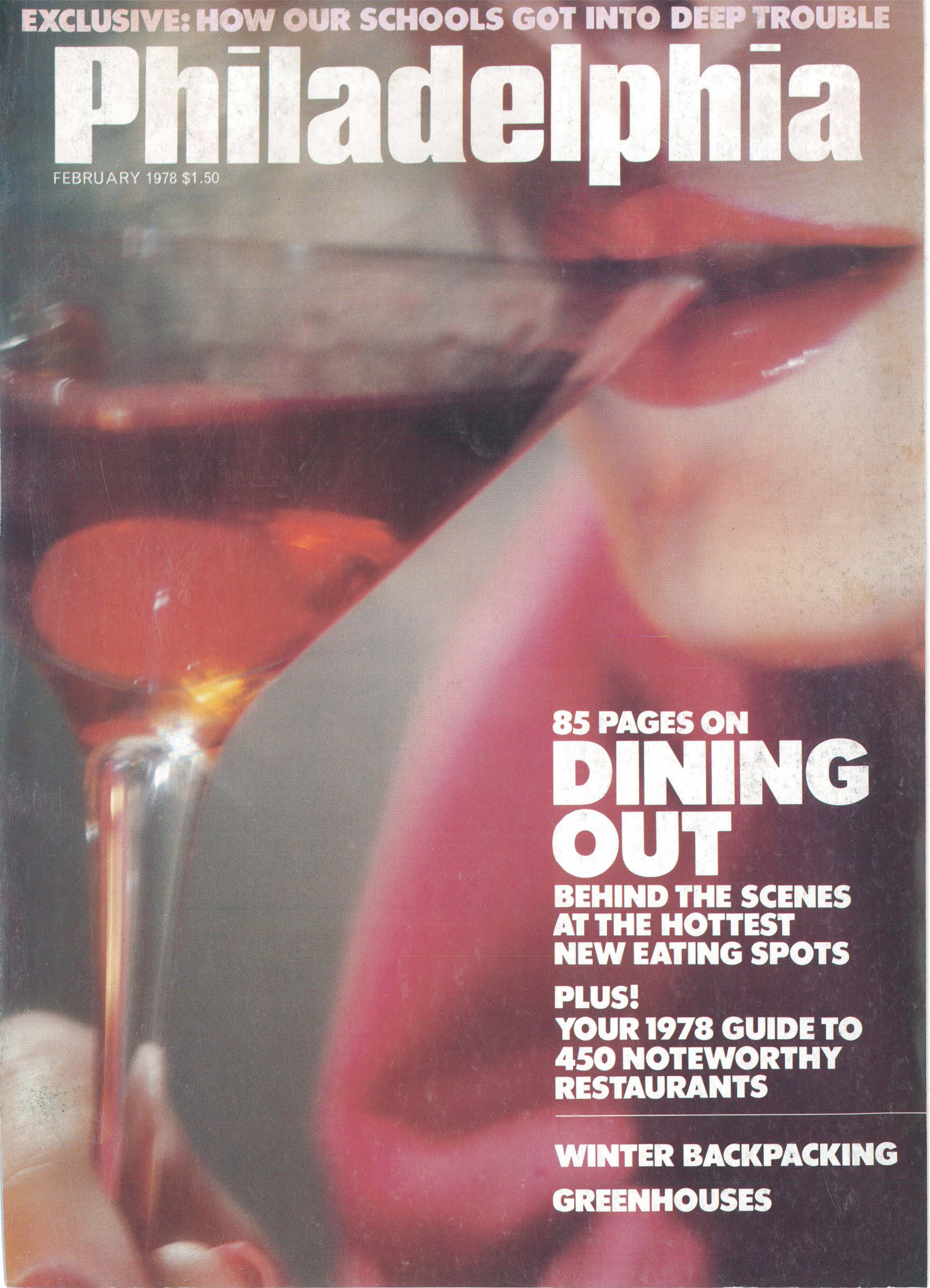
EXCLUSIVE: HOW OUR SCHOOLS GOT INTO DEEP TROUBLE

Philadelphia

FEBRUARY 1978 $1.50



85 PAGES ON

DINING OUT

BEHIND THE SCENES AT THE HOTTEST NEW EATING SPOTS

PLUS!
YOUR 1978 GUIDE TO 450 NOTEWORTHY RESTAURANTS

WINTER BACKPACKING

GREENHOUSES

PHILADELPHIA MAGAZINE
February 1978

Eats

A Special Section about Restaurants: Food, Drink, People and Dreams

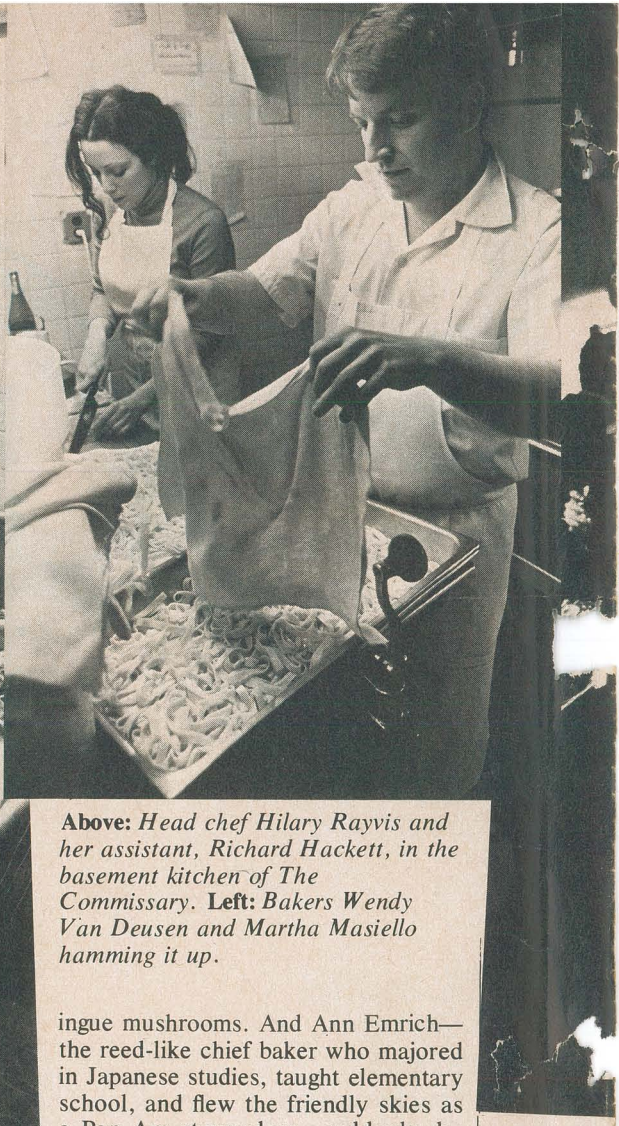
Between catering, consulting and running two restaurants, Steve Poses is the brightest star on the local dining scene.

