

## **I love to Eat in Riverhead** Updated 7/1/16

by Jim Dreeben of Peconic Paddler (In business over 51 years.)

**RIVERHEAD** has become a destination to visit for fine food and affordable dining. There are many restaurants of all types. The food in all of them is very good. Below is a list of my favorite dish(s) in each restaurant. This list will be updated periodically. **631- 727-9895**. Please enjoy your meal and visit Riverhead often, and paddle the Peconic River.

**SPICY'S BBQ** serves the **best fried oysters** and chicken wings on Long Island. You can pay \$25.00 for oysters at most seafood restaurants but Spicy's oysters are bigger, tastier and juicier, and they cost only 10 bucks including French Fries and coleslaw. Yummy side orders: collard greens, corn bread, baked beans, mac 'n cheese. 225 West Main Street.

**CARLO'S PIZZA** (since 1987) on Osborne Avenue in Polish Town makes the biggest and best **meatball and sausage parmigiana hero sandwiches** that I have ever eaten. They are big enough for 2 people. Their pizzas and antipasto are good too. You can dine in or take out or they will deliver to your business or home. Call Carlos at 631-369-2010.

**STONEWALLS RESTAURANT**, 967 Reeves Ave. is a beautiful restaurant with golf course views and a fantastic waitress named Jo-Ann. I order any dish w/4 syllables: calamari, rolatini, saltimbocca, quesadilla, "a dark draft beer", "Stonewalls Burger", "cheesecake for last". Everything is delicious. If you go on "Restaurant Week", it's only \$27.95.

**DARK HORSE RESTAURANT** on the corner has wonderful lunches and dinners and you can people-watch in 4 directions. For lunch, I love the Dark Horse Trio w/soup salad and sandwich, and a pint of draught or an Italian Red. In only 40 steps you can have 3 perfect meals: Breakfast: Poppa Nick's. Lunch: Dark Horse. Dinner: Tweeds.

**ROADHOUSE Brick Oven Pizza** is one of the best Italian restaurants on the East End. I love Stan's Roadhouse Special Pizza, Eggplant Parmigiana and all of his big salads, especially the Italian Chef Salad. Eat outside by the beautiful river.

**FARM COUNTRY KITCHEN**, 513 West Main Street, serves delicious salads and wraps and other great food at affordable prices. You can sit on the outside deck with a view of the beautiful and bucolic Peconic River and watch swans, canoes and **stand up paddleboards** gliding by. Sometimes we order take-out. 369-6311.

**TURKUAZ** Turkish and Medit. Cuisine, is one of the busiest places in town. I love their spinach pie and chicken, beef and lamb shish kebabs. Wash it down with Efes Pilsner Beer and finish with delicious baklava. 40 McDermott Street.

**JOE'S GARAGE** is always busy for lunch and dinner. Joe's has great burgers and chicken sandwiches and local craft beer on tap (try the Crooked Ladder Porter). Joe's Garage makes the best "**hand cut**" **French Fries** east of Idaho. The décor is beautiful inside Joe's. They sell some very cool T-shirts and a sign says "mechanic on duty". 40 Peconic Ave.

**TWEED'S RESTAURANT and BUFFALO BAR** is one of the best restaurants on long Island. My favorite meal at Tweed's is seared tuna but I also like Tweed's scallops and steaks, beef or **healthful bison**. Tweed's soups and spinach salad are delicious and the desserts are to die for. Tweed's has great beer on tap. 17 East Main Street. Say hello to Ed.

**JERRY** and the **MERMAID** – You gotta taste Jerry's Mussels Luciano and Linguini w/Scungili or Clam Sauce. Everything on Jerry's menu will make you want to go there again and again. Jerry's Buffalo Wings are delicious also. Jerry's is by the aquarium with a view of the pool, the Peconic River and beautiful boats and **SUPs and kayaks** gliding by. Jerry or Jerry Jr. will probably visit your table and say "How is everything; are you enjoying your meal?".

**LOLLY'S HUT** on Route 58 (north side), a half mile west of the hospital traffic circle, is my favorite place for breakfast. I love Lolly's eggs, bacon, home fries and whole wheat toast (w/strawberry jam). The coffee is pretty good too, and you can catch up on the local gossip and read Newsday for free. Lolly's also offers great sandwiches and soups for lunch.

