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Find welcoming atmosphere, simple menu at Joe's Cafe

By Aileen Wingblad
STAFF WRITER

Joe Janette knows there are plenty of places in the area to get a good sandwich, burger, salad or bagel.

But his new Highland restaurant, Joe's Cafe, is about more than just tasty eats.

"It's about forming relationships with people — I instruct my employees to be friendly and welcoming. If you don't form that relationship, people find somewhere else to go," Janette said.

"That's the kind of place I wanted to start and the kind of place I want to continue. To me, it's the foundation of building a good business," he said.

Janette is tapping into his 35-year history managing restaurants and bars to make Joe's Cafe a success. He said he formerly worked at the Comeback Inn in Highland, Milford House Bar and Grill in Milford and the Back Seat Saloon in Keego Harbor. He also spent several years working at beachfront hotels in Fort Lauderdale.

"I love this business — this is what I do, what I've been trained to do," he said, "I like working for myself, and I like people."

Janette said he decided to keep the Joe's Cafe menu simple, focusing on quality food.

"We have the best Reuben (sandwich) around — we always have fresh, cooked brisket. We have a Chicago-style hotdog, topped with peppers, tomatoes, pickles, mustard, relish and onion on a poppy seed bun. We have breakfast bagel sandwiches — those type of things," he said.

Greek, Caesar and Cafe Classic salads, homemade chili, wraps and soup round out the food choices, and for the summer, Joe's Cafe will also have malts, ice cream cones, sundaes and shakes.

The cafe seats 24, and during the warmer months there will be additional seating outside. Next year, Janette wants to add a banquet room on the back.

Joe's Cafe is smoke-free, offers wireless Internet service and has a large-screen plasma TV for entertainment. Carry out is available, too, and Janette said he can have food ready for those who phone in their orders.

"I've had a couple people come in and say I'm crazy to open a business with the way the economy is," Janette said. "But what are we going to do, just go away? We need to continue to try and keep things going. Everybody has to eat, right? I'm keeping the prices affordable and there is something for everyone here,"

Janette added that military veterans are welcome to a cup of coffee, on the house. "I'm a Vietnam vet. I'd like to buy my fellow veterans a cup of coffee when they come in," he said.

Joe's Cafe is at 1100 S. Milford Road, Suite 110 — which formerly housed Frankie and Johnny's. Hours are 6 a.m. to 10 p.m., Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 10 p.m., Saturday and 4 p.m. to 10 p.m. Sunday. Phone (947) 570-1212.

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