THE FROG PRINCE

By Carol Saline

It is middle morning at The Commissary, and the breakfast customers from the Stock Exchange building across the street are finishing their omelettes. The air is so rich with the cinnamony smell of muffins and the buttery perfume of brioches that you can taste the breads even before you put them on your tray. And there is space to sit all alone at a blue formica table watching the bare-armed counter girls lay out the platters of reddish-brown pâte and there is time

Photographed by Joan Ruggles



Above: *Head chef Hilary Rayvis and her assistant, Richard Hackett, in the basement kitchen of The Commissary.* **Left:** *Bakers Wendy Van Deusen and Martha Masiello hamming it up.*

to sip a second cup of coffee and read the back pages of the paper. It is in the morning that The Commissary—the city's first and foremost gourmet cafeteria (there is simply no better way to describe it)—is at its pleasantest. The crowds have not yet gathered for lunch and the circus has yet to begin.

The public circus, that is. For in the basement where the kitchen is located, the pace is already at a feverish level. Karen, who used to be a high school French teacher, is elbow-deep in a bowl of ricotta for the lasagna. Jill, a former social worker, smashes garlic—it's easier to peel that way—for a mayonnaise sauce. She's just cracked 50 eggs. Martha, a painter, presses almonds into gingerbread hearts. Arlene uses her skill as a potter to craft meringue mushrooms. And Ann Emrich—the reed-like chief baker who majored in Japanese studies, taught elementary school, and flew the friendly skies as a Pan Am stewardess—suddenly decides a cheesecake she's been making for four years ought to be more tart and adds a dash of lemon juice.

A table away, Richard, his days as an English prof long over, struggles to transform a lump of pastry with a rice, mushroom and salmon filling into something resembling a salmon. Wendy, yet another baker with an art degree, hands him a fluted spoon. "Try the back of this to make fish scale impressions," she suggests. Martha recommends covering the surface with almonds. Arlene fashions bits of dough into half-moons and applies a few. Soon there are a half dozen people huddled around the pastry salmon, laughing, giving advice, interrupting each other. "Ooh I love working here," someone says. "It's just like being in high school."

The Commissary is Philadelphia's only gourmet cafeteria. **Inset:** *A busy lunch at Frog.*

Around 11:30 the first lunch customers arrive upstairs. Soon there is a steady stream of people bundled in coats, wrinkling red-cold noses as they squint at the chalk hieroglyphics on the blackboard menu. "What's ginger-glazed smelts?" The pretty young woman behind the counter smiles and explains the sauce. "What's avlo-avmo-avgo—the soup for today?" She smiles again because the manager has just told *her* how to pronounce it. "It's chicken with a lemon and egg base. Very good." "I'll try it," the customer says.

A fortyish fellow in jeans wants the quiche. He's directed to the bar. A lady swathed in mink asks for an omelette. "That's in the back at the demonstration kitchen but I can't let you through the line until we have a table." The customer looks annoyed. It's one thing to sit comfortably at a table waiting for service. It's quite another to stand in line waiting for a table, tantalized by a spread of incredible edibles. But nobody leaves and they eventually serve all those who stand and wait. In the meantime, the counter staff rinses dishes, scrapes plates, slices cakes, grinds coffee beans, and refills the pots.

The basement door swings open and shut with a steady parade of refills. A tray of strawberry tarts. An eggplant quiche. A steaming bed of canneloni. The busperson needs help. A counter girl puts down her serving spoon and begins to clear tables. One manager is out sick. The other flits from problem to problem. The espresso machine breaks. A pipe leaks on a lady's pocketbook and she's mad as a wet hen. The circus is in full swing. All three rings.

A stocky man with black corkscrew curls and a beard to match, dressed in a plaid shirt and red suspenders attached to navy pants, stops by the smelts and motions to the manager. "Let's thicken this sauce to compensate

continued on page 133

Eats

Frog Prince

continued from page 109

for the water from the zucchini in it," he says. A new girl behind the counter pokes her co-workers. "Who's he?" "Who's he. My God, he's Steven Poses. He *owns* the place."

IF STEVE POSES had heard that question he'd have been behind the counter lickety-split, shaking the girl's hand, introducing himself in a low steady voice, asking her name so tomorrow he could say hello so-and-so instead of just hello. And he'd have walked away upset. Upset that it had come to this. That there were people working in his restaurant, his family really, whom he did not know. It's the price he's paid for expanding so fast, and sometimes, though not often, he worries that the price may be too dear.

First there was Frog, the funky restaurant with the funny name and the fabulous food. It was one of the earliest entries in Philadelphia's restaurant renaissance which in the short period from 1972 to today has changed the city from a steak and lobster-tail town to a gastronomic banquet. Poses could have kept his laurels at Frog and they'd have bloomed for years. Instead last spring he opened The Commissary: Downstairs, a revolutionary concept in fast food, a gourmet cafeteria; Upstairs, an intimate restaurant featuring his tasty bastardized blend of French and Thai cooking. Now it's also a catering business, a center city take-out service and a big consultation project for Stouffer's, whose snazzy restaurants on the roof gardens of six major cities (including Philadelphia) are laying an egg. And whom does Stouffer's select to help them out? A 31-year-old kid from Philadelphia who parks a black-and-yellow motor bike in his living room and started out wanting to design buildings, not put restaurants in them.

