




search

Search sponsored by

# Pittsford

## A DAY IN THE LIFE

### Organic café, shop tempts all naturally

Dolores Orman  
 Staff writer

(August 27, 2006) — Twin brothers Chris and Doug Miller searched for about six years for a spot in Pittsford for their new business.

They finally found it in December and opened Organic Alley at 7 Schoen Place.

"It's kind of like a holistic center," Chris Miller explains during a lull after the busy lunchtime period.

It's focused on juices, organic food and healthy living.

A customer can eat in the café, shop for items in the store and natural food market-store area, attend classes on topics such as cleansing, herbs intuition and polarity therapy when they're offered in the studio section or just "hang out, socialize," says Chris Miller, 37, a certified yoga teacher.

Items in the market-store range from cosmetics, incense, seeds and frozen vegetables to books, T-shirts and teapots.

Located across the street from Aladdin's eatery, Organic Alley is open 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., seven days a week.

But Miller, who is 10 minutes older than his identical twin, admits "We're hard to find." The entrance to its first floor location is off a parking lot. And village of Pittsford codes limit the type of signage that can be installed.

Also Miller says the brothers "haven't marketed much." They've depended on word of mouth and the Internet. That also "saves money and saves the environment."

However, Organic Alley already has become a favorite spot for some people.

Mendon resident, Michael Shields, 59, a regular customer, owns a software consulting business and is also a vegetarian.



enlarge—+

SHAWN DOWD staff photographer

1:24 p.m. Brighton resident Carolyn Friedlander, left, and her lunchtime companion, Louise Epstein of Pittsford, enjoy an afternoon bite at Organic Alley at 7 Schoen Place.

[Day in Photos](#)

### Weather



64° | Hi 70° / Lo 57°

Mostly Clear Forecas

Advertisement

### More Information

Organic Alley has about 450 people on its e-mail list. To learn more call (585) 264-9150 or log on to the Web site at [www.organicalley.com](http://www.organicalley.com).

"This place has a unique character," he says. "A lot of people from the yoga community come in here."

He has an Organic Alley membership which, among other things, entitles him to order special things through the market, he explains. He is drinking Kombucha, a raw organic natural enzyme beverage made in Tibet.

The place "draws a certain crowd — people who are nutrition and health conscious," he observes.

At a nearby table Carolyn Friedlander of Brighton was eating there for only the second time in about two months, with her friend, Louise Epstein of Pittsford.

Epstein had seen newspaper items about Organic Alley.

Friedlander observes "I try to eat fresh, natural and healthy and they make it taste good."

At a table near the door, Virginia Cartwright, 51, of Pittsford, her son, Stephen, 15, and her friend, Jennifer Borrelli, 33, of Palmyra, Wayne County are nearing the end of their meal.

Cartwright, who knows the Millers, had heard about their business through the Pittsford Chamber of Commerce, had invited her son and friend with the belief they would like it, she explains. She had eaten there three or four times before.

"I like their food," Cartwright says. "I like the atmosphere, it's relaxing. This is like going back into the '70s."

Borrelli says she likes "all the organic foods. We grow a lot of our own food and vegetables at home."

Stephen Cartwright, who is headed for tennis practice, first describes his Peace Waffle as "interesting," but soon says he liked it. "I'll eat most anything," he adds, when his mother points to the empty plate in front of him.

Cari Dickey, 25, one of the two full-time employees besides the brothers, is working the 12:30 to 9 p.m. shift today. She lives in Dansville, Livingston County, and drives an hour to work. But for her, a former organic food company sales rep, it's worth it.

"There's absolutely nothing like this around there," she says. "It's a fun, laid back atmosphere. I get a chance to be creative." Born in New Hampshire, the brothers have lived in Pittsford since they were seven. Both have been health conscious since they were wrestlers in high school.

Doug is married and the father of three children — two daughters, Valeria, 8, Meghan, 6 and infant son, Griffin, eight months. He holds a master of business administration degree in health-care administration and is the Web master of the University of Rochester Medical Center's internal Web site.

Doug Miller explains that a key factor leading up to the business venture with his brother was the birth of Valeria and his desire to show her and their later children how to start off eating healthy.

He says he and his wife, Molly, a nurse practitioner, eventually decided, "We can't just do this for the family. We've got to bring this to the community."

Explaining his background, Chris Miller, who is single and a college graduate, has had several jobs. He worked at Merrill Lynch for about six months before leaving in 1993 "to look for something more earth-friendly," he explains. He held a variety of jobs ranging from hotel management, postal carrier and Green Peace, to helping with catering and bartending at a local golf club before Organic Alley opened.

**Earn a Keuka College Degree at one of four campus locations near Rochester**

- BS in Management
- BS in Criminal Justice
- MS in Management
- MS in Criminal Justice Administration



**Succeed. Faster.**

**One night a week. Less than two years.**

Now Miller is working "about 100 hours a week" for the business.

"It's like a labor of love," he says. His goal is "to enrich people and the community and spread peace, love and happiness. To help people help themselves."

[DORMAN@DemocratandChronicle.com](mailto:DORMAN@DemocratandChronicle.com)

---

■ **Last seven days of news**

[Tue](#) | [Wed](#) | [Thu](#) | [Fri](#) | [Sat](#) | [Sun](#) | [Mon](#)

■ **1999-Present Archive**



**more marriage  
per match ...**