It takes a brave man to open a new restaurant in today's tough economy. Chris Staver (below left) already owns a successful enterprise called Great Plains Dent Company, a pantless dent repair business. So had he to ask him, why start a restaurant now? Found his answer very interesting. He said he was raised in Belmont, WI and pretty much grew up in Red's Supper Club owned by his grandparents. He was making onion rings and cleaning catfish when he was very young. From then on he always found himself working in restaurants. He was a dishwasher at Country Kitchen and a waiter at Miss Pat's Wheelhouse both in Dubuque. When the dent repair business was in the off season he would bring in restaurants bartending in place like 3 Mile House and Dubuque Mining Company. He just always knew the hospitality business was his destiny.

Then I asked Chris why the decision to open in Dubuque's North End? Well, it turns out for several years he lived at the corner of 30th Street and Jackson. That building was originally a neighborhood grocery that was converted to a restaurant. It was located right across the street from the Dubuque Brewing and Malting Company and faced a huge copper brewing kettle. At one time the Copper Kettle was known for its outstanding food. So Chris decided now as good a time as any to restore the Copper Kettle to its former glory. After buying the building he spent several months remodeling it so it would reflect the neighborhood's history.

He was able to keep the original walls and ceiling and he himself completely refurbished the original outdoor sign. So when you visit take time to check out the painting of the Dubuque Brewing and Malting Company. In the early nineteenth century it was one of the most modern breweries in the United States. Also on display are some of the Brewery's artifacts Chris is collecting. Don't forget to see the copper finish on the bar top and look up at the old fashioned belt driven ceiling fans, too. The new Copper Kettle opened October 16, 2012 and is once again a neighborhood restaurant providing the community with professionally prepared, made from scratch, quality meals. Chris did an excellent job recruiting a professional staff. The kitchen is expertly managed by Executive Chef Ryan Norman (pictured at right of Chris above). Chef Norman grew up in a restaurant family. He started washing dishes at age 14 and waited tables and bartended while in college. After graduating from the Illinois Institute of Art Chicago Culinary program he was a chef at Aria, a New World Fusion cuisine restaurant in the Chicago Fairmont Hotel. He also worked as Sous Chef at the Dubuque Country Club and more recently traveled for his family's business, MVP Services Group, food facility design and restaurant management consultants. Chef Ryan is ably assisted by his Sous Chef, Paris Dreibeilis, who was previously a cook at the Dubuque Country Club.

Chris also made a wise move in recruiting Mary Copeland to be Front-of-the-House Manager. Mary started her career at age 14 at the Ryan House. She then worked at another North End eatery, the Chateau Restaurant and Lounge from 1989 to 1992. For most of the last two decades she has been with Marlo's in Dubuque. Mary brings over 30 years experience to the Copper Kettle.

Chris has instructed his staff to prepare simple foods his patrons will find satisfying and perhaps a little unusual. His mandate is to keep the menu small but make sure everything on it is done well. Indeed, the menu can be summarized like this: 8 appetizers, 4 salads, 6 sandwiches, 5 burgers and 6 entrees. But look closely because many of these items are certainly not simple and they are definitely unusual.

Copper Kettle
2987 Jackson Street, Dubuque, IA, 563-845-0567
www.facebook.com/foodofdubuque

HOURS: Bar: 11 am – Close
Kitchen: Sun – Thu: 11 am – 9 pm (apps till 10 pm) – Fri – Sat: 11 am – 10 pm

DINING STYLE: Casual

NOISE LEVEL: Conversational – loud when crowded

RECOMMENDATIONS: Scotch Egg, Poutine, Burgers, Muf- tulena, Fish & Chips, Fried Chicken, Flat Iron Steak, Seared Salmon, Prince Edward Island Blue Mussels

LIQUOR SERVICE: Full Bar

PRICES: $6.95 - $18.95

My Options: Cash, Debit, Visa, MasterCard, Discover, No checks

ACCESSIBILITY: Ramp to side door, Restrooms

KIDS POLICY: Accommodated. High Chairs & Boosters

RESERVATIONS: Yes, 8 or more only

CATERING: No Take OUT: Yes

DELIVERY: No PARKING: On Street

In fact they are designed to take you on an intriguing culinary adventure. Here are a few examples:

• Scotch Egg – this British picnic food is traditionally made by placing a hardboiled egg inside a ball of sausage then covered with bread crumbs and deep fried. The Copper Kettle's version uses a soft boiled egg inside a ball of sausage then covered with bread crumbs and deep fried. The egg is served with a tangy spiced tomato jam and the Seared Salmon is superb turn it into a wonderful grilling steak requiring no seasoning. Incidentally, it gets its name from its resemblance to an antique metal flat iron.

Copper Kettle is a classy place Dubuque's North Enders will call their own. My prediction, however, is Dubuquers all over the Tri States will soon be finding their way to the corner of Jackson and 30th Streets!