STEVE POSES GREW UP in Yonkers and suffered his first major trauma when his parents uprooted him in ninth grade and moved to Florida. He ate himself two sizes larger before they moved back to New York, where he quickly readjusted, became president of his class *and* The National Honor Society and sports editor of the school paper. He also orchestrated his first catering assignment—the school carnival. Nobody'd done one in years because of the massive organizational problems. Poses took it on and raised more money for the school than any previous class.

From the big fish in the small pond, Poses had to adjust to being a minnow in the architecture department of the University of Pennsylvania. By the end of his sophomore year, he decided people were more interesting than blueprints. People and Causes. "The most

Pavio's

"Silvio" Owner and Chef. Creator for past 2 decades of Tableside Gourmet Cooking from every region of Italy and Europe.

Pavio's Hideaway
812 Chestnut St. Phila. Reserv.
MA 7-4888

Pavio's Suburban House
in the Great Northeast
Reserv. HO 4-2100

Entertainment Nitely

SCOTT MOSS' STEAK HOUSE

A 15-year tradition of quality service and excellent cuisine—the filet mignon sandwich, crabmeat omelette for Lunch. Mini-meals after 9 p.m. Music, cocktails and fine dining in a warm atmosphere, after 5 P.M. Reservations LO 9-3333.
Penn Towers Apartment House, 18th Street and JFK Blvd.

David Paige Plays Every *Nite*

FRIDAY SATURDAY SUNDAY

For dinner and drinks every night
261 S. 21st Street, Philadelphia • 546-4232

Dear Happy

Dear Happy:

For the past couple years Valentine's Day has become a real drag for my husband and I. All the affection and humor that use to accompany this joyous celebration seems to have all but disappeared. What can we do that would be exciting and fun, and not too expensive, that would spark a new flame in our Valentine's Day? Please Help!

Sincerely,
Depressed Valentine

Dear Depressed Valentine:

Cheer up! I've got a fantastic way for you and hubby to put the torch back into your Valentine's Day. The Philadelphia Marriott's Lovers Escape Weekend, February 17-19 is just for you. Get away from it all. Check into your deluxe guest room and from that time on enjoy a fabulous two day/one night lovers holiday for two. And just to get you into the proper frame of mind, the Marriott will provide a complimentary heart-shaped box of candy along with personalized turn down service in the evening. But that's not all. You and that someone special can enjoy a romantic candle-lit dinner in any of four specialty restaurants and then dance away the night in the musical Firehouse Tavern or the Windjammer Disco. And get this, there's also a cheerful breakfast the next morning, and you can have it in bed, if desired. There's more if you just want to relax away the hours in the heated summerlike atmosphere of the indoor/outdoor pool, or soothe away aches in the hydro-massage whirlpool, or just enjoy the hotel's electronic game room. And don't worry, check out is not till 3 p.m.

You get it all for just

$69.90

per couple plus tax and gratuities. Reservations required at (215) 667-0200 or toll free (800) 228-9290.

MARRIOTT WANTS TO MAKE SOMEONE HAPPY AND THAT SOMEONE IS YOU!

Philadelphia Marriott Hotel
City Line Ave. & Monument Rd.
Phila., Pa. 19131

This is living this is

Marriott® HOTELS

Frog Prince

pivotal book I read in college," Poses says, "was Jane Jacobs' *Death and Life of Great American Cities*. She approached cities in a very people-oriented, organic way. I trace my interest in restaurants to her description of neighborhood candy stores and the vital function they played as a way for people to relate to their surroundings. I see restaurants as providing some of that same social focus." Only he didn't see that until much later.

First there was a degree in sociology (because Penn didn't have an undergraduate department in city planning) and a stab at The Peace Corps in Brazil where, after two months battling a troubled conscience, he heard a radio broadcast describing the violence at the 1968 Chicago Democratic convention and concluded the place to change the world wasn't necessarily in a jungle 100 miles south of Rio. A confirmed pacifist, he came back to Philadelphia and went to work as a program secretary for SANE, the Dr. Spock anti-war group. But the draft board wasn't recognizing SANE as an alternative to military service. Rather than take off for Canada, Poses took a job teaching emotionally disturbed children at the Greentree School in Germantown.

"That was a terrific time. I love the kids. That's where I ran my first restaurant. The Greentree Cafe, two days a week. The kids and I would start in the morning and go shopping and talk about where did bacon come from—no, it doesn't come from a package—and so on. Then we'd plan the menu and the kids would go around the school and tell the teachers what we were making and the prices. Then we'd cook the food, collect the money and keep the books. It was a great, great experience for all of us."

And it gave Poses time—in addition to winning a post as Democratic committeeman in the 8th Ward—to ruminate about his future and decide he'd like to own a restaurant. First, though, he had to learn how. "I answered an ad for a busboy at 1603 Latimer Street. I knew La Panetiere was 1602 Locust and I figured this was the back door. Peter Von Starck [the très elegant owner who brought French high cuisine to the banks of the Delaware] interviewed me and informed me I'd have to shave off my beard because there was room for only one beard at Panetiere—his. I knew I was ready to make it on my own when a year and a half later I came out of the kitchen to wait tables again in the dining room and a new beard came with me."

Poses laid his cards on the table, told Von Starck he was after a restaurant education. Von Starck offered Panetiere as an open classroom and, in return, Poses worked like a galley slave. He bussed, shined glasses, emptied ashtrays. He waited tables and tended bar on his time off. (Von Starck himself had served the same sort of apprenticeship in France and at the Coventry Forge Inn.) Poses watched Von Starck arrange fresh flowers for the tables and gradually assumed that task, too. And he worked his way up the ladder from chopping carrots to taking over the whole kitchen the night a chef walked out. "What Peter taught me above all was a sense of style. I put it in my own idiom, which is worlds different from his, but that basic sense of style was crucial."

Von Starck also introduced Poses to fine wine. Through surreptitious sips of whatever remained in patron's glasses at the end of the evening, Poses sampled an array of grapes he could not have afforded to buy by the bottle. Though never enamored of liquor, he had no trouble falling in love with wine.

