

retired professor of chemistry at the University of Michigan, not only presented a remarkable gift to the library, but also joined the staff as Curator of American Culinary History in 2000.

At the symposium, while the Longones beamed like proud parents, the curators presented vivid examples of their finds, among them the papers of the 19th century diet reformer Sylvester Graham (whose name is immortalized in the sweet fiber-rich cracker). Dan offered a fascinating glimpse of early American winemaking.

Hometown food hero Ari Weinzweig, proprietor of the 400-strong staff of Zingerman's Community of Businesses in Ann Arbor and an ardent proselytizer for traditional American foods, provided a bountiful brunch for busloads of symposiasts who descended on his restaurant, Zingerman's American Roadhouse, to tuck into buttermilk/molasses doughnuts, Kentucky country ham, stone-ground grits topped with raw milk Vermont cheddar and Hangtown fry made with fresh oysters fried with eggs and applewood smoked bacon.

To whet an appetite for future symposiums, one case was filled with books relating to the theme of the next biennial program on regional and ethnic culinary Americana in May 2007. A selection of menus set the stage for the May 2009 symposium: *Eating Out: Chefs, Restaurants, and Menus*. The latest donation to the library, Jeremiah Tower's extensive menu collection from his days at *Chez Panisse* and *Stars*, will no doubt play a role in that symposium.

Looking toward the future, library director John C. Dann noted, "Historians are finally coming to realize that diet, the production of and commerce in foodstuffs, and cookery are not only

important but are actually defining characteristics of a nation's culture." And the Longone Center will remain front and center in defining those characteristics.

For info: w.clements.umich.edu/culinary or contact Jan Longone at (734) 764-2347 or jblong@umich.edu. —MERYLE EVANS

Former first chef cooks and tells Washington, D.C.—Anyone can be President. Or at least dine like one, now that Walter Scheib, after 11 years as the White House executive chef, has

launched an event-planning business. He's begun reproducing his state dinners, first lady lunches, even south lawn barbecues for anyone willing to pay the price. His new company is called, with no false modesty, *The American Chef*.

Scheib left the White House about a year ago, with 1,000 of the menus he'd served there. As *The American Chef*, he doesn't actually cook them (*Design Cuisine* in Washington and *Abigail Kirsch* in New York City cater the meals to his specifications). But he duplicates the style of the White House in menu cards and invitations and—most important—during the meal he talks about the origin of each course and tells tales of White House life—"peeking behind the curtain," he calls it.

For example, a dinner for 60, which had brought \$40,000 at a charity auction, began with red curried sweet potato

to soup that had been created for Chelsea Clinton when she was a vegetarian. Crispy duck confit was added for the charity dinner, which went on to fire roasted salmon with lime/Tequila glaze and warm fruit salsa, rack of lamb with pumpkin/truffle risotto and heirloom apple sauce, greens with artisanal cheese, and pear gratin in lemon/thyme sauce.

