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New restaurant opens in Auburn, dedicated to family's memories

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By **Ben Calvert**
Staff Writer

While most of today's restaurants rely on cost cutting and lower-quality foods to increase profit, the owners of Pannie-George's Kitchen abandoned modern business practices and built a restaurant around love, family and great food.

In 2005, the Askew family opened a southern style restaurant with two goals in mind: to serve the public and get more people to taste their food.

"We've all been blessed with this talent and want everyone to enjoy it," employee Jerelene Askew said. "Our food has love in it, and we want to share it with the community."

The daily menu varies, but always includes the family's famous fried chicken, two other meats, a variety of vegetables and an assortment of desserts, all served cafeteria style. Some of the most popular side items include dressing, macaroni and cheese and peach cobbler.

Pannie-George's Kitchen stems from a long standing tradition started by grandparents Pannie and George Askew. On Sunday afternoons the Askews invited their family and neighbors over for Sunday lunch. Their kitchen became home for the community.

"People would stop by after church and sit around telling stories," Askew said. "It was all about togetherness and everyone loved it."

In fact, the restaurant is a replica of their grandparent's kitchen and an extension of their hospitality. The colors come directly from Pannie and George's home, along with the recipes and friendly smiles.

The restaurant is owned and operated by Pannie and George's children, grandchildren, nephews and great grandchildren.

"We all work together making God's business a success," executive chef, Mary Counts said. "It's a shared journey by us as a family and the community."

Aside from the food and family, the atmosphere separates Pannie-George's Kitchen from similar restaurants around town.

"We try to be personable, almost like friends," Lorine Askew said. "We know what's going on in the lives of all our customers and we lend an ear to anyone who needs to talk."

While the restaurant is still new to the majority of Auburn students, the regular attendees rave about the food.

"It's good, fresh southern home cooking," senior Steve Zelinsky said. "I love the country fried steak and banana pudding."

Pannie-George's Kitchen is an old-fashioned reminder of the importance of family, community and love.

"Family is everything to us," Jerelene said. "It is such a blessing, and we want to give people our familiness. It's a southern tradition."

The last two years have been successful, and the family is open to any possibilities for the future.

"Whatever heights the Lord takes us to, we are willing to go," Counts said. "We're going to let God direct our path so we'll just wait and see what happens."

Pannie-George's Kitchen is located on South College street across from Carl Gregory Ford next to the Brass Brassiere.

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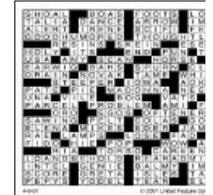


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