Ask About Our Daily Specials

Salads
Dressings: Creamy Garlic, Tomato-Ranch, Blue Cheese, Lemon, & Vinaigrette (non-dairy).
All made in-house and available in home sizes.

Add the following to any salad:
Grilled Rosemary Pesto Chicken........... 2.00
Tri Tip (Grilled or BBQ)................. 2.00
Smoked Tuna Salad..................... 1.75

My Blue Heaven........................... 4.50
Fresh romaine and radicchio tossed with our vinaigrette dressing, sliced sweet red onion, mushrooms and sweet roma tomato topped with crumbled blue cheese.

Joe's Caesar............................... 3.75
Tossed with fresh croutons, parmesan cheese & tomato

Farmer's Salad............................ 3.75
Seasonal fresh vegetables atop mixed greens

Soup (By The Pint)
Made fresh daily
• a la carte............................. 3.50
• W/ mini Caesar...................... 5.50
• W/ full sandwich................... 6.50

Sandwiches
All sandwiches served w/ Cole Slaw or substitute mini Caesar or mashed potatoes & gravy for $0.75
• Tri Tip, BBQ or w/ Onion Gravy..... 5.25
• Meatloaf............................. 4.75
• 40- Garlic Chicken Breast......... 5.25
• "OK" Smoked Tuna Salad........... 4.75
• Grilled Vegetables in a Pita......... 5.00

House Specialties
Cilantro-Walnut Pesto Quesadillas..... 6.00
Your choice of chicken, vegetable, BBQ tri tip, or onion gravy tri tip. Served with salad.

Turkey Sloppy Joe.......................... 5.00
Served open faced over hot comibread with cheese & onions. Served with salad.

Homemade Kettle Chips.................. 1.00
Made Fresh Daily in Pure Canola Oil
Topped with "sloppy" cheese & onions... 4.50

Chef's Choice Pasta
Served with caesar salad

Kids' Stuff (4 ft. & under)
Kid's Pasta of the Day..................... 4.00
Grilled Chicken Baloney............... 3.50
Sloppy Joe w/ sa...
The officers were on their way back to the West Valley police station after stopping by an exclusive country club up in the hills above Ventura Boulevard late last week. "What did they say?" Iain Hamilton asked his partner, Paul Bernal, who was still holding the two handbills he had walked into the country club with a few minutes earlier. "They said they're an exclusive country club. They don't do that sort of thing.

Both men just shook their heads. By "that sort of thing," they meant tucking up a couple of small handbills in the clubhouse to let members know about the coming West Valley Police Activity League Supporters (PALS) Golf Tournament.

All the money raised by PALS goes to help disadvantaged youths in the San Fernando Valley. The 14th annual tournament is scheduled for Sept. 26 at a different club. Some gratitude, Hamilton and Bernal thought. When the country club had called up the officers' community relations office, asking for someone to come out and sandblast graffiti from the stone marquee adorning the club's entryway, the officers gladly obliged.

It was part of their job, responding to graffiti complaints to make the Valley a more attractive and safer place to live.

Now these officers were asking the club to help them out a little by promoting a charitable police event. But the exclusive country club didn't do that sort of thing.

"I've been a Los Angeles police officer for 22 years," Hamilton would say later, "I have seen a lot and learned a lot about human nature during those years. I thought I had seen it all and had put it all in perspective until that day.

"After leaving the country club, I started thinking about Joe Cook back at Joe's Grill in Reseda, where we'd stopped for lunch earlier," Hamilton said.

"Here was a guy who is working his tail off to make an honest living but still has a social conscience. I thought about how generous he was and then thought about the people at that country club.

"I'll take the Joe Cooks of this world over any day," Hamilton says.

At Joe's Grill on Saticoy Street in Reseda, they do that sort of thing — put up police and community group handbills advertising charity events designed to make their community a better place to live.

When Joe needed someone to blast the graffiti off the exterior walls of his diner, Hamilton and Bernal had been there for him. Sure he'd help them promote the charity golf tournament by putting up their handbills.

Anything else — just ask.

"I'll tell you something — the police are doing a great job out here trying to keep this neighborhood clean and watching out for us," 29-year-old Joe Cook tells me when we talk Monday.

"He's standing over a hot grill making a turkey sandwich while his mother, Trudy, is taking more orders from customers.

It only takes a few minutes of conversation with Joe Cook to understand what Hamilton is talking about.

His young age and hip talk can fool you, because the guy's a throwback to the old days when a neighborhood business was a place to stop by and chew the fat with neighbors and workers — a place where the owner lived just around the corner and didn't want to make a quick million bucks so he could move uptown.

He was happy just where he was — in a working-class neighborhood. It was where he belonged, who he was.

"I'll get over 100 people in here every day, and at least 20 of them will ask me, 'Why are you in Reseda, Joe? Why not open a grill on Ventura Boulevard in Encino or Studio City?'" he says, flipping over his sloppy Joe and starting on orders for turkey meatloaf and tuna casserole. Comfort food, he calls it.

"My mom and I have lived in Reseda for more than 14 years. It's who we are," he continues. "I used to work at fancy hotels and didn't like the uptight attitudes and people always in a rush, even though they were spending a fortune on dinner.

"Mom was director of catering at a yacht club — always around highfalutin people. She got sick of that world.

"We both think you can't be a poser in life, you know what I mean?" Joe asks.

He opened his diner in a defunct Pizza Man storefront in a strip mall last year with the money he saved from running a taco stand for a few years at Corbin and Sherman Way.

The idea was simple. Give the neighborhood good food at a fair price — so the menu carries everything from meatloaf to salmon cakes and pesto tostada.

"See that guy over there?" Joe asks, pointing to one of his customers. "He's a retiree installer. The guy sitting next to him is a psychiatrist at Northridge Hospital. The girl is a student at Cal State Northridge.

"That's the makeup of people I get people from all different walks of life. We're mingling people from Reseda with people from Ventura Boulevard and trying into our hood to eat," Joe says, laughing.

When he gets a break, he walks out from behind the counter to see if there are any golfers in the crowd — pointing to the handbills he's posted for the police charity gold tournament.

At Joe's Grill in Reseda, they do that sort of thing.

Dennis McCarthy's column appears Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Sunday.