**Maple Tree BBQ** for lunch and dinner on West Main Street. My favorite, to die for, sandwich, is the grilled (on rye) Reuben with Thousand Island Dressing and a side of baked beans. Maple Tree Deli has very good barbeque chicken and ribs and their baked beans are the best. Eat in or take out. They also do catering. Call Dennis at 631-727-2819.

**Cliff's Elbow Room**, 6 miles east of Riverhead, makes (unquestionably) the **best steaks** on Long Island. My favorite meal at the Elbow Room is the marinated **porterhouse steak** (medium rare), baked potato, blue cheese on the salad, fresh rolls, and, a Beefeater martini on the rocks with 3 olives or a draft beer. No dessert but leftover steak for lunch tomorrow.

**Blue Duck Bakery** on E. Main makes the freshest pastries I have ever eaten. Ask Renee or Nancy for hot Flakey Cherry Turnover or a brownie or a loaf of their, just-baked, famous, Artisan Bread. They also have good coffee, tea and cookies.

**Star Confectionary a/k/a Poppa Nicks** is only a 3 minute walk from my shop. It is a quaint old fashioned luncheonette (1920) that serves wonderful breakfasts and lunches. They have homemade ice cream, and, just before Easter, they make their own chocolate Easter Bunnies and other homemade chocolates. Corner of Main Street and Roanoke Avenue.

**Bagel Lovers** at 673 Osborn Avenue makes the best bagel sandwiches on the east end and they do it fast. Donna makes my favorite: "everything bagel" with cream cheese and fresh lox, a small black coffee and Newsday. 631-727-5080.

**Snow Flake Ice Cream** makes the best and biggest Sundays every day. The owner, Stu, will even make a custom ice cream birthday cake for your kids. Snow Flake has soft and hard ice cream in a ton of flavors. 1148 West Main Street.

**Funcho's Fajita Grill** is a Tex-Mex restaurant specializing in fresh, delicious guacamole, huge, hand rolled burritos, Greek tacos w/chicken, and, to die for, Dirty Diva Dogs. You serve yourself (and clean up after) but the food is worth it, the prices are affordable and the restaurant is as cute as a button. Funcho's also has beer and soda but no tequila. Shucks!

**Our Sweet Shop** in East Moriches has chocolate covered Oreos to die for, and tons of other candies to satisfy your sweet tooth and to make your wife, your boss, your girlfriend or your mother very happy. Call Paulette at 631-878-3388.

**COFFEE - Hampton Coffee Company** has a new location on Main Road in Aquabogue. They also have stores in Westhampton Beach, Southampton and Watermill. Try their croissants, scones and muffins. **North Fork Roasters**, on the Main Road in Southold, has great, strong coffee and delicious breakfast and lunch sandwiches. Both coffee companies have whole-bean coffee "to go" so you can **grind and brew it at home**. **Sarikopa** is a new and beautiful organic coffee and tea house on Riverleigh Ave. in Riverhead. Sarikopa has 27 varieties of tea from ginger peach to coconut, and some very good coffee drinks and pastries. My favorite: Carmel Macchiato and a cherry turn-over. Best part: I can jog to Sarikopa from my shop in less than 3 minutes. Please meet Agnes at Sarikopa.

Kayak and SUP **More Reasons to Visit Riverhead – You can hike at Indian Island County Park for free.** Run and Swim

**Peconic Paddler**, in business over 51 years, is a **paddle sport specialty shop**. They sell and rent a variety of kayaks, canoes and **stand up paddleboards**. I love the 7 mile Peconic River Canoe Trip. For the most fun, paddle a Solstice or a Prowler Kayak or try stand up paddling for the **best physical fitness workout**. **SUPing** strengthens your core better than any other exercise. Professional paddlers on staff: Jim and Jared. 89 Peconic Avenue. 631-727- 9895. **The Peconic River and Peconic Bay are beautiful** and so are hundreds of other Long Island waterways.

**Suffolk County Historical Society**, near the library on West Main Street, a large history museum since 1886, has many artifacts from Long Island, especially the Riverhead area. They have a complete gift shop that includes many books on local history. I love the Arcadia Books of old photos. They have antique farm tools and Civil War handguns and rifles.

**The Long Island Aquarium** has the most beautiful fish I have ever seen. They have a great sea lion show, a big octopus on display and hundreds of fish in huge tanks. You can pet sting rays. Reserve ahead and you can swim with the sharks. Paddle Battle is a canoe, SUP, kayak race put on by the aquarium and Peconic Paddler. For info: **paddlebattleli.com**.

