

PANACHE

Newsletter of Les Dames d'Escoffier Chicago
Anniversaries



Anniversaries

are very special times, and within organizations, they are often benchmarks of growth, progress, and dedication. In the glow of success, there seems to have been very little attention paid to both the five-year and ten-year anniversary of the Chicago chapter, but all of the stops were pulled out in anticipation of the fifteenth in 1997.

Honoring Auguste Escoffier's 150 Birthday in 1996, the Chicago chapter staged a very formal Belle Epoch dinner dance at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel on October 28, 1996, co-chaired by Rose Kallas and Monique Hooker, and attended by Lawrence Escoffier, the event was supernacular. President at the time, Toria Emas, remembers that the menu was the same menu that was served at banquets honoring Escoffier's birthday around the world. And a special essay contest was sponsored by the Chicago chapter on an Escoffier theme. The winner received a full culinary scholarship.

Five years later, on May 2, 2002, the Chicago chapter of Les Dames d'Escoffier celebrated its 20th Anniversary in the grand tradition of past auctions at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel. The ambience was outstanding. On two levels of the Grand Ballroom were tempting stations offering chilled lobster, caviar on mini-latkes, luscious bites of coq au vin, tiny crab cakes, Le Vichyssoise's mushroom "cigars," and fine ripe cheeses. To complement the savory



Soiree 2002 – Chicago Dames minutes before the Auction begins.

dishes, were chocolate rolls with banana cream sauce, miniature cupcakes, cheesecake bites, and pastries beyond description that beckoned the connoisseur, while espresso and cappuccino pleased the surfeited palate. Interspersed between the comestibles were silent auction items featuring impressive imported serving dishes, baskets of tempting products, flowers, wooden boxes of wines, and previews of the live auction to come.

All in all, there were more than 100 silent and live auction items to lure the jaded gourmand and traveler, including trips to Las Vegas, Tucson, Napa, New York, and Spa, Jazz, and Festival packages to Chicago and Wisconsin. Guests were invited to think about Wine Country Retreats, Italian Cooking Classes, Chocolate, Tequila, and Spanish wine tastings, even Botox and Laser eye surgery did not escape the auction's far-reaching net. There were raffles galore—the President's Champagne Celebration Raffle, and the Grand Raffle—A Trip to Singapore, including round trip business class tickets for two, three nights at the Ritz-Carlton Millennia Singapore Hotel, and special trips and items donated by the Singapore Tourism Board. For the first time *Foodles*, doodle-like drawings about food, wine, and hospitality drawn by a roster of celebrities like Mayor Daley, Julia Child, Jacques Pepin, Alice Waters, and other notables, were an exciting part of the auction action.

TV personality and world-traveler Bill Kurtis volunteered as Master of Ceremonies and auctioneer for the event, and he generously donated an evening of food and wine at his 80-acre retreat to the highest bidder. It fetched over \$3,000. Presided over by president Rita Gutekanst and co-chairs Nancy Kirby Harris and Nancy Brussat Barocci, the event drew over 325 guests and more than 50 volunteers including culinary students and faculty from the Washburne Culinary Institute, and a gross outcome of \$110,000.

Continued on page 6



President's Message

Dear Members of the Chicago chapter,

August. The sun hangs lower in the sky, and each week, darkness falls noticeably earlier. August is a bittersweet month, and yet, it is a favorite of mine. The garden is finally weeded, trimmed and flowering; and it's too late to do more planting. So, it's the time to relax, to soak in all the pleasantness of late-summer ease.

I hope you have done so as well because by the time this newsletter arrives we will be in the throes of cookbook sales and the 25th Anniversary ticket distribution. Both of these projects call for full cooperation from each of us. And we will reach and even exceed our goals when everyone does her part. I invite you to participate as fully as your schedule allows. The benefits will include new friendships as well as success for Les Dames mission.

We are asking you to purchase a minimum of ten cookbooks at \$15 each, half the retail shelf price. Kathy Ruff has accepted the challenge to deplete our initial quota of 1200 books, while Pam Reardon has PR strategies in place with local media sources. Please come forward with your personal venues to enhance sales – your or an associate's retail shop, gift catalogs, newsletters, or simply forwarding the information to your personal email list. Dana Benigno will set up a link we can all use.

