

Sundae Best

(Continued from Page B2)

make as consistent a product as you can make."

To make sure his products are consistent Alan relies on the use of a special scale which helps determine the amount of air added during the freezing process. "There must be a balance between the freezing and the amount of air," he says. "It is kind of an art. You need to keep an eye on it and make adjustments."

Once the creamy, delicious product comes out of the freezer, it is put into three-gallon containers. In some cases some hand mixing of flavors is done at this point so the added fruit or cookies are not

crushed during the actual freezing process.

The containers are then allowed to harden for 10 hours at -15 degrees. To be ready for dipping they must be slowly brought from that temperature to +12 degrees, a three-hour process. All of this means advance planning is necessary to keep the ice cream freezer full, and the product ready for the customer! Alan began making some half-gallon containers to fill customers' wishes and he packages a small portion of each batch that way.

While Alan reigns over the ice cream making, the kitchen is Nancy's. She said they quickly realized they could not stay in business just selling ice cream. "We keep the food simple and

serve really good things. Ice cream sales in the winter are 15 percent of the summer. Food kept us going in the winter."

It is only natural for Nancy to work with the food. She says, "I really like food and I like to cook. It was always in the back of my mind that I wanted to do something with it."

Because the business is small, Nancy states, "I do things the way I would have done it at home. I do all my grocery shopping because I'm not big enough to have it delivered. I get better buys just taking the store specials. I use only fresh products, never frozen or canned, so I look for what is on special."

There are three kinds of sandwiches offered, plus a daily special and usually two kinds of freshly-made soups. The specials and the soups vary with the season, and the base of these are always natural ingredients, including real butter.

Nancy adds, "I make my own mayonnaise and we grind our own coffee. People love our coffee and it is worth it." Even the decaffeinated coffee is brewed at the Sundae Best.

The parlor is located on North Broad Street, Lititz's main north

and south highway, and it attracts tourists as well as locals. The Sechrists were pleasantly surprised at the number of tourists visiting Lititz, and are further pleased when they find that the tourists have told their friends from Baltimore and New York and these friends seek them out.

They are located in a building which housed a paint store, but it has been lovingly transformed, and the wide expanses of glass windows are beautifully etched to welcome customers.

Nancy says, "I did all the decorating. I knew what I wanted for the windows." Alan did most of the work, having the help of a contractor primarily for the carpentry. The interior features stained wood, brass rails, green wallpaper and black and white checked floors. Ice cream parlor tables and chairs were acquired in visits to Renningers and Black Angus Flea Market.

Both Sechrists admit that the adjustment from salaried career to owning a business has not been easy. Nancy says with a smile, "I had a stomach ache for three

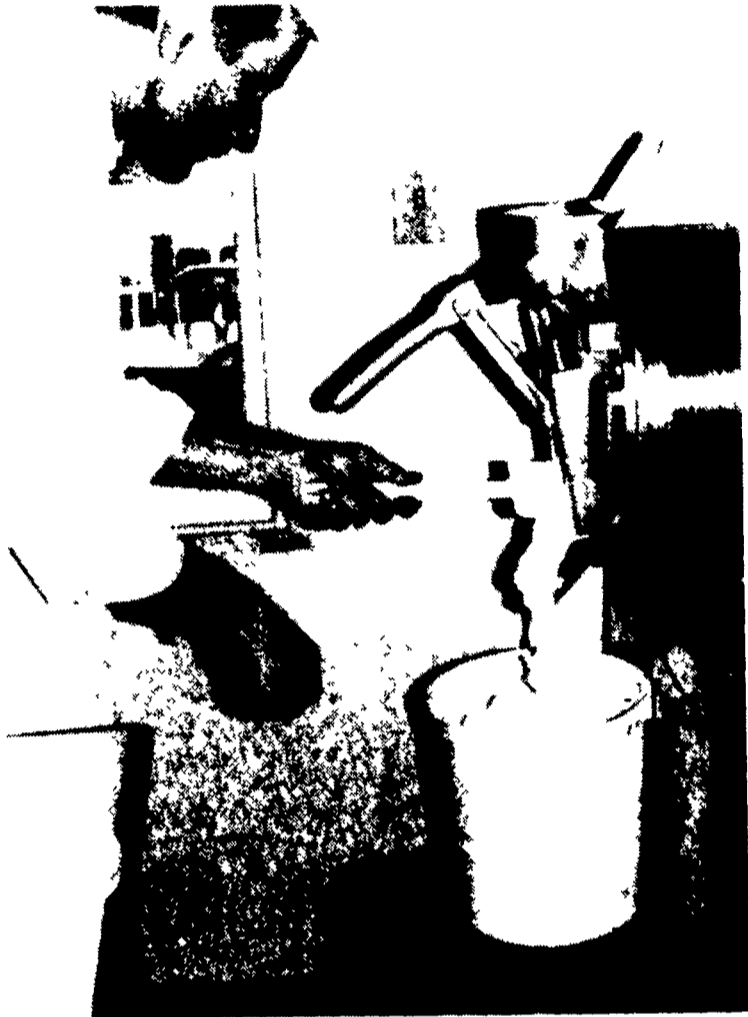
months. It was hard to give up a nice secure job with salary and benefits to start again. We had to learn everything. I don't think I could ever go through it again."

Alan agrees, but adds that since the business he worked for had been sold twice, he felt it was becoming less and less secure. Plus, he adds, "Everybody has the yearning to have a business of their own. The parlor thing kept growing on us over the last three years."

The most difficult time was the six months prior to their opening when they turned to many sources for information. They both credit Jerry Beck, their Crowley salesman, with helping them actually get organized and underway.

Although they are working 16-18 hour days to stay on top of the business, they enjoy providing quality food and delicious ice cream for the community.

If you are in the Lititz area and have a yearning for some delicious ice cream, pay a visit to the Sundae Best. The ice cream and the atmosphere are worth a visit!



This is fresh ice cream! Alan stops the freezer long enough to empty this batch into the three-gallon containers which are used to store the great-tasting ice cream. Vanilla is made most frequently because it is the basis for most of the special treats, but the shop has 15 other flavors.

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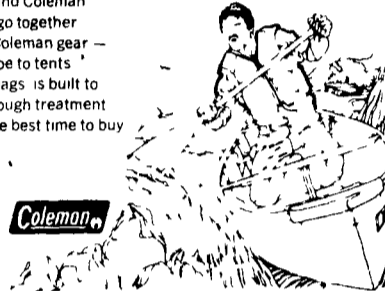
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