Do you need a good, **honest lawyer** who graduated from Riverhead HS and Hofstra University School of Law? Call **Nancy Dreeben** at 516-280-5300. Nancy specializes in divorce, real estate, custody, etc in Nassau and Suffolk Counties.

**Wineries/breweries** – from Riverhead, go east on Route 25 and Sound Avenue to visit many wineries and breweries to taste wine and beer. You get discounts on wine for multiple bottles. I love the Chardonnay, Riesling and Merlot at the **Jamesport Winery** on Main Road. **They have oysters, wine and music on Saturdays.**

Try the Crooked Ladder Porter Beer at 72 Main Street. Riverhead now has 3 breweries, **Mustache and Long Ireland Breweries** are in Polish Town and **Crooked Ladder Brewery** is on Main Street. **Fill your growler and drink up!**

**Mantas Korsakas** is my favorite physical therapist. Mantas has up-to-date, modern equipment including an arm bicycle to build up arm and chest muscles to make you a stronger paddler, an elliptical machine for a killer core workout and to get your heart rate up, and some very cool stationary bicycles. For all of your physical therapy needs, call Mantas at 631-284-9258. 1149 Route 58, Suite A-2. **Mantas' clients get 25% off kayak and SUP rentals and instruction.**

**Riverhead Community Garden is a showplace of vegetables and flowers not to be missed.** You will be amazed at the wide array of healthful food being grown by the banks of the Peconic River. For a free tour of our garden, please call me. You may have a taste of my kale, spinach, ground cherries or tomatoes and take home some zinneas from the box.

**Art Sites** at 651 West Main Street. Oz has created some huge and interesting sculptures on the banks of the Peconic River and smaller stuff in the studio. It can be visited on Rt. 25 by car or from the river. Call 631-591-2401 for hours.

**Suffolk County Correctional Facility** is on Route 24, the main road into Riverhead from points west. The jail is a beautiful and modern building. Inmates in cells on the third, fourth and fifth floors, north side, have a view of the lovely Peconic River with many swans and paddle craft gliding by. They can also see deer in the surrounding woods. If you are visiting, please request the third, fourth or fifth floor. It will remind you of being on vacation. I hear the food is good too.

**Great Bike Riding.** I like pedaling on Route 24 west into Manorville and then stay on the back roads or Route 51 south to East Moriches or east, through Riverhead, to Peconic Bay Boulevard and take the side streets to the Peconic Bay. A mountain bike trail is on Route 51. I buy my bicycles from Nick at **Twin Forks Bike Shop** on East Main Street.

**The Peconic River is the number one paddling destination on Long Island** starting on Connecticut Avenue in Manorville and paddling east into the Peconic Bay and the bird sanctuary. I have paddled it many times using kayaks, canoes and **stand up paddleboards**, and, I have swam parts of it. The fishing, scenery, tranquility and beauty are all outstanding. **Get set to get wet and have fun.** For paddling info, call the pros at Peconic Paddler. **631-727-9895.**

**For the best snow job in town** (and 10 mile radius) call Jim for **professional snow plowing and shoveling.** Jim and his helpers have over 100 years of experience plowing and shoveling driveways, parking lots and sidewalks. They use a heavy duty, red, **F-350 Ford Pickup Truck** with a heavy duty 8' Western Plow and state of the art, ergonomic, bent handle, snow shovels and Safe Step Ice Melter. Get on the list by calling Jim at 631-727-9895. When it snows, we plow.

Please visit Riverhead to **eat, drink (workout) and be merry.** Call me for more recommendations. Jim Dreeben, 631-727-9895 or 631-834-2525 or [jim@peconicpaddler.com](mailto:jim@peconicpaddler.com). 89 Peconic Avenue. Race info: [paddlebattleli.com](http://paddlebattleli.com). Stand Up Paddling is very healthful and fun. BTW: Jim and Jared have over 75 year's worth of paddling experience.

**Outside Riverhead:** **Aldo's Coffee** in Greenport. Aldo roasts his own beans. Try the Guatamala fresh roasted coffee. **Backbar**, on the way to the Old Ponquoge Bridge, has an unbelievable appetizer: **Tuna Taco** – to die for, and very good NE clam chowder and burgers. **Cor-J's** Seafood in Hampton Bays has fresh mahi mahi, swordfish, clams and sushi-grade tuna from local waters. "In the good old summertime", **Edgewater** serves amazingly delicious roasted corn salad; paired with a bowl of mussels and a pint, you will have died and gone to heaven. Rt.27A east of canal. **1North Steakhouse** has **bacon wrapped scallops** with corn salsa, delicious steaks, lobster mac n cheese, and prix fix dinner on Tuesdays. 3 mi. west of canal, north side of 27A. **Stone Creek Inn**, Montauk Hwy, East Quogue is another outstanding restaurant.

