

## Good Times

A newsletter for all the favorite guests &amp; friends of Salty's Restaurants in the Pacific Northwest.

## SeattleDining Connie Adams on the Kingens and Salty's 25 years.

By Connie Adams, SeattleDining.com  
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SEATTLE – When a group of restaurants like Salty's hit the 25-year mark, you've got to know there's a plan and a driving force behind the success. In this case, it's **Gerry Kingen** and his vision for both guests and team members.

**SeattleDining** talked with Gerry, his wife **Kathy Kingen** and the Managing Partner at Salty's on Alki, **Bonnie David**.

Gerry may be more familiar to you as the man who started the **Red Robin** chain, but his restaurant history goes back even further. He grew up in the business with parents who owned the **Airport Inn**, the **Roadside Inn**, **Kingen's Drive In** and **Kingens' Steakhouse**. He put a lot of hours in at the restaurants. "I was cheap labor," Gerry laughs, "and it kept me off the streets."

Clearly understanding his destiny, he went to college to become a dentist, but his summers were spent working in restaurants. Eventually the dentist idea ran its course and he bought a tavern called the **Riverside Gardens** and renamed it the **Climax Tavern**. He later bought a small tavern in the University District called **Red Robin**, built another tavern and called it the **Warehouse** (music here included a young local band named **Heart**), bought the **Blue Moon Tavern** (has anyone not owned this place?), built **Boondock's** on Capitol Hill, then **Lion O'Reilly's**. He's also responsible for the **Great American Food & Beverage Co.** that turned into the **Lake Union Café**.

Gerry fixed up the **Red Robin** tavern (with a little push from the City). As he explains, "At the time, there was a limited number of liquor licenses allowed. Then the bar scene exploded and people hopped to new bars. If you wanted them to stay at your place, you had to do something different." He added cocktails with crazy names like "Sand in Your Shorts," three burgers, a chicken sandwich, a steak and salad. The burgers

tripled the volume of business and the rest is history. As Kathy says, "It was a time when mom and pop stores turned into chain stores. He was at the beginning of that."

In the meantime, he was also involved in the real estate business in Portland and was developing a property in 1980 that would have a marina, condos and a restaurant on the Willamette River. It was a time when names were long in an attempt to get people to remember the place (i.e., **Lion O'Reilly's** and **B.J. Monkeyshines**, **Boondock's**

**Sundeckers** and **Green-thumbs**). He named the restaurant **Salty Pickerel & Angus McHereford** (later changing it to **Salty's on the Willamette**).

Another location came up in Redondo, Washington in 1981 and in went another Salty. The public shortened the name to Salty's (now called **Salty's at Redondo**).

In 1985, the **Beach Broiler** in West Seattle was purchased and **Salty's on Alki** was created. In 1987, a second Portland Salty's was opened, this time on the Columbia River. In 1990, **Salty's at the Falls** was opened in Spokane. Eventually two locations were closed, Salty's on the Willamette in 1991 and Salty's at the Falls in 1996, leaving the three current locations.

With the three Salty's doing well, the Kingens sold everything else and took time for themselves. Unfortunately, the person left in charge embezzled a million dollars from the company. Needless to say, Gerry and Kathy got back in the game and have been much more hands on in the past few years. "It's been great

for me," says Bonnie. "I've learned more in the past last two years than in my whole career. We've given the title CMO (Chief Mother Officer) to Kathy. They're both very involved."

What have been the lessons learned over the years? "It has to be fun," Gerry says. "The most fun I've had is in re-inventing and refining. I love to see the potential for making something better than it is and making it happen. As a company grows, someone has to have a tender grip on the rudder. I have people around me who are smarter than me,

but I like to stir the pot."

Bonnie adds, "The entrepreneur has to stay in the mix. The bean counters can't be left in complete charge or the spirit of a place goes away."

"My biggest lesson has been about persistence," adds Gerry. "I have had my butt kicked thoroughly several times, but the good news is that if you fall on your face, you're still moving forward."

