



Maureen Marzella hands a pizza over the counter as her husband, Fran, looks on.

Marzella's Just Oinking for some large appetites.

By CONNIE BRETZ
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COLLEGEVILLE – The large sign advising “Pig Out at Marzella’s Pizza is not just an advertising gimmick.

The pink pig lights decorating the restaurant at Fifth and Main streets in Collegeville are no accident either. The plaster of Paris chef pig defining the customer counter continues the theme.

Maureen Marzella, co-owner, used to have a real porker, Felicity, a Yorkshire pet.

She walked Felicity on a leash down Main Street, and passing cars tooted and locals accepted the animal as a celebrity, Felicity passed on to Pig Heaven at 650 pounds.

Her memory lives on, made memorable by her newspaper obit: She was fine swine. Marzella continues to receive pig mementos from Holland, Russia (some made of coconut) and other countries.

Recently, a patron heard Marzella say to a customer toting a sub, “Take a napkin. Thou shalt not dribble!”

But subs and pizza aren’t the only fare at this corner eatery. Marzella has added pasta dinners and a bakery run by Gary Yerger. Yerger was a former baker at Tiffany’s at the Gallery in Philadelphia.

The bakery is catching on fast, making a reputation with cinnamon buns and a Collegeville tradition – prosperity buns concocted with raisins, nuts and white icing.

Collegeville’s Centennial in June became a giveaway time for prosperity buns and tomato pies (another tradition).

Tomato pies are not on the menu at Marzella’s. They are made on request, though.

Regular patrons include Ursinus College students who sometimes double as part-time employees.

“We have a good rapport with Ursinus College and their students,” Marzella said. “The college tends to attract students who seriously want to do something with their lives.” I think Ursinus has fewer problems than other colleges: no drinking and driving – students don’t get rowdy.”

Marzella talked about her business climate. “We are doing well. We have fun here, and we trust one another.

If we were an elegant restaurant, we would not be doing so well.”



Fran and Maureen Marzella, owners of Marzella's.

Mercury Photo by Daniel P. Creighton

“We can provide quality food at a reasonable price because we own the building. We live in an apartment upstairs.” Marzella cites a \$5 spaghetti offer as “incredible.” Dough and sauce are made on the premises. The menu offers homemade soups for winter, and such specialties as veggie and chicken broccoli pizzas.

Since housing developments have sprouted in and near Collegeville, Rhone-Poulenc Rorer Inc. and others, Marzella sees an increase in business.

Raising her eyebrows, she stated “We get more variety of people now. It’s different than it used to be, but it’s a healthy difference, a welcome change.”

She details the realistic problems of today. “We are in troubled times. Benefits are being cut, all big businesses are downsizing, cutting out expense accounts.”