used elsewhere except on the city’s super-thin, yeast-less pizza crust and in other dishes.



At Vitale’s Bakery, we sampled tiny cannoli and other bakery products. We learned that Goey Butter Cake is a St. Louis specialty, but the bakery sold only Goey Butter Cookies, a different “animal” but still a delicious “dolce” ending to our tour.



St. Louis “Originals”: Toasted (fried) ravioli, Provel cheese, thin yeast-less pizza crust, goey butter cake.

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DIRECTIONS TO THE MEETING

CHoW/DC usually meets on the second Sunday of each month, September through May, from 2:30-4:30 p.m. at the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Services Center, 4805 Edgemoor Lane, Bethesda, Maryland.

DIRECTIONS: Bethesda-Chevy Chase Services Center is located at 4805 Edgemoor Lane in downtown Bethesda, Maryland, in the two-story County office building on the plaza level of the Metropolitan complex, above a County parking garage. The building is across the street from the Bethesda Metro station.

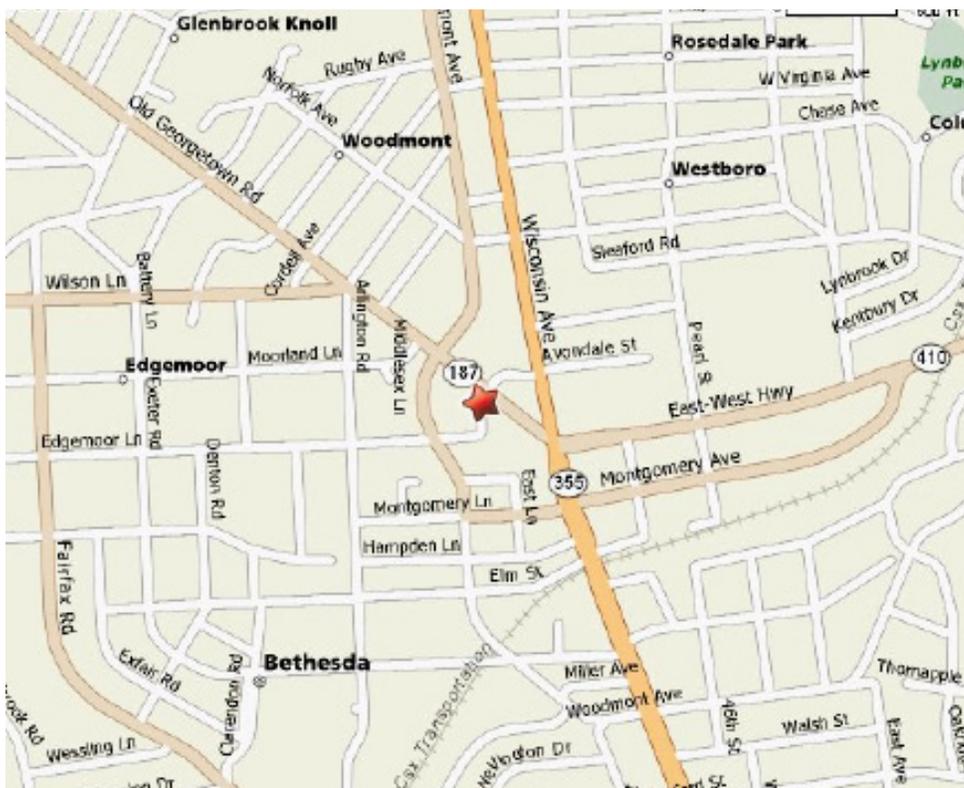
From the **Metro Station**, take the escalator from the bus bay to the plaza level, turn left, walk past the clock tower and across to the Metropolitan plaza using the pedestrian bridge. The Center's street entrance at 4805 Edgemoor Lane (corner of Old Georgetown and Edgemoor) is marked with American and Montgomery County flags. Take the elevator to Level Two for meeting rooms.

If you are coming **south on Old Georgetown Road** (from the Beltway use exit 36) turn right on Woodmont Avenue - the entrance is the second driveway on the left.

If you are coming **south on Wisconsin Avenue/Rockville Pike**, turn right onto Woodmont Avenue, go south for approximately one mile, cross over Old Georgetown Road, and the parking garage entrance is the second driveway on your left.

Coming **north on Wisconsin or west on Rt. 410**, take Old Georgetown Road north, turn left at the second traffic light (Woodmont Ave.) and the garage entrance will be on your left. Take the elevators from the parking garage to the plaza level (P). The building is located at the center of the plaza. The American flag, Montgomery County flag, and the County seal mark the entrance to the building.

PARKING: Parking is free on weekends in the county parking garage. The entrance to the parking garage is marked with a large blue Bethesda Center parking sign.





CHoW/DC Membership Form

Renewal. No changes to contact information or culinary interests listed on 2012 roster.
Please print name and city of residence only.

Name(s) _____ **City** _____

Renewal with new or changed information; print below.
 New membership. Please provide all information requested
(for use on the printed roster mailed to members only).

Contact Information and Interests

*This data will be included on the Membership Roster. Please **print**.*

Name(s) _____

Street Address _____

City, State Zip _____

Work phone _____ Home phone _____

Cell phone _____ Fax _____

E-mail _____

Culinary Web site _____

Culinary Interests _____

Membership Dues (Membership year is September 1, 2012 to August 31, 2013)

Membership including e-mailed color PDF file of *CHoW Line* newsletters.
(\$25) _____ Individual, Household or Organization

OR

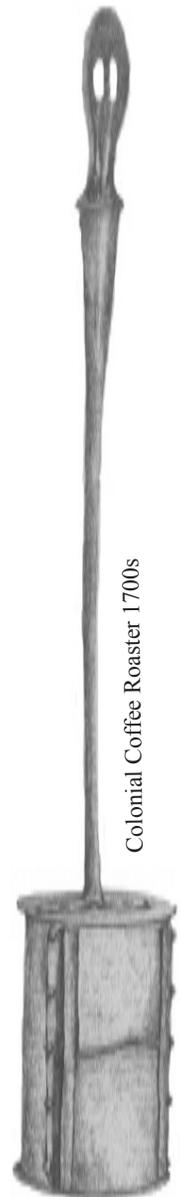
Membership including printed black/white copies of *CHoW Line* via
U.S. postal service AND via email as a full color PDF file.

(\$35) _____ Individual, Household or Organization

Today's date _____

Bring this form to a meeting with cash or a check made payable to **CHoW/DC**
or mail (checks only) to CHoW's Treasurer:

Bruce Reynolds, 6804 Hampshire Rd., McLean, VA 22101



Colonial Coffee Roaster 1700s