Meme Hopmayer and her committee have splendid plans to introduce our cookbook to the world at the celebration of the 25th Anniversary of the founding of the Chicago Chapter. Save November 12th for the most glamorous party of the season. And please answer the call for addresses for the invitation list. A link for your personal email list will also be provided for this event. Meme guarantees an evening of great food, wine and music in addition to the delightful enjoyment of being together.

We thank all those who responded to the website survey. However, since the percentage of member responses was low, the results are inconclusive. Nonetheless, Dana Benigno will proceed with many improvements to our site, making it a useful source of information for you and an efficient center for event reservations.

About the LDEI CONFERENCE 2007, if you dismissed the brochure as something for Board members only, let me ask you to reconsider. Once I attended a Conference, I realized how much it validates the concept of uniting women in our industries for networking, educating, and assisting others in our communities. I know you will enjoy the experience. Nieman Marcus, Veuve Clicquot, the historic Adolphus Hotel and the entire Dallas Chapter are eager to please you.

In the last two years, we have invited twelve accomplished professional women into our Chapter. We hope they will become fully involved in our activities, but this may take additional effort on the part of long-term members. No matter what one's age, it is difficult to be the "new member." Please welcome them at every opportunity and review their stories in the June issue of *Panache*.

Thank you for your continued involvement and your friendship,
Barbara

Executive Board

President: *Barbara Glunz*
Vice President: *Brenda McDowell*
Treasurer: *Nancy Kirby Harris*
Secretary: *Carol Mighton Haddix*
Past President: *Toria Emas*

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Queenie Burns
Patty Erd
Meme Hopmayer
Carrie Nahabedian
Pam Reardon

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Newsletter: *Joan Reardon & Eleanor Hanson*
Chapter Historian: *Toria Emas*
Program Chair: *Patty Erd*
Green Tables Initiative: *Lois Levine*
Scholarships: *Madelaine Bullwinkel*



The Book and the Cook

In 1984, just two years after the founding of the Chicago chapter of Les Dames d'Escoffier, Colman Andrews wrote: "Never have so many Americans been so knowledgeable about good eating. And scores of inventive chefs, shops, and marketers are scrambling to fill our plates. How did we get here?" Read on.

Think about it. While credit must be given to Escoffier, Fernand Point, Paul Bocuse, Henri Soulé, Charles Ranhofer, James Beard, Craig Claiborne, Jacque Pepin, and a host of other culinary practitioners for changing the American palate, it is the cookbook-writing women who set the American table. Beginning with Amelia Simmons' *American Cookery*, published in 1796, and continuing with Mary Randolph's *The Virginia House-wife*, published in 1824, those two Connecticut and Virginia housewives used ingredients at hand to make a host of native dishes from Indian-inspired pumpkin puddings to corn meal bread. And they adapted the bounty of the New World to the traditional dishes of the Old.

With a penchant for teaching and measuring, Boston's Fanny Farmer standardized recipes while her mid-west counterpart, published *The Settlement Cookbook*.

Both were indispensable for early 20th century brides. But it was Irma Rombauer's *Joy of Cooking*, published in 1931, that turned American housewives into enthusiastic cooks and bakers, and her recipes clearly showed the inroads that the food industry was making into traditional cooking methods. Canned stock became an easy substitute for homemade stock, and in her chatty authorial voice, Irma also let her readers in on other labor-saving tricks, creating a willing acceptance for both canned and frozen foods. Enter the "women's magazine" editors, the diet dictators, the Peg Brackens with their reactionary *I Hate to Cook Book (s)*.

Only six years after Swanson introduced TV dinners, Julia Child *et al* published *Mastering the Art of French Cooking* and initiated a decade when upper middle class women and some men rushed into the kitchen, especially on weekends. Dishes like Boeuf Bourguignon, Coq au Vin, and Mousse au Chocolat became the gold standard on middle-class American tables, cookware shops multiplied, and TV cooking shows took off.