Later when he opened Frog, he listed ten or twelve standards—a few red, a few white and a rosé. As the food became more sophisticated, the wine list developed accordingly. Poses devoured wine books, attended seminars, visited vineyards in California and became something of a wine maven. Eventually, he built a stellar wine cellar at Frog with 150 selections. Then when he could lay his hands on a few cases of rare wines, he stashed them in the cellar, too, and offered them as wine specials. From that came his wine-of-the-day policy: a particularly good red or white wine available by the glass in addition to the house wine. At The Commissary this concept has become a full blown wine bar where ten or twelve different wines can be ordered by the glass.

The wine bar is a tremendous resource for people who want to try new wines without the expense of buying a full bottle. It fits perfectly into Poses' philosophy of educating the public palate and it doesn't hurt business to fatten the check with the bar bill.

POSES WAS GETTING itchy at La Panetiere. A year of five lunches and six dinners weekly seemed an adequate apprenticeship. A friend touted him on a used furniture store for rent near the corner of 16th and Spruce, that could make a good restaurant. He felt he was ready to take the plunge. Borrowing some money from his parents (though his dad was less than thrilled that his college-graduated son preferred recipes to blueprints), he persuaded his brother to quit his job with a chemical company in New York and join him as a partner. They signed a lease for the store and the apartment behind it and worked

nights and weekends for six months tearing down walls, building a kitchen, tiling a bathroom.

Mother Poses did the decorating long distance by combing junk shops in New York for chairs—$6 was her top price—and when she discovered a number of cheap church pews, it was quickly decided banquettes would be nice too. For a clue on how to arrange them, Poses and his brother carried tape measures in their pockets and every time they went out for a bite to eat, they measured the chairs, the tables and the spaces between. Later people would think the seating was purposely tight at Frog to add an air of conviviality, but it was purely an economic move to squeeze as many diners as possible into a small space.

Brother Fred located a set of beautiful oak library doors in Connecticut one weekend which, he figured, turned sideways would make an ideal base for the bar. That meant they only needed a top. A drugstore in Manayunk advertised a going-out-of-business sale and a marble soda fountain was among the items. Poses drove out to take a look and the pharmacist wound up offering to pay him $100 to cart the thing away. "We rented a truck and a bunch of us arrived with a hammer and some screwdrivers. Well, this monster was built 50 years ago and, as they say, they don't build'em like they used to. The stainless steel parts were welded together and we couldn't find any seams. At one point we pried a piece of marble loose; it fell on my cousin's foot and we had to rush her to the hospital. When we got back there were some guys sweeping the place who suggested we try to force the thing apart with a pole and we hit a power line and were nearly electrocuted."

It was the Marx Brothers on a shoestring. All along Poses had been putting friendly little hand-written signs in the front window to let the neighborhood know what was happening inside. "Hi. We're building a restaurant." "Making progress. The sinks went in today."

Looking back, Poses has trouble believing his naiveté. He put Frog together with guts and $35,000.

IT WAS GETTING close to opening and they needed a name. They considered The Wind and The Willows. Too cute. Gepetto had a nice ring to it but they couldn't afford puppets for decoration. Besides, people would think it was an Italian restaurant. Mother Poses came up with Le Grenouille but Steve thought a French name was the height of pretense, exactly the opposite of what he was aiming for. "Well how about Frog, then?" And Frog it was.

After trying the rest. . .
You know we still are the best!

The only restaurant under the personal supervision of the fourth generation of the original BOOKBINDER restaurant family, Sam Jr., and Richard.

PHONE
KI 5-1137
•
PARKING FACILITIES
•
Credit Cards Honored

15TH STREET
15th ST. BOOKBINDERS
SEA FOOD HOUSE, INC.
215 South 15th St

Amoroso's plays the leading roll at Pagano's

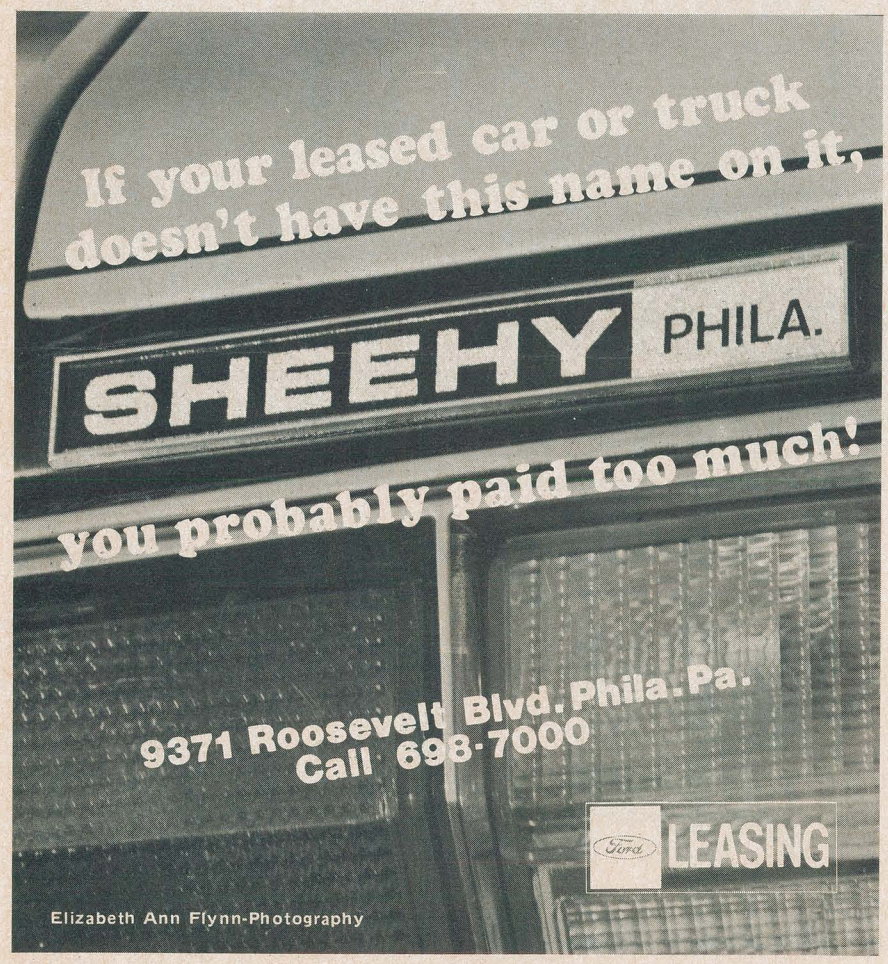
Amoroso's Hearth-Baked Bread & Rolls
845 S. 55th Street, Philadelphia, Pa. (215) 471-4740

La Panetière
Dinner Luncheon

KI 6-5452
1602 Locust St., Philadelphia, Pa.

