

# Dining on the Green



Lisa Reisman photo

Jared Schulefand, owner of Home restaurant, was inspired to offer boxed picnics when he saw folks headed to the Green for jazz.

## Folks headed to Branford's Jazz on the Green drop by for the Home cooking

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By Lisa Reisman  
Special to The Times

**I**N ONE of Branford's coolest new restaurants on the steamiest evening of the year, the phone was ringing.



Jared Schulefand, owner of Home, picked it up.

Outside the window, a parade of concert-goers clad in summer pastels and toting lawn chairs plodded past Home in the direction of the Green for the Thursday night Jazz on the Green concert series.

Evidently, they weren't privy to the latest example of Yankee ingenuity to strike the 29-year-old Connecticut native.

Schulefand, who in May reincarnated the Main Street restaurant formerly known as Foe into a more, well, Homey venue, had watched those people stream by on earlier Thursdays. Some ingredient was missing. Something that would make their musical experience complete.

As it happened, it was precisely what the caller was ordering: a boxed picnic for the evening concert. Specifically, a Caprese sandwich. She needed to pick it up in 15 minutes on her way to the Green.

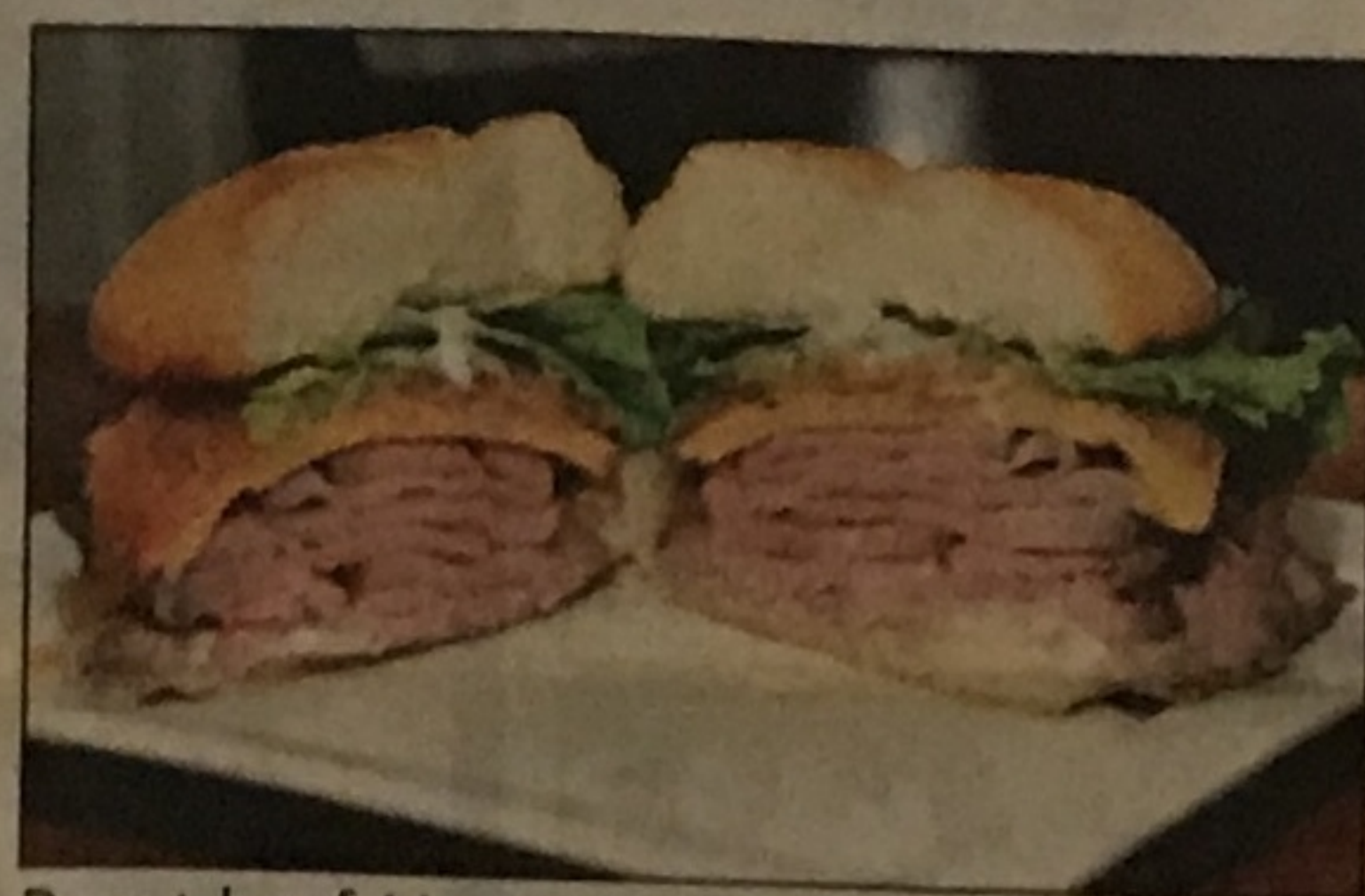
"I've been waiting for something like this