Ten years later on the West coast, *The Chez Panisse Menu Cookbook* and, especially, *Chez Panisse Pasta, Pizza & Calzone* heralded the concept of seasonal, fresh, and simple, and emphasized ingredients like pasta, heirloom vegetables, and herbs fresh from the kitchen garden. But time-

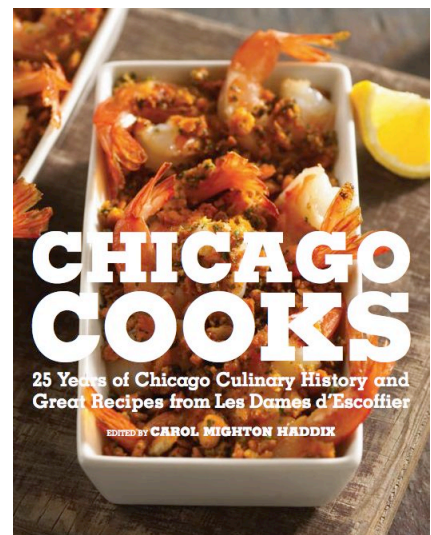
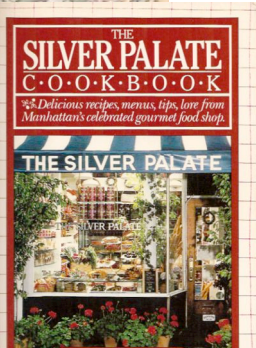
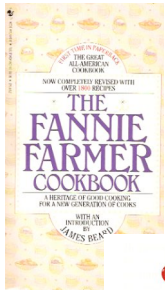
saving habits and take-out in one form or another was never far from the American kitchen scene, and dining as entertaining became the coin of the land. Targeting *Weddings* as her first packaged scenario, Martha Stewart went on to tout *Life Style* and paved the way to expand newspaper food columns into food sections referencing wine choices, restaurant reviews, and recipes.

But it was *The Silver Palate Cookbook*, published in 1982, the same year the Chicago chapter of Les Dames d'Escoffier was founded, that gauged

America's growing preoccupation with all things culinary. Accessible, smart, trend-driven and trend-setting, Julee Rosso and Sheila Lukins propelled their small New York City take-out, gourmet, food shop into a franchised line of sauces, salad dressings, and condiments, and into cookbooks that captured the entertaining dreams of the "new working society." Twenty-five years later, Cocktail Chicken Wings, Seviche, Butternut Squash Soup, Spicy Sesame Noodles, Arugula and Sweet Red Pepper Salad, Chicken Dijonnaise, and Decadent Chocolate Cake are still a part of a home cook's vocabulary.

Into the same culinary landscape that supported the Silver Palate concept, a group of Chicago cookware shop owners, cooking school founders, food journalists, restaurateurs, chefs, caterers, and PR professionals came together to form a chapter of the already established Les Dames d'Escoffier. And to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Chicago chapter, a cookbook was proposed to chronicle the role that the organization has played on the Chicago scene.

Chicago Cooks: 25 Years of Chicago Culinary History and Great Recipes from Les Dames d'Escoffier captures a period in time inaugurated by *The Silver Palate Cookbook*, and it showcases culinary trends, menus, and recipes from 1982 to 2007. It is history, comfort food, and achievement—all tied with a silver ribbon.



Scholarship Winners Update

By Madelaine Bullwinkel

Both of this year's all-school scholarship winners have summer jobs in the Chicago area. Luminita Cirstea is working at Bennison's Bakery in Evanston, and Ebru Basadyn is a cook at Aigre Doux on Kinsey St. in Chicago. They would be thrilled if any of us stopped by to say "Hello" and "Congratulations".

To emphasize the effectiveness of our Scholarship Program, Dana Hildreth, a 2006 scholarship awardee, addressed the Annual Meeting and explained how she made effective use of her \$5,000 award. The following letter expresses her gratitude to the organization and to her mentor, Mary Abbott Hess.

Dear Mary,
Feel free to share this letter with the rest of Les Dames:

Please allow me to express my gratitude to Les Dames d'Escoffier Chicago Chapter for giving me the chance to speak not only about my experiences in Japan, but also my appreciation for the mentorship that accompanies the annual scholarship.

If there's anything that a true chef and culinarian desires, it is experience. New equipment is great, and a solid base of loyal clientele is key to any operation, but the one thing that money CANNOT buy is the time-tested methods and techniques of a culinary/hospitality veteran.

The networking and opportunities that are available to the scholarship recipients through Les Dames are more abundant than I could have ever asked for. I am so thankful for the life and career lessons that all of the Dames are so eager to share, and I cannot stress how beneficial this organization is to the young and/or un-established women in the Chicago land area.