Gerry, Kathy and Bonnie agree that you have to be focused on satisfying customer demand and their ever-changing tastes. "The difference here is our relationship with the guest," says Bonnie. Gerry agrees. "We're human. We make mistakes. But if we screw up, we fix it in spades. We have great recovery skills."

Salty's has a serious staff training program that emphasizes making the guest happy (in fact, the company name is **Happy Guests International, Inc.**). They supply cards that team members carry with them, filled with information like their motto, philosophy and credo. Each team member gets a handbook that

touches on every aspect of their employment as well as how Salty's wants them to treat guests. No one will fail here due to lack of communication. It's a lesson Gerry has learned well over the years.

Currently, Salty's is on a two-to-three year journey to meet the gross potential at all three locations. As Gerry explains, "The economy is still down and people don't always have the money to splurge on a big dinner, but they'd like to come to Salty's. So we're revamping our Alki location to meet that need. The main dining room will stay close to what it is now, with new furniture and fixtures. We'll install an entire patio system with fireplaces and a gazebo and a fish bar downstairs where people can have a meal for \$10-15. The bar will have greenhouse glass that can be opened, it will expand to a 120-seat capacity and will also have a fireplace. We'll add a robata bar with sushi and an apothecary bar. The Admiral's Stateroom downstairs will gain an extra 20 seats for private parties." In addition, the bakery and kitchen downstairs will be expanded.

Owning a restaurant isn't a static operation. "If you like constant change, this is the place for you," laughs Bonnie. "I never know what the day will offer when I come in." Despite how busy the Salty's grills are, Gerry and Kathy are balancing their lives thoughtfully. "We don't do leading edge now. I'm 62 and I want to do fun stuff. Salty's does great things, but we aren't looking at new concepts—we choose not to plug into that again," says Gerry. Kathy feels like there's a return to the past in some ways. "We're almost back to a new breed of mom & pop," she says. At the moment, there are no plans for more Salty's, but that doesn't mean it won't happen. "It has to be just the right opportunity," says Gerry, "we can't do less than what we've already done."

Of course, despite all that balancing talk, there is the redevelopment of six acres of real estate called **The Station** at **SeaTac** with commercial retail, parking and residences. Maybe the Kingens won't ever completely slow down.



Gerry &amp; Kathy Kingen (photo courtesy of SeattleDining.com)

## Pig on the run finds "Hog Heaven" at Salty's in Portland.

PORTLAND – "The newsworthy swimming piggy is now a part of the Salty's family," says Salty's Portland Hostess **Lynique Oveson** of the pig she helped to rescue from the flowing waters of the mighty Columbia River on July 3. Oveson was helping seat guests when she noticed a little pink pig swimming for her life (little did we know at the time). A call to non-emergency police services went to no avail (what, they have bigger fish to fry?). So as **Phil Stanford** of *The Portland Tribune* reported, "...line cook **Josh**

**Thorburn** stripped down to the bare essentials, and to the tumultuous cheers of the onlookers, swam out and rescued the little porker."

Portland Managing Partner **Linda Addy** reports, "We later received a call from the owners, a group of people who were preparing an Hawaiian pig roast with two pigs, one of which escaped and found freedom and life right off the shores of Salty's waterfront restaurant location. Yes, there is a 'Hog Heaven.' We struck a trade with them. They'll eat seafood instead!"

The saved piggy has been adopted by Addy and given the name **Peaches** which is savior Josh's nickname. Peaches now lives on the Oveson family farm where she is seen frolicking with the family pet (and Lynique) in our photos courtesy of Lynique's mom, **Evamarie Oveson**. Lynique's dog **Tessa Ann** cleans Peaches after her mud baths.

Addy says, "Lynique is such a com-



passionate person and this isn't the first time we've celebrated her big heart: She created special gift bags for Salty's kids joining us on Easter, and she helped a guest who suffered a seizure while dining with us and even visited the guest in the hospital and befriended the family. We look forward to her next big-hearted act!"



