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'Almost like home to me'

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By **JOE NOWAK**
Staff Writer

Aug. 19, 2004

Chef Steve Weiss literally grew up at the Donauschwaben German-American Cultural Center on Columbia Road in Olmsted Township.



Chef Steve Weiss serves up red sauerkraut at the Donauschwaben German-American Cultural Center in Olmsted Township. Weiss, an Olmsted Falls resident, has been the center's main cook for the last 2½ years Sun photo by Jim Votava.

to me."

For the last 2½ years, ever since Elizabeth retired, Weiss has been able to call the

"My mom, Elizabeth Weiss, ran the kitchen (at the center) and I always helped her out," the 37-year-old Olmsted Falls resident said. "It's almost been like a home

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cultural center his professional home. He is the facility's main cook, and he wants to keep it that way for a long time for both personal and professional reasons.

"You have three to four generations here working to keep traditions from Europe alive," said Weiss, who had his culinary training paid for by the center. He went to Cuyahoga Community College for his two-year degree and finished up his education at the American Culinary Federation.

"Because I've been around here so long, I'm very comfortable and I have the opportunity to keep those traditions going. I want to cook as well as my mom did," said Weiss, who listed the center's pork schnitzel as its biggest-selling item.

Schnitzel is pork that is covered with a hand-breaded seasoning before being deep fried. "It's just a traditional German food," Weiss said.

Robert Filippi, president of the cultural center, said it is a greater benefit for his organization to employ Weiss, than it may be for Weiss to cook at Donauschwaben.

"Steve understands the food business and that's something we needed," said Filippi, who described one of the goals of the center as being a place where visitors can enjoy food they are not usually offered at a "typical" restaurant — at reasonable prices.

"He does a marvelous job with our food and we have to do whatever we can to maintain a good working environment because we need good food service," Filippi said of Weiss.

Lunch-time patrons at the center have the opportunity to choose from a variety of appetizers, salads, side dishes, desserts and entrees. The latter includes sauerbraten (slowly marinated roast beef), cured smoked pork chops, wiener schnitzel, chicken paprikash and sausage sandwiches.

Lunch is served from 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Tuesday through Friday, and Sunday. The most expensive entree, wiener schnitzel, is \$8.95.

For the rest of the story, see your local Sun newspaper.

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