

Southside pub plays up Irish roots

It may have come to your attention that this week includes St. Patrick's Day, and the fact that it is on a Friday will add to the intensity of the rampant frivolity this Gaelic frolic invites.

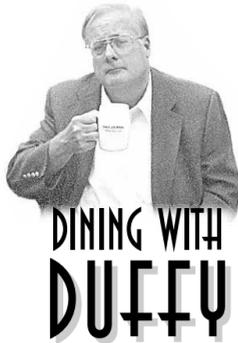
This means virtually every establishment with a liquor license will green up their décor and, in more extreme and clichéd cases, their beer to suggest their charming oasis traces its lineage to Dublin, and thus should be your headquarters for St. Patrick's Day, night and early morning.

One suspects Griffin's County Kerry Pub off South Emerson and Stop 11 Road on the southside comes by these sentiments more honestly than most, under the auspices of John and Donna Griffin since 1997.

Housed in a small shopping strip, it offers a large dining room of tables and booths with strategically placed TV monitors, a zigzag shaped bar near the entrance with such Irish-blessed nectars as Guinness Stout and Harps on tap, and a fitness facility in the back for aerobic dart workouts.

Suffice it to say the premises are decorated for holiday festivities, with shamrock images dangling from the ceilings and walls, as thoughtfully provided by prominent national breweries.

Griffin's has the full line of generously portioned pub cuisine, with the dinner menu offering hand-cut steak specials, country fried steak, breaded chicken, cheese covered "Galway chicken" breast, breaded grouper and walleye.



Griffin's County Kerry Pub

Address: 7930 S. Emerson Ave., Indianapolis
Phone: 727-1717
Hours: 11 a.m. to 3 a.m. Monday to Saturday; noon to midnight Sunday
Entree price range: \$5.95 to \$8.50
Credit cards: Major cards accepted

The sandwich board sports hefty "pub burgers" and "paddy" melts, grilled chicken, cheese steaks, barbecued pork, breaded tenderloins, BLTs and grilled chicken, with pizza also a viable attraction and alternative.

A highlighted specialty is "Grandma Boyle's Irish stew" (\$6.95), the quintessential beef stew offering a full bowl of beef chunks, accessorized with sliced potatoes, onions, carrots, celery and just enough tomato to influence the broth, laced with oregano seasoning.

I found the imposing bowl of beef-rich stew hearty and partic-

ularly comforting on the raw, rainy, gloomy afternoon I graced the premises, with a balanced mix of vegetables that Grandma Boyle and other Irish grandmothers of yore find critical to well-balanced diet, starting with the spuds and carrots.

And with St. Patrick's Day night, I felt obligated to sample the corned beef Reuben (\$6.95).

I often find myself disappointed with the corned beef offerings at area pubs, since they tend to opt for the corned beef round, which, while usually lean, tends to be chewier and less flavorful than the much tastier, tenderer, albeit fattier, corned beef brisket.

Thus, I was pleasantly surprised the corned beef in the expertly grilled Griffin Reuben proved deeply flavorful and in proper balance with the sauerkraut and Thousand Island dressing. It proved to be one of the more satisfying Reubens I've had in a while.

My server gently warned me that I would not be able to finish the sandwich in light of the heat of the Irish stew. I am embarrassed to say that once again I proved my server wrong.

So I will confine myself to soda bread and a few sips of Guinness to wash it down when I make my rounds Friday, with Griffin's County Kerry Pub as worthy a St. Patty's destination as any.

Veteran restaurant critic Reid Duffy writes a weekly review for the Daily Journal. Comments may be sent to letters@thejournalnet.com.

Even facing prison time, Lil' Kim larger than life

By TERRY MORROW
 SCRIPPS HOWARD NEWS SERVICE

There's nothing little about Lil' Kim.

Even in her new reality show, "Lil' Kim: Countdown to Lockdown" (9:30 p.m. Thursdays, BET), the infamous rapper is larger than life. She is not one to sit around and worry as her prison date looms.

During the two weeks leading up her 366-day sentence for perjury, she's out doing interviews, worrying about music videos and promoting the release of a CD.

This doesn't look like a woman with regrets for being found

guilty of lying to a federal grand jury about her knowledge of a 2001 shootout in New York.

"Countdown" will have you believe that Lil' Kim is the Martha Stewart of the rap world: a powerful woman who was a victim of an unfair judicial system.

Unlike Martha, Kim is no ice queen. If anything, she looks like she'd be a lot of fun to hang with.

Instead of being mad about how unfair her life is, she goes about business as usual.

She tells a fan that God is with her so she doesn't fret about what prison may be like.



SCRIPPS HOWARD PHOTO
 Hip-hop performer Lil' Kim stars in "Lil' Kim: Countdown to Lockdown" on BET. The show airs at 9:30 p.m. Thursdays.

AT THE MOVIES

'Failure to Launch'

Matthew McConaughey and Sarah Jessica Parker team in an improbable romantic comedy about a 35-year-old boat broker (McConaughey) who still lives with his parents.

The plot kicks off when Parker's character — a woman who's paid by parents to push reluctant adult sons out of the house — takes McConaughey's case.

Rated: PG-13. Adult situations.

'Firewall'

Harrison Ford plays a heroic husband who winds up saving his family from kidnappers who are trying to coerce him into helping them carry out a high-tech robbery.

Rated: PG-13. Violence, situations in which children are under threat.

'Freedom Land'

Race becomes an issue when a woman (Julianne Moore) tells a detective (Samuel L. Jackson) that her car was "jacked" by a black man and that her 4-year-old son was in the backseat.

Rated: R. Profanity, violence.

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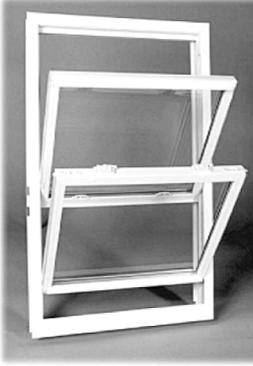
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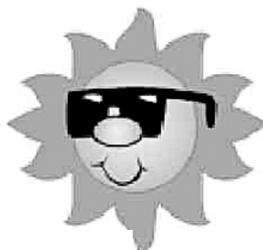




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