I'll go ahead and speak for my entire generation when I say that we've never had to fight for any of the rights or privileges that we have; electricity and potable water are readily available to the majority, women's and minorities' rights have always been under consideration, and the internet is old news. While this has instilled in us a need to "re-invent the wheel", it has also increased our awareness of the lessons of those who have gone and done before us.

This, to me, is what makes the mentorship portion of the Les Dames scholarship so extremely invaluable. As a past scholarship recipient, I would like to voice my agreement for the decision to re-examine the mentorship policy to provide more exposure to the next generation of the culinary community of Chicago.

Congratulations on your 25th anniversary. It is such an honor to communicate the difference that Les Dames has made in my life.

With sincere thanks,
Dana L. Hildreth

Annual Meeting and Dinner

On June 25, 2007, after an informative and inspiring Annual Meeting, sixty-three Dames, including six of the eight newly inducted members gathered for a gala reception and dinner at the Four Seasons Hotel in Chicago. Planned and executed by our out-going Program Chair Nancy Brussat and new Board member Chef Carrie Nahabedian, the evening showcased the talented executive chef Kevin Hickey and his staff. The six-course dinner was a tour de force of salmon tartare, a Scotch egg, sable fish, veal tenderloin, a stilton soufflé, and peach Melba—all accompanied by complimentary wines poured by Chef Hickey.

The highlight of the evening was the honoring of Alma Lach with the Chicago chapter's Dame of Distinction Award preceded by a short speech given by Toria Emas and an appreciation by chapter president Barbara Glunz.

Accompanied by her daughter, son-in-law, and family friend, Alma then gave her own award to Bill Emas, whose spotted, worn, and tattered copy of Alma's *The Hows and Whys of French Cooking* so astonished her that she gave him a new autographed copy of the book.



Looking back on the evening, Alma wrote, "June 25 was so very special for me and I thank you for all you did to make it so. The evening was a great chapter in my life, and the food, wine, speech and everything was beyond perfection."

The meeting before the Awards dinner summarized the activities of the chapter to date, emphasizing the momentum of the Scholarship committee, the outreach to various schools and organizations as a part of the Green Tables initiative, the forthcoming publication of *Chicago Cooks*, the induction of new members, and the updating of the Board of Directors—all of which were a tribute to the 25 years of successful leadership and fundraising activities sponsored by the Chicago chapter.



2007 New Members inducted at the Annual Meeting: President Barbara Glunz, Sharon Olson, Kathi Kari, Eleanor Hanson, Sandra Suria, Karen Herbst, Vice President Brenda McDowell

Panache-doku

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Place letters into the 9 by 9 table above in such a way that:

- Each row contains every letter once...
- Each column contains every letter once...and
- Each outlined 3 by 3 sub-box contains every letter once.

Harlequin Dressing –

Put ingredients into a blender and whirl...

¼ cup olive oil

¼ cup catsup

¼ of a sweet onion

¼ of a green pepper

¼ of a peeled, seeded tomato

½ teaspoon of sugar

Salt and pepper to season

Serve over 1/2 avocado filled with chopped shrimp,
or chopped lettuce. Dressing for 6.

Puzzle and recipe compliments of Alma Lach.

Solution is on page 7

Summer Events

Remember the old saw about “How did you spend your summer vacation?” Well, we asked our members the same question and came up with some interesting answers.

Green City Market

July 12, 2007 - Green City Market Chefs' Summer BBQ Festival featuring 50 of Chicago's top chefs took place from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Thursday, July 12, in Lincoln Park. The Green City Market barbeque has become one of Chicago's favorite summertime events and hundreds of people strolled through the park, sampled fabulous food and beverages, and enjoyed the live music provided by Blues To Go.



Shelly Young serving a guest.

Participating Les Dames chefs were: Carrie Nahabedian, Sarah Stegner, Sofia Solomon, Ina Pinkney, Mary McMahon, Pamela Fitzpatrick, Debbie Sharpe, and Shelley Young.



Shannon Kinsella with Rick Bayless

With dishes prepared from Green City Market's harvest bounty, tastings of local wines and beers, entertainment, a children's activity booth, and the beautiful Lincoln Park setting, it was a memorable summer evening!

