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OF THE RIVER!

HELP ESTABLISH A
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, GAY & BISEXUAL
& SISTERS

HAVING A...

MEETING

1:00 P.M.

RDAY,

OBITUARIES

Michael G. Oreski IV

BY STEVEN CAINES
Special to PGN

Michael G. Oreski IV, 36, a culinary artist and master chef for several Philadelphia area restaurants and cafés, died on April 19 at Pennsylvania Hospital. Mr. Oreski was also known for his dried flower arrangements, watercolor and oil canvas paintings and his skills as a decorator. Mr. Oreski and his companion of 13 years, Roland W. Carney, moved to Merchantville in 1987. They had formerly lived in Collingswood and Philadelphia.

"He made the greatest prime rib with all those little secret spices and herbs he put on it before he baked it," said Peter Lamlein, owner and chef at Overtures where Mr. Oreski worked during 1990 and 1991. He was also a chef at the Backstage Restaurant during the same time. "We still use a secret sauce he created for vegetables—it gives an extra little flavor to them."

Since 1978 when he was only 20 years old, Mr. Oreski was the chef at a succession of restaurants including Café Lafitte, Café Warsaw, the

former Equus Café and Uncles Restaurant. He had also worked as a private chef for a Main Line family and as a seasonal private chef in Maine. Mr. Oreski was a real gentleman—even-tempered...and with a fabulous sense of humor," Lamlein said.

Mr. Oreski learned the restaurant business from the bottom up starting with a restaurant his family had owned for a short time. He grew up in Skippack and King of Prussia. But his first restaurant job in Philadelphia was with the former Fruit Lady on Walnut near Rittenhouse, said his companion Roland W. Carney. In addition to his prime rib, Mr. Oreski was known for his wonderful pâtés, his Caesar salad, his pork dishes and for Mushrooms Oreski. His culinary creations "ranged from Eastern European to any type of nouvelle cuisine," Carney said. "His favorite herbs were garlic and thyme. He was very observant and would take things [he learned] and do them his way."

Mr. Oreski loved nature and loved gardening—particularly raising his own fresh herbs and spices, Carney said. "That's why we moved to New Jersey."

His artistry ranged from a

passion for dried flower arrangements to canvas paintings to interior decorating. His dried flower arrangements had their own following and sold as quickly as his pâtés.

"It was nothing for him to whip up a set of drapes to match an oriental rug," Carney said. "He liked change."

"Fine music, fine dining and fine living were all very

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SOAPBOX

From P. 12

hasn't just leapt out of the closet now that she's in a position of power, or because someone else was ready to out her. So she stands as a symbol for the rest of us—proof that queer integrity *can* be maintained while working within the system.

Not every queer American wants to work within the system, certainly, or even believes that the system *can* work for queers. But it is one avenue that activism can take, and it is important because it bolsters the idea that queers are just one more minority group, one other part of the American melting pot.

The fact that no one was able to derail the Achtenberg appointment is a great cause for queer celebration. Personally, it makes me thrilled that this queer "first" came from a lesbian. I wish more queers felt as I do. I can't wait for the day when government is full of out queers and nobody cares about the closet cases anymore. Moving forward as a civil rights movement means accepting our victories with at least as much grace as we accept our defeats. Victory certainly becomes Roberta Achtenberg. I think it would look really fierce on the rest of

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