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The Mad Fish is Open for Business!

by *Charity Winters*



Two years after closing its doors, the Mad Fish restaurant will once again be serving delicious meals to the people of Seldovia. Tim and Isabelle Harbaugh of Soldotna purchased the restaurant from former owner, Kate Springer in August 2005. After a winter of renovating and preparing a new menu, the Harbaughs opened for business on June 26, 2006.

The Mad Fish won't be Tim and Isabelle's first venture into the world of food service. Tim got his start about 10 years ago when he attended AVTEC in Seward for cooking and baking. He didn't have any particular reason for choosing this field – after retiring from 25 years in the oil business Tim just decided it was time to try something new. After his schooling finished, he and Isabelle opened up a small place in Soldotna. A year later, they decided to turn their menu into a catering service and hit the road! "Isabelle's Catering", as it was called, got bigger and bigger – which made Tim and Isabelle busier and busier. After 6 years in the business, they new they needed a change – their kids didn't like the fact that

Now the Mad Fish is sporting a new look of pale green with a deep green trim. The original Mad Fish sign will continue to display the restaurant's name. A new deck with a handicap accessible ramp will be installed shortly. There will be no specific theme for the type of food they will be serving, just "comfort foods", as Tim referred to them. Items such as Alaskan seafood, steak, hamburgers, chicken, pasta, breads, and desserts are just a few of the foods that will grace their extensive lunch and dinner only menu. Wine and beer will also be available. All of this will be offered in a smoke-free environment. They will be open 11AM – 9 PM Monday to Sunday from Memorial Day to Labor Day weekend.

they were so strapped to their work that they could never visit. Tim and Isabelle needed to find a different way to use their talents.

While catering an event at the Challenger Learning Center in Kenai this summer, the Harbaughs met Tom Glover, Kurt Reynertson, and Dick Wyland from Seldovia, Alaska. Through them, they learned about a small restaurant in town that had been waiting for a buyer for a few summers. Isabelle asked them if anyone was interested in the place. Tim jumped in with, "Well, I'm interested!" They made a trip to Seldovia to check it out and decided that it was the perfect solution for their dilemma. Since prime business opportunities last mostly for the summer, Tim and Isabelle felt that this would allow them the remainder of the year to spend time with their 4 children and all of their grandchildren. So, they bought it and finished out their last year of catering.



Opening night - all tables are filled!

As for their hopes for the summer – "Uneventful" was tops on the list. Overall they are looking forward to a "good challenge" in the transition from preparing bulk catering foods to a plate by plate preparation. Tim and Isabelle are both very optimistic about their first season and feel they should do well.



Isabelle Harbaugh



Tim Harbaugh

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