More Summer Events

Caviar and Oysters

ChicaGourmets and Shaw's restaurant sponsored a Collins Caviar tasting and book signing of Joan Reardon's current books about Oyster Hall of Famer, M.F.K. Fisher on Wednesday, July 18, 2007. The evening began with sparkling wine and passed caviar appetizers during the book signing, and then moved on to a special dinner featuring the flavorful fresh water American caviars from Collins Caviar. Prepared by Shaw's Executive Chef Arnulfo Tellez and Sushi Chef Naoki Nakashima the menu featured a green salad garnished with fried oysters, Yukon salmon, and raspberry pie for dessert.

Armenian Fest

Spearheaded by Carrie Nahabedian, the 33rd Annual Armenian Fest was sponsored by St. Gregory's the Illuminator Armenian Church, 6700 W. Diversey, Chicago, on Saturday, August 11, 2007 and on Sunday, August 12.

It featured live Armenian music, great Shish Kebab cooked outside on an open fire, hand-made delicacies lovingly prepared by the women of the church, and great food and beverages. The annual fundraiser for the church is a wonderful example of volunteerism and food prepared and served with a generous spirit.

Caviar Tour

On Sunday, August 12th ChicaGourmets and Carolyn and Rachel Collins organized the first ever bus tour from Chicago to fabulous Michigan City Indiana- the "Global Headquarters" of the Collins Caviar Company.

It was a day to see the artisanal processing facility and methods of making America's finest Caviar that the Collins are famous for. In 2005 they moved to an historic former brewery building in the Elston Grove neighborhood--less than a mile from the shores of Lake Michigan, and the 1892 landmark building has been refurbished to house their FDA production facility. It is also a spacious and lovely site to host a party!

The day included a scrumptious seven-course Caviar Buffet, with wines generously provided by the House of Glunz, and a local Michigan Winery, the friendly vintners of Wyncroft Winery also poured their lovely offerings.

Dames Who Drink at Ravinia

After a week of record-breaking four-and-a-half-inches of rain, on August 21 eighteen members and their guests kept their fingers crossed and make the *Dames Who Drink Ravinia Picnic* a huge and dry success.

Well, not really totally dry. Debra Crestoni and Barbara Glunz brought many great wines and artisan cheeses.

The evening of music and pot luck dining began at Karen Levin's home where the traditional Margaritas and Maria Concannon's guacamole and chips were served along with Maria's shrimp cocktail and Karen's pepperoni-stuffed mushrooms.

After a stroll to Ravinia Park, the group enjoyed the following savory dishes: Jill Van Cleave's Zucchini, Blue Cheese & Feta Cheese Tart, Sandra Suria's Favorite Summer Salad of arugula, watermelon, feta, mint and fava beans, Barbara Gorham's turkey and Swiss cheese wraps, and Scott and Kathy Kari's cheese stuffed mushrooms and marinated asparagus spears. Diane Sokolofski provided Greek salad, crusty bread and Belgium chocolates, which were a nice transition to the exotic array of desserts.

Bill and Toria Emas presented a Biscotti Cake with Blueberries, Ken and Eleanor Hanson served Buttermilk Bars, Mary Abbott Hess and Bill Reynolds brought a Red Haven Peach and Fig Tart. Completing the feast were

more desserts and champagne from Nancy and Victor Rodriguez.

Aretha Franklin dominated the evening, with among other hits, "You Make Me Feel Like a Natural Woman"—a natural for an evening with the Chicago Dames Who Drink



Barbara Glunz, Sandra Suria, Barbara Gorham



Maria Concannon, Karen Levin



Kathy Kari & husband Scott Speer



Bill and Toria Emas



Mary Abbott Hess & Bill Reynolds



Victor and Nancy Rodriguez



Diane Sokolofski, Ken & Eleanor Hanson

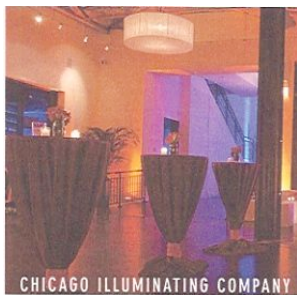


Debra Crestoni

Anniversaries cont. from p. 1

“Chicago Cooks : Celebrating 25 Years of Leadership in Chicago's Culinary Community,” our twenty-fifth Anniversary event to be held at the Chicago Illuminating Company, is promising to be another sizzler with a twist. Reflecting the many changes in the Chicago chapter and heralding the giant culinary strides that the city of Chicago has made during the past twenty-five years, the Anniversary committee, headed by Meme Hopmayer, and assisted by Rita Gutekanst, Nancy Brussat, Jeanne McInerney and Jennifer Anderson promise an unforgettable evening.

