

ALMA LACH

It pleases me to be able to represent our chapter and LDEI in bestowing upon Alma Lach our Dame of Distinction Award this evening. She is a true Renaissance Woman. Alma is the connection to our past and the present. Her commitment to children and nutrition was a precursor to what we are trying to accomplish with Green Tables and the many projects that our chapter supports. You have seen the work at Walter Payton and heard about the distribution of funds to the various public schools.

Alma was the pioneer who blazed the trail for many of us to follow. She was an early TV personality; creator, producer and performer of the show "Let's Cook"—the first cooking show for children. In 1950 she wrote "A Children's First Cookbook".

Alma served as Sun-Times Food Editor from 1957 – 1965. While there she received the Pillsbury Award in 1958. Never satisfied to be just a member, in 1959 she chaired the Newspaper Food Editors Association of America.

Her recognition didn't stop in Chicago. She was often seen on the Today Show around the country. She was a continuous contributor to the Lee Phillip Show and was seen nationally on PBS with Hugh Downs on "Over Easy". Her knowledge of food is combined with her wine expertise. She was awarded the Chevalier du Tastevin in 1962.

Along the way Alma was able to enjoy life, travel and adventure with her dear husband Donald. From the early days in Paris where she received a diploma from the Condon Bleu to more exotic locales of India and China, Alma was always learning and transferring her knowledge to others and inspiring their creative juices. One of the nicest tributes is one from our very own Nicole Bergère "What a joy to be addicted to Alma. She is a wonderful, talented lady filled with magical secrets. Thank goodness for her classes. They are a feast—for learning." Her 1974 *Hows and Whys of French Cooking* influenced many a cook and I have an extremely well-used copy here that is the "cooking bible" for my husband, Bill.

After being a food editor for nine years, Alma served as a consultant for LEYE, the Berghoff Restaurant and Midway Airlines with Sue Gin to name a few. Herman and Jan Berghoff are with us this evening and will be adding a few words later. To this day, members and friends call upon Alma for advice. Gale Gand recently brainstormed with Alma and both came away with new contacts and ideas. Alma has supported LDE from its inception in 1982. She is the first to send in her dues and donate to our causes.

During this hectic life of travel and career, Alma was able to raise a lovely daughter, Sandy who is here with her husband, Bill Arlinghaus. Today, with a twinkle in her eye, Alma is an artist, writer and mentor. She created tonight's table numbers and the LDEI logo for each of you to take home.

Thank you Alma for all that you continue to do. You have been called the "Queen of Cuisine" and tonight you are our Dame of Distinction. It gives me great pleasure to introduce Herman Berghoff who will say a few words before we present the award.