**Take a break and go paddling for fun, exercise and peace of mind. SUP, kayak, canoe. Get wet.**

**In Patchogue:** **Bobbique** has exceptional burgers, fried pickles, **Brooklyn Black Chocolate Stout 9% Beer** and pulled pork. **Perebell** on Main Street has great salads, sandwiches and Dry Martinis (w/olives). They have a 2nd restaurant in Riverhead also. **Varney's**, in Brookhaven (East Patchogue), has Mussels Gone Wild on Mondays for only \$12, and other great salt water specials. If you love tripe, **Mi Tierrita** on East Main St. is the place to go. The portions are huge.

**Long Island Paddlers** is the premier paddling club on Long Island. They plan over 50 trips yearly for all levels of paddlers. L.I. Paddlers does pool instructions to improve your paddling skills. LIP meets the third Tuesday monthly at the Bay Shore/Brightwaters Library. Club Pres. Steve Berner, is a real nice guy and he runs a great club. Jim leads club trips to restaurants for lunch and dinner. You must try his "Paddle to Eat, or Eat to Paddle". lipaddlers.org.

**Farther Outside Riverhead:** **Harborside Pizza** in Cordova, Alaska delivers delicious pizza by dog sled. **Racanellis Pizza and Brew** in White Plains, NY, has the best linguini with white clam sauce on the East Coast. **Sardi's** in NYC makes the best steak tartare (raw meat). **Waterzooie** mussels and burgers on Franklin Ave in Garden City is one of my favorite Nassau County restaurants. **Tavern on the Green** in Manhattan has duck eggs, steak tartare, smoked trout, Wolaver's Oatmeal Stout, Breckenridge Vanilla Porter and dark chocolate mousse.

**Condensed: Food to die for, must be tasted, not to be missed, last meal before execution:** Crooked Ladder Porter. Elbow Room steaks. Spicy's ½ BBQ chicken w/gravy. Chocolate covered Oreos. Maple Tree grilled reuben. Carlo's heros. Jerry's lobster tails. Tweed's burgers. Roasted corn salad. Joe's Fries. Funcho's Dirty Diva Dogs and rice and beans. Racanelli's linguini with white clam sauce and a cannoli. Bagel Lover's lox. Lolly's eggs. Backbar Tuna Tacos.

**Please don't drink / drive in Riverhead. Riverhead police can smell alcohol before their radar clocks your speed.**

For great birding you can see **baby seagulls** on an island 200 yards east of the Ponquogue Bridge. There are so many birds just west of **Docker's** Restaurant, Alfred Hitchcock could make a movie and call it "**The Birds**". With a snorkel and mask, you can see **tropical fish** in Shinnecock Bay on the east side of the Shinnecock Inlet.

Riverhead boasts three 7/11 stores, 2 McDonalds and one each: Burger King, Taco Bell, Wendy's, Pizza Hut, KFC, Panera Bread, Quiznos, Subway, Moe's Southwest Grill, KFC, Dunkin Donuts and Friendly's. These establishments offer good food at moderate prices and served by very polite employees, and, get this, they are all in the same Zip Code. All of the above accept cash and some even take credit cards.

Please e-mail or call me with your good comments about the above mentioned businesses. (Complaints also.) [jim@peconicpaddler.com](mailto:jim@peconicpaddler.com) or 631-727-9895 or 631-834-2525.

For everything you always wanted to know about Stand Up Paddling, Kayaking and Canoeing: Please call or e-mail the pros at Peconic Paddler. 631-727-9895 or [jim@peconicpaddler.com](mailto:jim@peconicpaddler.com). Jim has been paddling for over 65 years. He has paddled in many parts of Long Island, Belize, Honduras, The San Juan Islands, South Carolina, Georgia, the Bahamas and the Florida Keys. Jared has paddled in The Galapagos, on Long Island and in Florida and Georgia. They paddle canoes, kayaks and stand up paddleboards. They use ultralite carbon paddles. Get set to get wet and have a ton of fun.