This tasting event will boast more than thirty food stations, featuring more than twenty-five appetizer, main course, and dessert recipes from *Chicago Cooks*, the Chicago chapter's cookbook that will be officially launched at the party. Wine will be flowing, compliments of EOS Winery and a Tequila Bar, compliments of Cielo Tequila. There will also be a band and, of course, recipes from the Les Dames cookbook will be featured.



Debbie Sharp and Wendy Pashman will prepare dishes for members who do not have commercial kitchens.

Foodles will be both a reprise and surprise. Maida Heatter, Rick Tramanto, Tony Mantuano, and Jacques Pepin have already sent in their foodles accompanied by a book

Dana Benigno will post the invitation online. It is guaranteed to be a celebration that will say *Silver* with style.



View more photos of our magnificent event venue at: www.chicagocooks.com

Significant Somethings: Les Dames Events and Honors

By Dana Benigno

Congratulations to **Dame Camille Stagg** who received the prestigious 2007 Divisional Outstanding Part-time Faculty Member Award from the College of DuPage in Glen Ellyn, Illinois at the Part-time faculty Recognition Dinner on August 20th. Camille says, "Considering there are 600 very active and 900 total part-time faculty members, I am thrilled to receive this honor!"

Dame Abby Mandel and Green City Market will be honored by ChicagGourmets with a special harvest dinner “From Farm to Table”. Abby will be the guest speaker at May Street Market and the dinner will feature Alex Cheswick's “localvore” menu. The event takes place Monday, September 10, 2007 at 6:30. Visit www.chicagocooks.com to attend.

Dame Carrie Nahabedian will host a “Menu to Impress for Less” with author Hope Fox at Naha at 6:30 on Thursday, September 6, 2007. The Menu will feature terrific dishes from Fox's book *Terrific Recipes from the Finest Restaurants You Can Really Make at Home*.

Dame Ina Pinkney ventured into the theatre as the guest movie reviewer on Chicago Tonight reviewing the animated “tale” RATATOUILLE, which is about a rat who aspires to be a chef. It was a four-star review! Ina also won 2nd prize, \$500 worth of rare Bordeaux wines, in an essay contest with a story about a wine bottle cork for the Portuguese Cork Association.

Dame Patty Erd, owner of the Spice House, has plans to go West by opening a store in beautiful Geneva, Illinois.

Dame Camilla Nielsen is proud to announce that a series of tours of the Nielsen-Massey Vanilla Company are being conducted by her son, Matthew Nielsen, Chief Operations Officer. The first tour was on Saturday, July 14, 2007, and they will continue through the fall.

From the Editor



We urge all members to send articles and submissions to joanreardon@jjreardon.com, and achievement items to Dana Benigno at dana@chicagocooks.com. We ask that your submission be current and complete. Deadline for the Winter issue—November 14, 2007.

Panache is published by the Chicago chapter of Les Dames d'Escoffier for the benefit of its members.

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Solution to puzzle on page 5

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2007 Calendar of Events

September

Monday, September 17, 2007 Season Kick-off at The Tavern Club
333 North Michigan, 25th Floor

Wine and Appetizer Reception (to roll out this year's programs and activities).
Also a showing of Dame of Distinction Alma Lach's "Pixelist" art.

October

Saturday, October 6, 2007 Breakfast with Alice Waters

LDEI president, Toria Emas, presents Alice Waters with the Grand Dame award at the Green City Market Edible Garden at the Lincoln Park Zoo.
A crepe breakfast will follow at that market.

October 17 – 20, 2007 LDEI Conference, Dallas TX

November

Monday, November 12, 2007 CHICAGO COOKS:

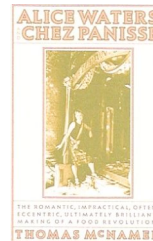
A Special Book Signing and Showcase Tasting in Honor of the
25th Anniversary of Les Dames Chicago.

Chicago Illuminating Company, 19 East 21st street, Chicago, IL 60611

December

Saturday December 1, 2007 Dames Who Drink & Shop Event

A Brunch at Nancy Brussat-Barocci's newly opened Convito Café & Market.



PANACHE

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25TH ANNIVERSARY

1982 – 2007