CINELLI'S. . . Since 1909
Where your Parents and your Grandparents Dined. . .
Cinelli's
COUNTRY HOUSE
ROUTE 38 & HADDONFIELD RD.
CHERRY HILL, N.J.
609/662-5050

Quaker Photo...
the pro team of photo lab services
● CUSTOM COLOR PRINTS
● QUANTITY COLOR PRINTS
We use Kodak paper... for a good look.
PROFESSIONAL PHOTOLAB SERVICES
QUAKER PHOTO
1025 ARCH STREET
PHILADELPHIA, PA. 19107
(215) 922-4444



Frog Prince

Frog opened in April 1973, a pretty little place with green tables, lots of hanging plants and fresh flowers and waitresses in long hair and long skirts. Actually it looked more like a boutique than a restaurant and it caught on like brushfire—partly, Poses thinks, because there were so few alternatives at the time. "Compared to the sophisticated sauces and dishes we do today, we really were a miserable restaurant. The stove was new but everything else was second-hand. We even borrowed a refrigerator. And summer came and, Jesus, it was hot and the salads were wilting so we stuck them in a tub of ice. We printed the menu on six chalkboards and erased them between lunch and dinner. It was months before it occured to me to buy six more chalkboards."

Yet the public was charmed because the food was interesting—watercress soups, Thai-flavored chicken dishes, sumptuous desserts—and the atmosphere was as friendly as a dinner party at home.

From the start Poses attracted an unusual staff. Enthusiasm was more important to him than experience and it was a novelty to be served by an English major working his way through Penn or a painter from PCA. But those were the bright types drawn by the help wanted signs in the window and they found an immediate rapport with the young man inside, a civil libertarian from his Earth Shoes to his tasting finger. Poses outlawed any distinctions between waiters and busboys, oops buspersons. All jobs were rotated so nobody got stuck with the crumbs, and tips were pooled. "People don't work just for the restaurant," he told them. "They work for each other, too." And because he also believed work shouldn't dominate people's lives (his own excluded) he closed on major holidays like Christmas, New Year's and July Fourth.

Poses was a women's libber, too, one of the first in Philadelphia to hire female chefs in the kitchen. They'd traditionally been barred with the excuse they didn't have the strength to lift the stock pots.

In an industry where dishwashers are frequently drug addicts and those waiters who do speak English don't speak the King's, Poses is unique in that he could fill a university faculty by raiding his staff. Though the initial art students have graduated, many still wait tables part-time. Others have risen to the management team instead of pursuing their original careers as teachers or historians.

Carol DeLancey cleared dishes at Frog the summer she graduated from Skidmore; today she's a manager at

The Commissary. What keeps her here is the special way Poses has of nurturing his employees. "I drank Gallo chablis when I came to work at Frog," she says. "Now I'm giving wine seminars to the staff and ordering from French vineyards because Steven had the confidence in me that I didn't have myself. When I had to hire the staff at Commissary, I was scared to death. I'd never hired anybody. He said, 'You can do it. Just make sure the cashiers are pretty!' "

Saul Schwarz is another Commissary manager who's been everything at Frog from cook to bartender. "Steve has a way of bringing out the best in people," Schwarz says. "If something's wrong he looks to find out why; he doesn't demand you make it right. He lends people money, helps the Thais in the kitchen with their immigration papers. One day he walked in and handed me a huge box with a beautiful copper Charlotte mold inside. 'Happy belated birthday,' he said. 'And thanks for cooking the night the chef called in sick.' "

The chefs are very much a new breed too. Only one, Nick Petruse, the dinner chef at Frog, was formally trained to cook in Europe. The rest, like Poses, are largely self-taught and he considers that a distinct advantage because their vision isn't limited by having learned to prepare a velouté the one and only right way. Hilary Rayvis, the day chef Downstairs at The Commissary, is typical.

A face like a china doll, masses of wavy hair falling over dib-dabs of blue eye shadow and pink cheeks, her dream was to teach Asian children Shakespeare. But when she finished Temple with a major in Asian studies, her job offers amounted to zero. Cooking, her avocation, became her source of income. "I can make something at home, tell Steve about it, and he'll let me put it on the menu. If it doesn't go over, it's not a big deal. We can erase it."

Poses is beginning to sound like Jesus in a white apron. Isn't there anything negative to say about him? "Well, he's not good about understanding sickness because he's never ill and he says 'fuck' when he gets mad."

Right now he's mad. He's sitting at a round table in the back room at Frog, the room he opened about the time he and his brother Fred angrily parted ways. (They've since patched things up.) It's the weekly staff meeting where occasional complaint letters are discussed, the menu reviewed and general feelings hung on the line to air.

Slender Don Falconio, whose official title is manager of Frog but who functions as Poses' right arm, has just distributed the results of a survey in which the staff was asked to evaluate the lunch and dinner menu based on customer comments. There are several negative remarks about the steaks and the chefs complain they've been dissatisfied with the quality of beef Frog's buyer has been loading in the cooler.

Poses doesn't raise his voice. He explodes. "Don't fucking serve it if the steak is shitty. Come tell me! I'll solve

Let them eat carrot cake

Poses isn't one of those cooks who guards his recipes as if they were as valuable as the H-bomb formula. In fact, he plans to publish a cookbook as soon as he gets around to reducing the proportions from restaurant to family size. That's why it takes so long to get a recipe from Frog or The Commissary. It's not that they're unwilling to share; it's just that the chefs don't want to be bothered with the mathematics of cutting carrot soup from 40 servings to six.

