

This is an article about The Garden Pavilion that was Published in the Midweek.

By: Laura Stoneburner

lstoneburner@forumcomm.com

It's been there for eight years. It's pretty likely that you haven't heard of it. You might say Garden Pavilion, 1421 7th Ave N., is one of Fargo's hidden treasures.

Besides renting out the facility for book signings, banquets, parties, dances, or wedding receptions, Garden Pavilion is also open for lunch from 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. on weekdays.

Roger Teegarden, the owner, operator, general manager, and executive chef built the building in 2000, got occupancy in 2001, began his own catering business and finally opened up a restaurant in early 2003.

The garden, which surrounds the building, is one of the unique things about the pavilion. “We get to supplement all of our stuff right out of the organic garden we grow,” said Teegarden. Teegarden explained he had grown up around his grandfather's garden with all kinds of Russian red cherries and plums and apple trees. “I was all into the organic stuff when I was a kid and I didn't even know it,” he explained. His grandparents would feed him fruits and vegetables from the garden, and eventually started giving him shoots to build up his own garden here in Fargo.

Teegarden has four different kinds of mint, chives, onions, wild dill, four different kinds of squash, five different kinds of cucumbers, 93 tomato plants, five different varieties of apple trees, choke cherries, and the list goes on.

Besides the garden that wraps around the sides and back of the building, a fieldstone fountain is being constructed in the driveway. Made out of stones Teegarden has been collecting his whole life, the fountain is expected to be finished by July 4th this year. “We’re going to have a lit fountain as a landmark out front, which people will see from the road, which might give them reason to come in and check us out. When you see the fountain you’ll see the sign more, cause you’ll look over,” Teegarden explained.

The fountain will likely help draw attention by passing traffic, as Garden Pavilion is tucked behind a railroad just off of 7th Avenue North next to a railroad – which, unless you’re looking for it, can be easy to miss. Teegarden said that those who do make it inside say that they “like the cozy atmosphere Garden Pavilion provides. You often feel like you get the whole place to yourself. People come and go so quickly that it’s mostly open when you come in here.”

The high ceiling does make the restaurant feel rather spacious. You may not realize it from the street or the parking lot, but once you get inside, the fancy woodwork, neat centerpieces and tunes playing at the perfect volume make you feel at home.

According to Teegarden, the cozy atmosphere isn’t the only thing his customers love. “The menu is made by the customers, really,” he said. “If people don’t see exactly what they want on the menu, I’ll ask ‘well what would you like?’ I started making specific things for people that they wanted.” Teegarden places commonly requested items on the menu, and other people enjoy it as well.

When the restaurant started, about nine items were featured. Now over 20 items are listed. “We do have a nice menu – it’s quite big and extensive proportion wise. You get your money’s worth when you come for lunch,” Teegarden said. “Most meals are in the \$5 to \$6 range.”

Teegarden said he's noticed lunches have gotten busier. "As it grows, we'll open up for more hours, we'll have more availability and maybe a few more holidays. But once it gets going, it goes faster and faster and faster... so there will come a time when we will be open all the time," Teegarden explained. The restaurant has always been a sideline to Teegarden's catering business, One-on-One Professional Catering. "Catering has always been the backbone to the business, catering has taken care of things all these years. The restaurant is just helping the catering side of it," said Teegarden.

One-on-One Professional catering covers a very large area. "If they have the equipment, I'll go just about anywhere," Teegarden said. "I never thought I'd enjoy it, but I really do because you get the satisfaction of seeing the gratitude on the customer's face when you're done, that they're happy. You don't get that in the kitchen where you're in the back of house and don't really see the customer." The catering menu is very broad, ranging from elegant plates such as duck and lamb to burgers and brats.

Garden Pavilion is also home to the annual Mother's day and Easter brunches. Signature items include the BBQ Pork Sandwich and the Hot Roast Beef Sandwich with Parmesan cream gravy. The pig is smoked over Applewood from Teegarden's grandfather's farm. "We get a sweet, nice robust flavor," Teegarden said.

They also have punch cards where customers buy six lunches and get one free. Other coupons and deals can be found in the phonebook. If you would like more information on Garden Pavilion or One-on-One Professional Catering, call (701) 237-4666.