

Restaurant community dines for disaster relief

By **JEFF WERNER**
Special to The
ADVANCE

The Lower Bucks County Chapter of the American Red Cross is inviting everyone in to dinner on March 28.

As part of a new fundraising initiative, "Dining For Disaster," the chapter is in the process of enlisting the support of the restaurant community to donate all or a portion of its proceeds that day to disaster relief in Bucks County.

"We are now in the process of contacting restaurants throughout the Yardley, Newtown and Lower Bucks County area to participate and to help us prepare for the next disaster," said volunteer and disaster recovery team member Sharon Favata, who is spearheading the effort.

So far, ten restaurants have signed on, including Yardley Inn, Carlucci's Grill, Villa Rosa and A Little Dragon, all in the Yardley-Makefield area; the Temperance House, the Brick Hotel and Fiorentino's Restaurant, all in Newtown; the Newportville Inn; the Lyon's Heart Pub in Washington Crossing; and the Black Bull Restaurant, Holland.

Proceeds will benefit local relief efforts provided during local disasters, including winter storms, hurricanes, floods, fires and other disasters that strike Lower Bucks County.

In recent years, the local disaster team has been called to action numerous times, including twice for

tember 2004 and April 2005, impacting Yardley, Lower Makefield, Upper Makefield and Morrisville Borough.

"Our disaster team has worked very hard during the past year with the flooding and the fires that we have experienced here," said Favata. "But they don't get the same attention, or the budget, that other activities get within the Red Cross."

Favata is hoping that "Dining for Disaster" will reinvigorate their disaster war chest, which has dwindled over the past year due to local disasters and national efforts to assist the survivors of hurricane Katrina.

"Even though our chapter processed over \$2 million in donations for Katrina, we didn't keep any of that," said Florence Kawoczka, the director of financial development for the chapter.

In fact, according to Kawoczka, the local chapter's budget of \$20,000 for emergency services allocated in June was exhausted by December as the chapter responded to calls for help.

"Our hope is that 'Dining for Disaster' brings in \$10,000," said Kawoczka.

Services provided through the local disaster relief team are free and made available due to the generous support of time and financial donations of the American people.

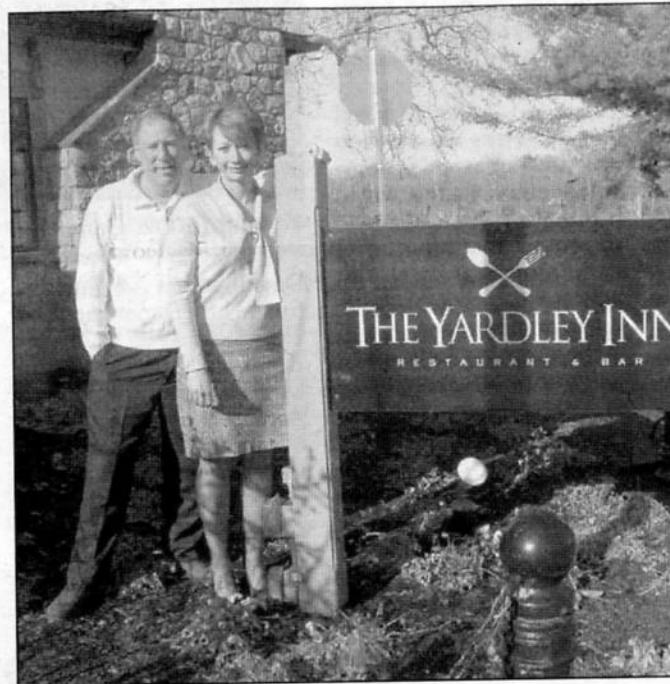
The services are provided without consideration of fees, primarily by a volunteer-based workforce. Relief efforts focus on meeting people's immediate

health and mental health services to address basic human needs.

In addition to these services, the core of Red Cross disaster relief is the assistance given to individuals and families affected by disaster to enable them to begin the recovery process and help them resume their normal daily activities independently.

The Red Cross also feeds emergency workers, handles inquiries from concerned family members outside the disaster area, provides blood and blood products to disaster victims, and helps those affected by disaster to access other available resources.

Restaurateurs interested in taking part are encouraged to contact Sharon Favata at 215-421-0630 or Florence Kawoczka at 215-946-4870, ext. 112.



Visiting the Yardley Inn to check out the menu for "Dining for Disaster," volunteer Skip Gittens; Florence Kawoczka, director of financial development for the Lower Bucks County Chapter of the American Red Cross; and disaster recovery team member Sharon Favata, who is spearheading the project.

Take Advantage of Your Greatest Asset

Visit us **FIRST** for your home equity loan to

7.00
Adjustable
Rate
5.49
5-Year