# Mintz—her words.

By Eileen Mintz, Public Relations Spokesperson for Salty's

Congratulations to Alki and the Portland Salty's for winning the **Award of Excellence** with *Wine Spectator* 2006. The award is given to restaurants whose wine lists offer a well-chosen selection of quality producers, along with a thematic match to the menu in both price and style. We are very proud of Salty's Sommelier **Tim O'Brien** and Portland Beverage Manager **Jason Ludlow** who both lend their knowledge to our wine lists (see [www.saltys.com/food\\_wine/awardwinning\\_wine.asp](http://www.saltys.com/food_wine/awardwinning_wine.asp)).

**Bite of Oregon** with Portland Executive Chef **Dana Cress** and crew takes place August 11-13. Enjoy tastes from Salty's (Blackened Salmon Caesar, Cioppino with Dungeness Crab, Dungeness Crab Cocktail, Key Lime Pie Tart) and other top restaurants, Oregon wines, an Iron Chef competition, Oregon craft beers and American-style lagers, music and family fun galore. See more at [www.biteoforegon.com](http://www.biteoforegon.com).

The **Auction of Washington**

**Wines** will be held at Chateau Ste. Michelle Winery to benefit Children's Hospital & Regional Medical Center and the Washington Wine Education Foundation August 17-19. Buy tickets at [www.auctionof-washingtonwines.org](http://www.auctionof-washingtonwines.org). On August 19 Salty's Sommelier **Tim O'Brien** auctions his sommelier services plus six white Chaleur Estate wines from **DeLille Cellars** ([www.delillecellars.com](http://www.delillecellars.com)) and a six-year vertical (1998-2003) of **Quilceda Creek** Cabernet ([www.quilcedacreek.com](http://www.quilcedacreek.com)). Alki is in a live auction package with **Chuck Reininger** and Reininger Winery ([www.reininger-winery.com](http://www.reininger-winery.com)).



**"SweetFest"** (a first for this area) is August 26-27 in Marymoor Park. It showcases a wealth of success and talent in the Northwest sweets industry with exhibits of edible works of culinary art. Family focused, it includes live entertainment, children's area and stage, demo tents, food booths, product sampling and a wine garden. Alki Executive Pastry Chef **Jane Gibson** teaches on stage. Portions of the proceeds benefit The Moyer Foundation. Cost is \$5 for adults and includes free parking. Kids under 12 are free. For tickets visit [www.sweetfest.com](http://www.sweetfest.com). Yours truly will be the MC at some of the pastry demos!

Portland Managing Partner **Linda Addy** recently appeared in *Whiskwise*, the *Oregonian* personality profile. Her favorite cookbook is *The French Laundry Cookbook* by **Thomas Keller**. Her most memorable food fiasco: "A family food fiasco involving Spago in Beverly Hills, my father-in-law and **Regis Philbin**. A group of us were dining, enjoying a holiday vacation, dressed in our best and anticipating our last course, dessert. My father-in-law is easily star-struck, and when he spotted Regis at the bar he could not help squealing and diving happily into his chocolate soufflé. The soufflé exploded onto the front of my father-in-law's white shirt, and Regis waved with a grin. See the full story which includes Addy's recipe for Summer Green Bean-Edamame Salad at [www.oregonlive.com](http://www.oregonlive.com) (do a search on "Linda Addy")."

I just saw a private unveiling of the **2007 Firefighter Calendar**. You can attend the public Calendar Release party August 11. See [www.firefightercalendar.com](http://www.firefightercalendar.com) to buy \$25 tickets. I attended the private unveiling with Writer **Mina Williams** of

[stir.com](http://www.stir.com). Her pet Dalmatian "Chip" made it into the calendar, too. He's named after a Dalmatian posted at a fire station in New York City and is known as the only dog in her Shoreline neighborhood that does not howl at the fire truck sirens.

The Tacoma **Zoobilee** sold out as it always does helping to benefit the Point Defiance Zoo and Aquarium. Executive Chef **Gabe Cabrera** wowed everyone with Salty's Signature Seafood Chowder.

I joined Alki Managing Partner **Bonnie David** on my birthday last month to help the Alki Beach Business Community clean up Alki Beach. They'll be at it again September 9, National Paddle Out Day.

