

A gourmet's wedding-rehearsal menu: What else but hoagies?

Her name is **Jannis Debra Swerman**, youngest daughter of the renowned workaholic (at age 89 yet) architect **Jack Swerman**. She grew up on Parkway Avenue in Chester, attended Swarthmore High School and for the last 21 years has been working for Wolfgang Puck Worldwide Inc.

For those of you unfamiliar with the Food Channel or whose idea of fine dining is nachos and tamales at Chi Chi's, **Wolfgang Puck** enjoys a worldwide reputation as one of the finest chefs on the planet. His signature restaurant, Spago's in Los Angeles, attracts the rich and famous and the Hollywood glitterati in droves.

Being associated with the master for so many years must have rubbed off on Ms. Swerman, for she also is general manager of a trendy restaurant, Granita, in Malibu.

The big news is that Jannis is getting married. It will be the first for her as well as for her intended, **Dr. Don Mathya Rubinstein** of Ann Arbor, Mich., no relation to the Chester Rubensteins, who would include **Charlie, Benny and Max**.

Having waited longer than most to accept a proposal, Jannis is going all out on the wedding plans, especially when it comes to the traditional rehearsal dinner.

She could have held it at ritzy Le-Bec Fin or Striped Bass in Philadelphia. Closer to home, the Dilworthtown Inn or the Rose Tree Inn would appear to be appropriate options. But no, Jannis has something else in mind. Something that the many out-of-town guests would remember for years to come.

The rehearsal dinner will be held at Phil and Jim's Delicatessen in Parkside!

Gus Guasperini, the proprietor of Phil and Jim's for the past 35 years, will never be confused with **George Perrier**, the owner-chef at Le-Bec Fin, but he has managed to survive in an area where only the very finest steaks and hoagies are tolerated by a discerning public.

Naturally, he was stunned when he got a call from **Cecily Morris**, wife of the renowned physician, **Dr. Richard Morris**. Cecily is sort of coordinating the rehearsal dinner plans since Jannis still is on the West Coast. Somehow, Cecily found time to do this, even though her full-time job is pampering her husband 24/7.

"When Jannis called and told me what she had in mind, my first reaction was, 'You're kidding, right?' She assured me that she wasn't. Then I called Gus. His reaction was 'You're kidding, right?'"

Jannis wasn't kidding.

Cecily got the job of coordinator since the Morris and Swerman clans are practically family.

"When we first married, Jack and his late wife, **Esther**, practically adopted us," Mrs. Morris said. "Esther was like a second mother to me. We've been very close for more than 45 years. Our children and Jack's children grew up together.

"I think Jannis chose Phil and Jim's because the shop played such a big part in her childhood. She and her parents were always walking up from their home on Parkway Avenue."

Jannis is a graduate of Boston University, but she frequently traveled to California to visit an older sister. Whenever she flew west, she always carried a Phil and Jim's hoagie.

"In fact," Jannis said, "I taught Gus how to pack a hoagie for travel.

"I've even given one to Wolfgang, and he pronounced it 'excellent.' One of my friends, **Jason Silverton**, has to visit Philadelphia on business from time to time and the people he deals with always like to wine and dine him. The last time he was here, they asked him where he'd like to go for lunch, and he said, 'How about Phil and Jim's in Parkside?'"

At the rehearsal dinner, Jannis says she wouldn't be surprised if she ends up helping make the sandwiches.

"I know something about making a hoagie," she said. "There really is an art to it. 'What do you do with the lettuce?' 'Do you slice the meat to order?' If they don't give the right answers, I tell them to forget it. I don't want it.

"I picked Phil and Jim's because I want the rehearsal dinner to be fun. Weddings are so formal. This will be great for everyone, especially for the guests coming in from out of town."

The rehearsal dinner is not the only thing offbeat about the nuptials. Take the courtship, for instance.

Jannis first met her intended in 1972. Don was a close friend of her brother, **Marshall**. They had roomed together for a time at Penn State. Jannis and Don had a very romantic first date in Martha's Vineyard, but apparently there were no fireworks.

Flash forward 31 years, as in three decades. They meet again, quite by accident, in Philadelphia. This time the fireworks fill the sky.

They'll be married Sunday at Ohev Shalom Synagogue in Wallingford.

Tomorrow: So what does Gus Guasperini think about all of this?

Ed Gebhart is a retired public relations executive and works part-time for the Delaware County Department of Public Relations. His column, which normally appears Friday and Sunday, will also appear tomorrow.



By **Ed GEBHART**