Hang in, if that's the one you're waiting for. If it's the carrot cake you're after, though—and it's The Commissary's most requested recipe—we can help you out:

Commissary Carrot Cake

Combine in a mixer bowl and beat well: 1¼ cups corn oil and 2 cups sugar.

Sift together:

2 c. sifted flour
2 tsp. baking powder
2 tsp. cinnamon
1 tsp. baking soda
1 tsp. salt

Sift half these dry ingredients into sugar mixture and blend; sift in remaining dry ingredients alternately with four eggs. Mix well after each addition.

Add and stir in by hand:

1 lb. carrots, grated & peeled
1 c. chopped pecans
1 c. raisins

Pour into a lightly oiled 10" tube pan. Bake in a preheated 325° oven for about 1 hour and 10 minutes. Cool upright in pan. Split cake into three layers and spread about ¼ inch of pecan filling between layers.

Pecan Filling

In a small heavy saucepan combine 1 cup sugar and ¼ cup flour. Gradually stir in one cup heavy cream. Add ¼ cup butter and scant ½ tsp. salt.

Cook over very low heat, stirring frequently until mixture just comes to a simmer. This may take one half hour—let simmer 2-3 minutes. Remove from heat. When lukewarm, stir in one cup of chopped pecans and two tsp. vanilla.

Cook completely, preferably overnight.

Toast 4 oz. of shredded coconut in a 300° oven for 10-15 minutes or until lightly colored. Toss with fork to help it brown evenly. Cool. Pat this onto sides of cake after frosting it.

Cream Cheese Frosting

Combine in a mixer 8 oz. of soft cream cheese and 8 oz. of soft butter. Add ½ to ¾ box sifted powdered sugar and 1 tsp. vanilla. Refrigerate if too soft to spread right after making it.

Serves 12 to 16.

the problem in two weeks or we'll get a new buyer. You guys must give me the feedback!"

The dust settles. They move on, item by item, over the three typed pages of the survey. The curries are too sweet; the seafood crêpes too rich. Poses suggests dropping the latter for something else. He also requests the chefs devise a new veal sauce that doesn't have cream and mushrooms. And a different soup. "Let's get away from our slavish devotion to cream soups," he says. "And let's try a new chef's salad. We could do one with chicken and ham as long as it doesn't look like a julienne from Woolworth's."

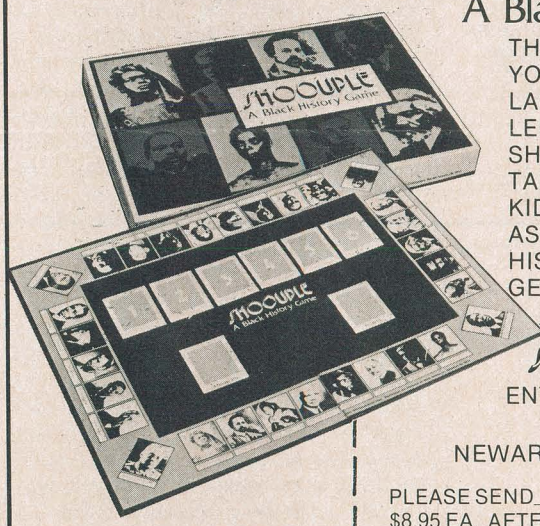
THE BACK ROOM at Frog was added in 1974, bringing the capacity to 90 seats. Though he never spent a penny on advertising (and still hasn't), word of mouth was packing the house and Poses was putting in 90 hours a week to meet the crush. He did everything: arranged flowers, wrote the menu boards, ordered food, did the payroll, and cooked. His friends, despairing of his ever finding a half-hour to share a glass of wine, drifted away. The creativity of cooking became the drudgery of grinding out meals. "I was insane," Poses says. "I had to have my finger on everything. I didn't have the emotional maturity to deal with instant success. It was a very rough time for me."

What Poses had to learn was to be the driver instead of the horse. Little by little he hired additional kitchen help, skipped overseeing a lunch here, a dinner there. He couldn't enlarge the 18′ × 20′ cubicle of a kitchen but there was plenty of room to expand in the basement to put in a pantry, a wine cellar and worktables for boning chickens and slicing potatoes. As he added personnel, business increased until gradually Poses vacated the kitchen altogether—except as chief taster—the better to handle his growing empire.

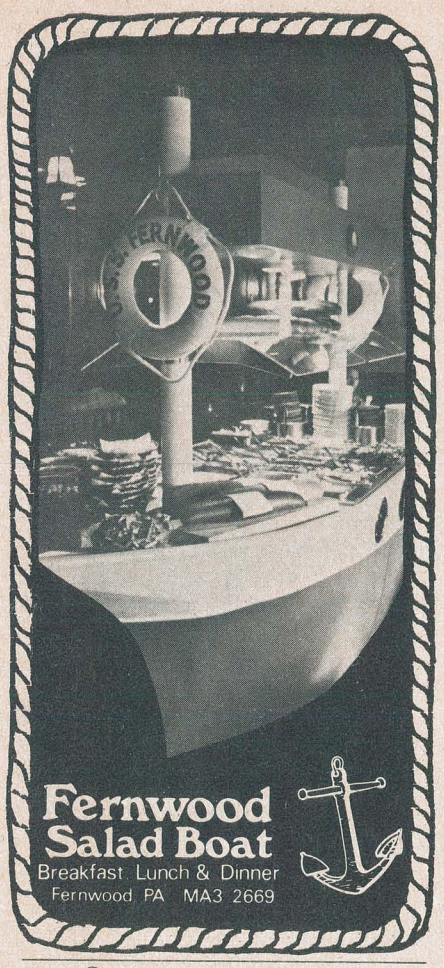
IN THE SPRING OF '76, The American Institute of Architects approached Poses to cater its national convention in Philadelphia, an intimate gathering of 1,200 people which—just to make things impossible—it wanted to hold in the unfinished Academy House adjacent to the Academy of Music. Poses hadn't thought about catering before that and saw the offer as a challenge, not unlike his high school carnival. But this time he was the professional, expected to produce 1,200 first-rate meals. The kitchen at Frog couldn't be used, occupied as it was feeding restaurant customers, so everything was prepared on a four-burner stove in the basement. "It was staggering," Poses recalls. "Trip after trip, lugging pounds

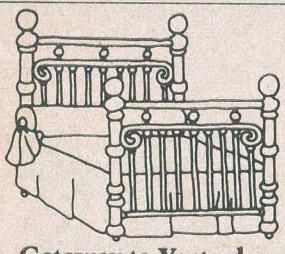
ANOTHER NATURAL EXCLUSIVE
COMPLETE SKIN CARE CENTER
Deep pore cleansing designed for acne, oily, dry, mature, skin.
Organic face lifts.
Make-up application & charting.
Corrective creative hair coloring.