The July **Boys & Girls Seafair Fishing Derby** in Elliott Bay had coverage by Seattle Sportsradio 950 KJR outdoor writer and personality **Joel Shangle** of "Northwest Wild Country." He set up shop early in the day at Alki to cover the festivities.

Salty's Owner **Gerry Kingen** and Executive Chef **Jeremy McLachlan** talked with Shangle during the pre-derby promotion. Salty's gave away brunch certificates. Past guests include Bobby Knight (NCAA Coaching Legend) and Joe Montana (Hall of Fame quarterback). What a guy!

## Lake Sonoma Wine Dinner at Portland Salty's.

PORTLAND – **Lake Sonoma Winery** and Salty's in Portland will present a Wine Maker's Dinner hosted by Wine Educator **Dave Crane** with a five-course dinner by Portland Salty's Executive Chef **Dana Cress** and his team of chefs.

Lake Sonoma is a unique winery located in Healdsburg, California, featuring exclusive wines that possess excellent structure, desirable fruit flavors and interesting complexity. Their wine philosophy mirrors Salty's food philosophy with a passion for quality. Winery Owner



**Gary Heck** says, "If in one season the climate is such that the grapes are not to our quality standards, we won't make Lake Sonoma wine from them." This dinner is truly a rare opportunity to enjoy the best of Sonoma wines and the best of Portland seafood in a wonderful riverfront venue. The menu:

**1st Course:** Lobster & Crab Bouchee with Lobster Oil & Herb Oil by Sous Chef **Bob Murray** with 2005 Dry Creek

Valley Sauvignon Blanc.

**2nd Course:** Field Greens Tossed With Hazelnut Vinaigrette, Goat Cheese Croutons and Poached Pear by Brunch Chef **Steve Keritz** with 2004 Russian River Valley Chardonnay.

**3rd Course:** Triple Cream Camembert-Stuffed Soft Shelled Crab by Sous Chef **Josh Gibler** with 2003 Dry Creek Valley Zinfandel.

**4th Course:** Medallions Of Wild Boar with a Poivrade, Vegetable Purée & Cassis Reduction by Executive Chef **Dana Cress** with 2002 Alexander Valley Cabernet Sauvignon.

**5th Course:** Meringue Torte by Pastry Chef **Darla Swanson** with 2003 Saini Farms Dry Creek Valley Old Vine Zinfandel.

Please join us Thursday, September 28 at 7:00 p.m. in Salty's Private Wine Room. Seating limited to 26 people so call (503) 288-4444 soon; the cost is \$75 per person which does not include gratuity.

refrigerated. You can add 1/2 cup of your favorite fresh berries to 4 ounces Pina Colada mix and 6 ounces of ice. Blend until smooth.

30 ounces Coco Lopez Coconut  
46 ounces Pineapple Juice  
40 ounces crushed pineapple  
Blend until smooth. Refrigeration shelf life is 3 1/2 days. The total recipe yield is 100 ounces or 16 to 20 12-ounce frozen drinks. When adding rum use 1 1/2 ounces. Of course you can come into Salty's and order a Pina Colada!

## Pina Colada recipes.

SEATTLE AND PORTLAND – "The secret to all good beverages is to start from scratch instead of buying mass-produced mixes. We would like to share our Pina Colada batch recipe minus the rum so the whole family can enjoy the tropical taste of summer," says Salty's Sommelier **Tim O'Brien**.

Make this up ahead of time and keep it

## Wild salmon, heirloom tomatoes and berries.

SEATTLE AND PORTLAND – With the arrival of heirloom tomatoes and glorious berries to the summer marketplace, Salty's chefs beckon you with their dishes featuring these summer beauties that pack a punch of flavor.



"Nothing adds more flavor than superior heirloom tomatoes or rich ripe summer berries," says Salty's Executive Chef **Jeremy McLachlan**. "When you're buying them for home, don't be afraid of the odd

shapes of heirloom tomatoes. It's the flavor that counts. But of course we want you to come in to Salty's restaurants and try our special dishes available in August at all three of our seafood eateries."

