

2011 Charity “Celebrity Chefs” Dinner

Submitted by Brian Daley

Missy & I couldn't make the Charity Auction this year. Plans concocted on a snowy February evening while watching an SU basketball game with friends presented a conflict of not being able to be in two places at one time. One night at a 5-star hotel in South Beach and three nights in an historic cottage in Key West won out – SORRY! When we realized we couldn't be at the dinner Missy came up with an idea. She's been hooked on the Food Network lately and she's also a member of the Oswego Lions Club. One of their annual fundraisers is an auction that among other items includes a package where a local restaurant chef brings an entire meal to the successful bidders' home and prepares a gourmet meal. Since we couldn't attend the Charity Auction we (she) decided that it would be fun (?) to auction us off as “Celebrity Chefs” for a four course meal to PCA members.

We kicked around a few ideas as to what should be on the menu and settled on a few choices as to entrée and dessert choices to be offered to the “winners”. That way they could decide what they wanted to eat. They chose Braciolo Lasagna for the entrée and Bananas Foster for dessert. Let me explain the entrée – My office is in Auburn and I found an old school butcher in town that makes braciolo which many people have never had or even heard of but was a favorite of mine since boyhood that my maternal grandmother and mother made for holiday dinners. It consists of prime, lean beef, pounded to within an inch of its life; filled with the most delectable mixture on Earth; rolled then browned to seal in all the goodness; and then dropped into a big vat of sauce to simmer all day long. When I found this delicacy at the butcher shop a couple of years ago I brought it home, prepared it and served with angel hair pasta. It was fantastic! One day I had an epiphany – What if I combined braciolo with lasagna; not as a side dish (anybody can do that) but as an ingredient *in* the lasagna. I made it for the family and it was a big hit. At last year's Charity Committee planning meeting at the Shea's home I tried it on them, another big hit. So when Cathie & Chris White shared the bidding with Barb Conley & Art Vanore my Braciolo Lasagna was voted in as the entrée on the menu.

The dessert also has a story attached to it. Missy and I went out to a local restaurant this past spring that had recently changed hands. We had been there while the original owner's were in control but never really clicked with it. We figured we'd give it a try again and when we did we found Bananas Foster on the dessert menu. We had never heard of it before but based on the waitress' explanation we ordered it. It too was fantastic! We researched the ingredients and recipe and figured we had nothing to lose – it's basically bananas, sugar and rum served on vanilla ice cream - how bad could we screw it up? Do yourselves a favor – give it a try!

So, with the menu decided on we merely had to agree on whose house it would be at and schedule the Saturday night that all six of us could sit down and do this thing. Since our home was essentially equidistant from our guests homes we decided on that. Missy and I really enjoyed the whole process and the fact that we pulled it off leads us to think we should offer ourselves up again for 2102's Charity Auction. I'll leave the rest to comment on the actual evening.....

Submitted by Melissa Miller

Even though I am a watcher of the Food Network, what Brian failed to mention was that I don't watch the cooking shows where they teach you how to cook. Rather, I watch the ones that involve chaos – Chopped, Great Food Truck Race, etc. I have no desire to learn to cook – then I would have to practice!

Anyway, when we discovered we could not be at the event I just felt like we needed to do something. Since our local Lion's Club brings in a good deal of money by auctioning off a local chef to cook for a night I thought – why not us? Once I convinced Brian we really could pull this off we set off to design a menu as well as something to present at the auction. The rest is outlined so well by Brian I won't elaborate anymore on the how and why.

I am a firm believer of “If you can't play the part, look the part”. I do this every time I am on the golf course and this cooking thing would not alter my mantra. After finding a uniform shop in Liverpool I purchased 2 chef's coats. Not being satisfied with a plain coat, I phone my good friend Judy who owns Hometown Embroidery to see if she could do me a

favor. She is also right around the corner from us – how convenient! For only a few beers I was able to negotiate the embroidery of our names on the coats. Great touch – we actually looked the part! My mantra was again proven to be true!

Settling on a date was more of a challenge as the summer was busy for all of us. But we were able to nail down a beautiful Saturday in mid-August. We ended up having the soirée at the Daley home – it was equidistant from Chris and Cathie, coming from a completely opposite direction than Art and Barb. And everyone spent the night – good thing after all that wine!

It really was a lot of fun and I am ready to do it again for 2012. Start saving your dollars 'cause you never know what we will offer up for next time!

The evening started out with great wine and conversation on the patio while we waited for our meal to be prepared. The table was exquisitely set, better than a 5 star restaurant with candles, fine china and crystal, and even rose petals. Our servers were dressed in the finest attire and we were served great wine with our wonderful appetizer of shrimp and tomato and mozzarella slices with balsamic. Then came the main course of lasagna braciolo, which was fantastic.

After dinner we enjoyed a night of vintage rock music (on LP's no less!), several games of pool and great wine. Then it was time for a delicious dessert of Bananas Foster. Yumm! We ended the evening with a camp fire and....did I say we had great wine? It was a memorable evening for all.

You too can have the Missy and Brian experience if you win the highest bid at the 2012 Charity Auction.

Barbara

What can I say about the Missy & Brian Charity Dinner? In one word, WOW! There is certainly something special to be said about gathering a small group of PCA friends to enjoy great food and company all for a worthy cause. I dare say that Brian's lasagna was better than moms and the presentation superb. The braciolo reminded me of Christmas dinner at Grandma Vanore's. Take it from an Italian car guy from Jersey, this is the real deal. I already plan on going back for seconds next year.

Art

A very heartfelt thanks to Brian and Missy for lavishing upon us an extravagant ambiance, a spectacular supper together with providing a delightful progression of entertainment all in the company of fabulous Porsche friends! I know that our winning bid was to benefit our Club Charity, however, I clearly feel that we were genuinely the lucky recipients of this charity performance!!!

Truly outstanding!

Cathie

OK, It was tough enough to beat out Mr. Turco on the bidding for this year, now if I let the cat out of the bag* it will be much tougher to win next year! Since this is a charity event I guess I will have to do the right thing.....

(* - there was no cat involved in the preparation of the Lasagna what so ever....)

The evening did indeed start out with wine alfresco, along with the delightful conversation. Mr Daley also gave tours of his fine automotive collection at his personal on site museum, restoration and race prep shop. After a splendid time sampling some wines on the back deck Brian and Missy disappeared for a moment and then returned to serve the appetizers dressed for business:



Very nice touch - embroidered chef's jackets. Missy didn't seem to take the hint that a french maid outfit would have been a good idea.... The table was laid out in style with a very tasteful presentation. They say that a picture is worth a thousand words:



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Now that I have let the secret out I imagine I will have to bid a little higher next year to beat out the competition at the auction – especially if Missy goes for the French Maid outfit hint....

Chris