International HAIRCOLOR specialists
PAUL AND KAY'S BEAUTY VILLA
Skin Care
Hair Design
Bio-Cosmetics & Creams
264 South 20th Street Philadelphia, PA 732-6176 • 545-8758
MasterCharge and VISA cards accepted.

INTRODUCING...
SHOOUPLE®
A Black History Game


THIS CHRISTMAS, GIVE YOUR CHILDREN THE LASTING GIFT OF KNOWLEDGE. GIVE THEM SHOOUPLE... THE ENTERTAINING WAY FOR YOUR KIDS TO DISCOVER NEW ASPECTS OF BLACK HISTORY. THEY WON'T FORGET IT. (OR YOU!)
ORDER NOW TO INSURE DELIVERY IN TIME FOR CHRISTMAS. ORDER BEFORE DECEMBER 5th AND WE'LL PAY POSTAGE AND HANDLING.
SHOOUPLE
ENTERPRISES, INC.
P.O. BOX 461
NEWARK, DELAWARE 19711
PLEASE SEND_____ SHOOUPLE GAMES @ $8.95 EA. AFTER DECEMBER 5th, ADD $1.50 PER GAME FOR POSTAGE AND HANDLING.
NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
_____
CITY _____
STATE _____ ZIP _____





Getaway to Yesterday

Visit the Inn in the Berkshires with two centuries of tradition, and all the modern amenities. Live amidst antiques. Savor lobster, homemade apple pie, potables from our tavern. Norman Rockwell Museum close by.

The Red Lion Inn
Since 1773, Box P2, Stockbridge, Mass. 01262. (413) 298-5545

HILLARY'S

Made fresh on the premises daily.

Rated "The Best" in PHILADELPHIA Magazine.

HOMEMADE ICE CREAM
1929 Chestnut Street, Phila. • 561-5031
Open daily 11:30 a.m.-1.00 a.m.

of food, pounds of ice from Frog's basement, finding the right staff, the logistics. We were exhausted but thrilled because the architects thought it was wonderful and so did we."

Now he'd become a caterer too. The word spread. "Poses does parties on the side." The phone started ringing, first occasionally, now regularly—a bar mitzvah luncheon, a private dinner, an office party, and lots of charity soirées like Regine's blast last spring to benefit the Institute of Contemporary Art. Poses almost didn't get that one. The decorations committee envisioned the evening as "very '30s" with only male waiters in black tie passing hors d'oeuvres on silver trays. Poses insisted, "You use my women as waiters too or you'll have to find another caterer." He agreed to dress the women in tuxedos and everybody was happy. "When it comes to a showdown between my beliefs and my willingness to compromise, my beliefs are usually stronger."

"PICKETS," the voice on the telephone said. "You'd better come right over. There are pickets blocking the door and we can't get in to work." Poses ran from Frog at 16th and Spruce to the new restaurant he was building at 1710 Sansom and sure enough, there were pickets, about 20 of them. Not peaceful pickets carrying signs "for educational purposes" but big mean-looking brutes standing in front of the entrance with their arms crossed and their faces set like bull mastiffs. "This ain't a union job," they said. "You're preventing us from making a living."

Poses had intended to be fair. When he mapped out The Commissary in 1976 during an all-night confab over a picnic table in North Carolina where his friend, architect Ed Bronstein, was camping, he planned to give the plumbing and carpentry work to the same men who'd helped him build Frog. The rest of the jobs, electrical and such, would go to the union. But Poses didn't like being bullied. He didn't like it one bit that here in America somebody could seal off his front door and dictate whom he should hire. So he went to court and he paid rent for six weeks while his workmen sat idle until the National Labor Relations Board decided Poses had a right to employ whomever he chose, as long as *some* of them were union men. Which was exactly what he'd intended from the beginning.

That delay meant The Commissary didn't open for Christmas 1976. Easter '77 came and went too. It's awfully hard to hammer when the outside thermometer reads 23° and your only heat is a kerosene burner because Philly Electric's put a freeze on new oil and gas installations. It was May before Poses finally unveiled his singular version of a fast food operation. Except for an epidemic of jealousy at Frog which suddenly became the older kid, seemingly neglected by Poppa Steve, it was rave reviews from the start.

The Commissary wasn't one of those cymbals-banging-lights-flashing-why-didn't-I-think-of-it-before ideas. When a broker called Poses to look at an available storefront on Sansom Street he went with the possibility of opening a retail bakery to sell the desserts so popular at Frog. But somewhere in his head danced visions of Fauchon, the recently exploded millionaire's gourmet food shop that he'd visited on a French wine seminar the previous spring. His business sense had been telling him for quite a while that the fast food industry was sprouting faster than

Between The Commissary and Frog, Poses dishes out up to 1,500 meals a day.

Jack's beanstalk, yet his aesthetic sense warned him he'd never be happy selling hamburgers and french fries. And he certainly didn't want to put himself in competition with Frog with a duplicate operation. "At some point it occurred to me that there was no place in Philadelphia, let alone the rest of the country, where people could get a high quality, imaginative meal at a relatively reasonable cost in a pleasant atmosphere. And be in and out in 20 minutes."