On the market sheet in August:

**APPETIZER -**  
**Heirloom Tomato Gazpacho with Herbed Dungeness Crab & Avocado Coulis**  
**ENTRÉE - DINNER/LUNCH -**  
**Lavender Honey-Glazed Wild Salmon Salad with Arugula, 12-year-old Balsamic Vinaigrette, Chèvre Cheese, Local Berries, Focaccia Croutons**

See the recipes online, view our current market sheets and make reservations at [Salty.com](http://Salty.com) or call us.

## Live music with Myles Crew at Redondo Café-Bar.



SOUTH SEATTLE – Don't miss the live pop music at Redondo Beach Café-Bar in August. The lineup:

Thur 8/3 **Dave Christensen**  
Fri 8/4 **Paul Kroeger**  
Sat 8/5 **Jonny Smokes**  
Thur 8/10 **John Case**  
Fri 8/11 **Jonny Smokes**  
Sat 8/12 **Myles Crew**  
Thur 8/17 **Dave Christensen**  
Fri 8/18 **Billy Farmer**  
Sat 8/19 **Myles Crew**  
Thur 8/24 **Myles Crew**  
Fri 8/25 **Dave Christensen**

Sat 8/26 **John Case**  
Thur 8/31 **Billy Farmer**  
Make reservations today.

## Casey MacGill's Blue 4 Trio tour in Europe, return September to Alki.

SEATTLE – Just after launching their debut CD, **Casey MacGill's Blue 4 Trio** is headed to Scotland, England and France in August to play festivals, clubs, dances and pubs. "We'll miss them in Seattle but they return in September and will add Fridays to their formerly Mondays-only schedule," says Alki Operations Manager **Mary Davis**.

Their debut CD, recorded in Seattle, is appropriately named "Casey MacGill and the Blue 4 Trio." Twelve sparkling tunes, all crowd favorites from their shows (can anyone say "Chop, Chop?"), feature MacGill, Bass Player **Mike Daugherty** and Drummer **Matt Weiner**. Joining the trio on two tracks are special guest Saxophonists **Craig Flory** and **Hans Teuber**, both Seattle legends in their own way. Weiner tells us, "This CD is the first of many documents of the sound of this band. It's just

us playing and singing, with no gimmicks, just the way you hear us at Salty's. We're very proud of it." The cover art, pictured here, was painted by Casey's childhood buddy **Robert Armstrong**, a noted artist (Mickey Rat comics) and musician (Cheap Suit Serenaders, the musical saw in "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest"). MacGill adds, "The cover fits the band so well because Armstrong is not only a musician and aficionado of the music we play, but also my mentor who introduced me to much of it when we were in high school 40 years ago." The album's beautiful package was invented and printed by **Stumptown Printers** in Portland (they recycle and are sparing with yucky poisons). Purchase the CD at [www.blue4trio.com](http://www.blue4trio.com) or at Alki when the band plays.

In August, the group will play in larger European venues including the Edinburgh

Jazz Festival where the threesome will grow. MacGill reports, "We're more than a little excited, curious and, yes, nervous to hear the sound of our expanded group which will include clarinet, tenor sax, trombone, and my good chum **John Reynolds**, the guitarist from my original band in Los Angeles in 1980." The horn section will include all British blokes. Other venues include Ronnie Scott's, a London jazz landmark where the trio will perform Salty's style, just the three of them. In France, they return to a festival outside of Toulouse.

Daugherty tells us, "I'd rather sit in an old London Pub and drink real ale than almost anything else I can think of, except play upstairs at Salty's in Seattle. It's our own little jazz club inside the restaurant. You wouldn't think that



people would pass up the Seattle skyline view just to sit with us in the back. Well, come join us in September and you'll see why we have so much fun." See their full schedule, including the Europe tour, online at [www.blue4trio.com](http://www.blue4trio.com).



World Class Seafood,® Steaks, Service & Smiles!

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ON THE COLUMBIA RIVER 503.288.4444  
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