for years," said Betsy McMahon of Branford, a veteran of Thursday night jazz fests, who just then dashed into Home as the amiable, curly-haired Schulefand hung up the phone and welcomed

her with a wave. "It's easy, it's stress-free, I can come straight from work, and it's inexpensive," she said, picking up three boxed picnics in the rich, cozy light of the bar area. "And this isn't your mother's peanut butter and jelly."

Quite the contrary. The former Modern Apizza busboy honed his gastronomic chops at the esteemed culinary arts program at Johnson & Wales University, then spent five years rising through the ranks at the four-star, four-diamond resort Chatham Bars Inn on Cape Cod. All along, he was refining an image of the restaurant he would one day own.

"I've always enjoyed making people feel at home," he said while a Stony Creek resident tucked into a pork belly



Roast beef, Vermont cheddar and horseradish mayonnaise, topped with a sweet onion jam is on the boxed picnic menu.

BLT at the spacious bar amid the strains of soft jazz. Customers, employees, vendors — it doesn't matter. "I wanted to create a place that's casual and relaxed, where fine dining doesn't require white linen tablecloths."

That's what explains Home's policy of accommodation, both literal and figurative. Take the little girl with a host of food allergies who was able to eat French fries in a restaurant for the first time. Executive chef Mike DiVincenzo, who fol-

Edward J. Berns photos

Marti Resnikov stopped at Home restaurant on Main Street to pick up a boxed picnic before a recent Branford Jazz on the Green performance.



## SIT BACK AND ENJOY

Jazz concerts are on the Branford Green Thursdays at 6:30 p.m.

**July. 26:** Steve D'Agostino  
**Aug. 2:** Gene Bertoncini, featuring Donn Trenner and Dave Daddario  
**Aug. 9:** KJ Denhart  
**Aug. 16:** Chris Coulter  
**Aug. 23:** Marion Meadows

lowed his friend from the Chatham Bars Inn, fried the potatoes in a separate pan with separate oils. The reason they went to such lengths, according to Schulefand: "We're not in the business of saying 'no.'"

Then there are the soft leather chairs and couches in the front room that further Home's aim "to provide all the comforts of home without needing to cook, set the table and

See Home, 13

# Home: Comfy

From page 14

wash the dishes." And the family atmosphere fostered by Schulefand's father, Steve, tending bar on Saturday



Jared Schulefand

nights and his mother, Marcia, who works down the street, regularly popping in unannounced for dinner. His girlfriend,

Kate, in addition to waitressing, does the bookkeeping and designed the restaurant's logo.

It's the boxed picnic, though, that best captures the essence of Home.

Consider the Caprese sandwich that an assistant chef was preparing.

The mozzarella came fresh from Liuzzi's in North Haven. The tomatoes, smothered in a house-made basil pesto and animated with pine nuts, were from a shoreline farm. As for the sourdough bread, someone at Home had baked it that day.

With the exception of the Utz potato chips, the pickle and the bottled

water included in the box, it's all local. The cost: \$8. You can order it the morning of the concert or on 10-minutes' notice. If you want something that isn't on the menu, just ask.

And it's not limited to Thursdays evenings. "We'll make up a boxed (meals) for anyone who's on their way to the beach or to their boat or for a picnic," said Schulefand, as the woman who ordered the Caprese sandwich 15 minutes earlier hurried in.

"Perfect," she said as she headed out the door before looking back with a smile. "Pardon the pun, but there's no place like Home."

■ Home, 1114 Main St., Branford, 203-483-5896, [www.HomeRestaurantCT.com](http://www.HomeRestaurantCT.com)