When all these thoughts mixed together in Poses' mental food processor, what came out was The Commissary: a salad bar, a soup bar, a charcuterie, a dessert bar, an ambitious daily special, a cookbook reference library, a wine bar, and a demonstration kitchen to whip up omelettes and pasta and be used for cooking classes during slack hours. "I wanted some of the elements of a cafeteria but nothing in a traditional sense. I knew people would be confused by having to go one place for eggs and another for a cup of cappuccino. But I wanted the confusion. I was willing to pay the price for it because of what I hoped to gain from the excitement. I wanted a seductive three-ring circus and I accepted the fact that I might end up with a zoo."

It's typical of the way Poses operates

that the recipes for feeding time evolved over a series of exotic luncheons the proposed kitchen staff prepared for each other during that long cold winter. The first one Poses hosted: caviar, followed by hot lobster with truffles, washed down by imported champagne. As they lifted crystal glasses filled with golden liquid, he said, "We are about to create the most exciting restaurant in this country." Though he never planned to put caviar and truffles on the menu, tuna on toast would hardly have been an appropriate augury.

What evolved Downstairs at The Commissary was a repertoire of 75 salads, soups and platters from which the daily fare is chosen. Every three days the selections change. It's a far cry from the creamed spinach and macaroni staples you find day in and day out at Horn and Hardart. Here, if you love the cous-cous, come back for it tomorrow or you'll wait weeks until it appears again.

If self-service isn't your idea of dining out, some of the Downstairs features are available Upstairs—a cozy, noisy, let-us-take-care-of-you eatery with its own kitchen that turns out unusual dishes like Thai beef curry, hot pork sandwiches, and guacamole.

Business has been so far beyond projections that Poses is breaking through to the building next door.

Besides 50 more seats for The Commissary, he'll add a laundry, that ought to cut his $50,000 linen bill in half, and offices too, including one for himself which may or may not have his name on the door. He's never had a personal office before—he spreads his papers like everybody else at Frog in a converted hallway with a long counter and a door at each end.

One would suppose this meteoric rise has made Steve Poses a very rich man. Between Frog, and the two Commissary restaurants, he dishes out 1,200 to 1,500 meals a day, employs 170 people and, by the end of this year, should be grossing nearly $3 million. But his expenses are high, his debts large, and his profits immediately reinvested in new ventures. He lives simply but tastefully in a three-story rented town house off an obscure center city alley. The dining room is on the first floor, the living room is on the second, furnished with an eclectic mélange of modern leather and Victorian wood. There's a stuffed chimpanzee on one chair, several needlepoint pillows done by his mother on the sofa and clusters of plants in the corners.

On one typical recent Friday, he placed a steaming espresso pot on the coffee table next to a pile of books—Paul Tillich's *The Courage To Be,* Paul Bocuse's *French Cooking,* and a biography of Adlai Stevenson—and began munching on his regular breakfast of an apple, and talking about finances. "Rich, in and of itself, has never been a goal of mine. Right now there's not enough in my personal bank account to make the down payment on a house. What I'd like out of life is a good relationship with a woman and enough money to travel, own a farm in the country and a house in the city. My parents were frugal people and my experience in the Peace Corps taught me I can get along on very little. I've had to learn how to spend money and it's something I'm beginning to enjoy."

Poses is beginning to enjoy a lot of things these days. The last five years have been a see-saw of business ups and personal downs—the rift with his brother, the break-up of a four-year live-in love affair, the rites of passage from a dissident youth to an establishment adulthood. Therapy helped. So did success. He's content for the moment to live alone with his plants and paintings and books. He doesn't ever remember feeling as good.

"I used to think about nothing but making the business run. But I've cut my work week from 90 hours to 60 and I've started to think about my own happiness. I'm doing sit-ups every morning and dieting very seriously [his goal is a 37-inch waist]. I no longer have to eat to fill emotional holes."

He looks to his watch and realizes he's late for a hearing at City Hall on a variance for The Commissary expansion. From there he has a meeting with an architect to smooth out a few details on the Stouffer's consultation and a staff meeting Upstairs at The Commissary, to devise a menu for a catered party for the Academy of Music Restoration Committee. Until his office is ready, he continues using a restaurant table for his desk.

Over more black coffee at the restaurant Poses neatly prints the suggestions for the party on a yellow legal pad. "Let's do cornucopias of salmon wrapped in dill. That'll be pretty. And mussels with saffron mayonnaise. That's good for color. Ummm. Two hot and one cold hors d'oeuvre, a bartender and two waiters. I think $8.50 a head is fair." He checks his watch again and dashes off to catch a plane for Boston where he's been combining weekend pleasure with a new-found friend and a little Stouffer's business on the side. In a minute he's back. He forgot to leave a tip. He pulls out a few dollars from his wallet and tucks them under his cup. Poses always leaves a tip in his own restaurant; that's the kind of guy he is. Then he runs for the plane. ■■

WILLIAM PENN inn

3 QUALITY RESTAURANTS

The MAYFAIR

The CLUTTERBUCKS

The COMMONWEALTH CLUB

Enjoy the relaxed atmosphere of the MAYFAIR, with its full menu and salad bar . . . the warm and friendly mood of the CLUTTERBUCKS, with its succulent seafood and reasonable prices . . . or the luxury of the private-membership COMMONWEALTH CLUB. Open seven days a week for lunch, dinner or your next family or business affair.

Rt. 202 at Sumneytown Pike

Gwynedd, PA 19436

Ph. (215) 699-9272

GIOVANNI'S 24 WEST RISTORANTE

Exquisite Italian Cuisine

Dinner served Tues.-Sat.

Businessman's Luncheon Tues.-Fri. 11:30-2:00

American Express, BankAmericard and Diners Club Honored

24 kings hwy west haddonfield nj

609 428-2211

KELLY'S of Mole Street

A Philadelphia Tradition . . .

"Stand-Up" Oyster and Clam Bar

Fresh Seafood • US Choice Meats

FULL COURSE DINNERS from 5.95

Popular Cocktail Bar

Walking distance of Major Hotels

Major Credit Cards Honored including American Express

Open Mon.-Sat. 11am Sun-2:30 pm

1620 Ludlow Street

567-4333