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Grande's owner wants to 'reach out to community'

New SE restaurateur raises funds for Haitian victims; looking to assist local organizations

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Stephen Draviam said he wants the business over which he just took ownership, Grande's Italian Restaurant, to be a part of the community, and he isn't just talking.

That community could mean the area surrounding the restaurant, 4279 Mayfield Road in South Euclid, or it could mean the world community.

"With our new Sunday buffet we just started (Jan. 31), we raised about \$900 for the people in Haiti," Draviam said of the earthquake-ravaged country. "We gave all of our proceeds. Our waitresses

even gave their tips."

As for the immediate area, he said, "We want to reach out to the community, to the schools, if people are willing. We can give free pizzas to students who are doing well.

"If people want to contact us about holding fund-raisers for a good cause, they can use our restaurant. We serve at the City Mission every second Sunday. It's something to give back."

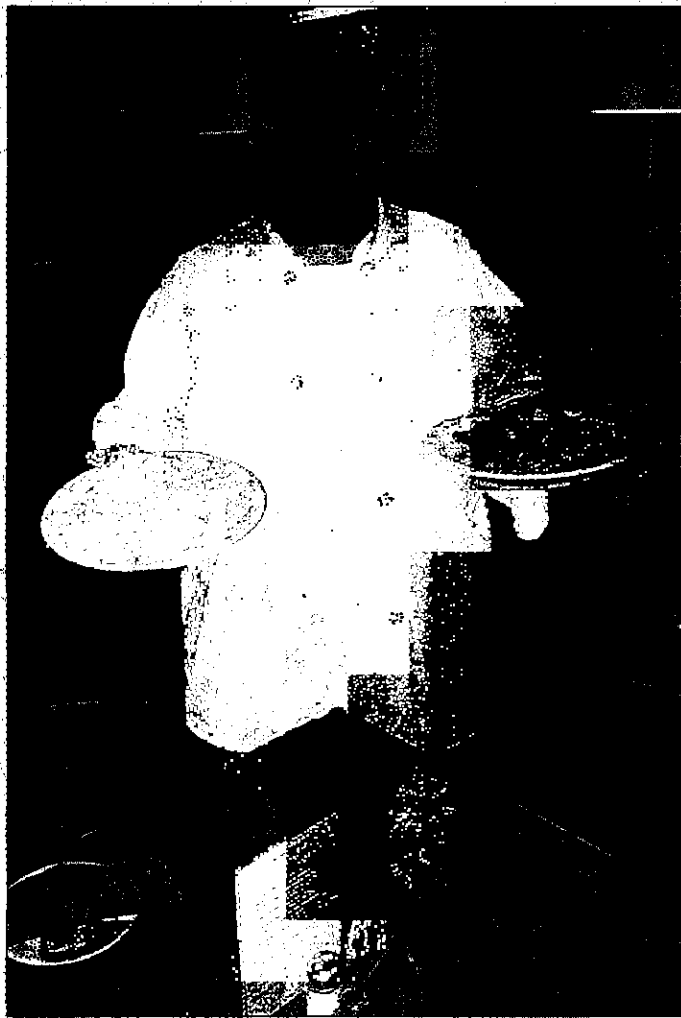
A native of India, Draviam is operating his first restaurant after having worked for U.S. Customs as a house broker. He left that job 12 years ago and worked as an im-

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Stephen Draviam, new owner of Grande's Italian Restaurant, and his new friend, a chef mascot that greets patrons as they enter the dining area.

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Chrissy Lake, the head chef at Grande's Italian Restaurant, holds two of the eatery's most popular dishes, alfredo and shrimp, and Veal Grande.

GRANDE'S

From A1

porter of foods from around the world.

"I wasn't looking for an Italian restaurant, but I wanted to own a restaurant," he said, noting his ethnic background. "I'm not Italian, but I've lived in this country for 32 years and it is a favorite (style of cuisine) that I like to eat."

To keep the continuity and quality of the food in order, Draviam retained the services of head chef Chrissy Lake, of South Euclid. Lake has served up dishes at the Grande for the past four years. She is assisted by another South Euclid resident, Reginald-Roberson.

Lake said the menu's stalwarts remain from the past ownership. They include veal grande (veal with artichokes and mushrooms in a white wine sauce), fettuccine alfredo, chicken Marsala and chicken picatta.

A new favorite is spaghetti with jumbo meatballs.

"We make our own homemade sauce and our own



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The restaurant has been at its current location at Mayfield Road and South Belvoir Boulevard for a couple of decades but, as of December, it is under the ownership of Stephen Draviam.

meatballs," Draviam said. "The sauce is tomato and meat flavored."

Draviam, of Chester, said this movement to homemade is something new with his ownership.

"Even our desserts are made at home — our cheesecake and Tiramisu."

"Our eggplant is homemade, too," Lake said. "It's fresh, not frozen and we cut it and bread it."

Grande's has a fully stocked bar in front that remains open after the restau-

rant has closed, serving drinks and appetizers until 2 a.m.

The dining area seats 80 and Draviam is hoping it will be full, particularly for those newly instituted Sunday buffets, open from 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The buffet features a menu with over 20 items, from scrambled eggs and link sausages, to eggplant parmesan. The cost is \$13.99 for adults, and \$7.99 for children under 10.

The dining section is open every day from 4-10 p.m.

Taking over a restaurant business in the current economy is no easy task. While Draviam is reaching out to the community, he is hoping the community will eagerly accept the food his eatery offers.