

# Former Bikini Bar gets classy face lift

*The small building at 1300 Empire Boulevard has been transformed from a vacant eyesore to a nautical-themed LaSalle's Steak and Crabhouse.*

By **AMY CAVALIER**

Messenger Post Staff

When Don and Tina Woodring took a look at the shack-like structure at 1300 Empire Boulevard over a year ago, it was a far cry from the high-end steak and seafood restaurant they hoped to

open along with former Froggy's on the Bay owner Joe Bassett.

"It probably should have been condemned," said Don Woodring. "I kept thinking 'what in the world is it going to look like,' but then you combine everyone's talents and it comes together."

Getting LaSalle's Steak and Crabhouse ready for business has definitely been a team effort.

They completely gutted the interior and a 1,000-square-foot addition was added to the former Bikini Bar. Tina Woodring handled everything from decorating, furniture shopping to book keeping. Don Woodring, owner of Pontillo's Pizzerias in Pittsford and Greece,

and Bassett had the business knowledge. Even the Woodring's son, Christopher, helped, selecting an extensive wine list.

It took about a year to complete, but the business partners' hard work paid off when the restaurant opened on July 24. The restaurant is open from 3 to 11 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday; from 3 p.m. to midnight on Friday and Saturday and from noon to 8 p.m. on Sundays with an outdoor grill menu.

In total, Bassett estimates they've invested close to \$180,000 in the restaurant.

As for the fare, "the crab legs are

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STAFF PHOTO/CARRIE ANN GRIPPO

**A view from the deck at LaSalle's Steak and Crabhouse which opened at 1300 Empire Boulevard in July.**

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the best, we've got cold water lobster tails which can't get any better, the steaks are all prime, the drink prices are average and we've got 32 different choices of wine you can buy by the bottle."

Everything is prepared to

order, said Tina Woodring. "Nothing is prepared ahead of time, so if you don't like something, he can eliminate it," she said.

Tina Woodring said LaSalle's Steak and Crabhouse is comfortable but upscale.

"I wanted that warm sunset

feel inside," she said.

Outside, on the patio, Bassett said, one can literally take in a sunset.

"We have the best view of Irondequoit Bay," he said. "There's no doubt in my mind."

From the deck, diners can take in the marshlands and

sand cliffs of Irondequoit Bay, with a view that stretches all the way to the bay bridge.

"Penfield doesn't have anything like this," said Don Woodring.

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