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Lemaire to Host Friends of Beard Benefit Dinner in Celebration of Exceptional American Regional Cuisine!

Executive Chef Walter Bundy Welcomes Chefs John Currence, John Fler and Colby Garrelts on Jan. 14

RICHMOND, Va. (November 2, 2011) --- Lemaire executive chef Walter Bundy in collaboration with chef/owner John Currence of City Grocery Restaurant Group (Oxford, Miss.), chef/owner John Fler of Canyon Kitchen (Cashiers, N.C.) and chef/co-owner Colby Garrelts of bluestem Restaurant (Kansas City, Mo.) will present the best of American regional cuisine during the Friends of Beard benefit dinner on Saturday, Jan. 14. Held at Lemaire in The Jefferson Hotel in Richmond, Va., the evening will begin at 6:30 p.m. with a cocktail reception followed by a five-course dinner. Each featured chef will showcase a signature dish, highlighting the culinary influences of their region. The cost of the dinner with wine pairings is \$115 per person for James Beard Foundation members and \$125 for non-members, plus tax and gratuity. There will also be a silent auction with all proceeds to go towards supporting the James Beard Foundation and scholarship program. For more information or to make a reservation, please call Lemaire at 804-649-4629.

"It is an honor to host the Friends of Beard dinner, and I'm thrilled to be working with such a talented team of chefs on this collaborative menu," said executive chef Walter Bundy. "We each bring a unique creative culinary perspective to the table, and I think this dinner will really showcase exceptional ingredients and regional flavors at their best."

The menu will feature:

Hors d'oeuvres

Arrowhead Oxtails with bourbon, Green Dirt Farms fresh cheese and preserved onions
Chicken on a Stick with buttermilk-black pepper ranch and Johnny's automatic dill pickle
Tennessee Prosciutto Gougère with pickled okra, crème fraîche and Sunburst trout caviar
Chesapeake Bay "Rock 'N Roll" with cornmeal dusted rockfish, celery root-apple slaw and brioche

First Course

Butter-Poached Rappahannock River Oysters with Virginia country ham, buttermilk-chive cornbread, baby spinach and champagne hollandaise

Second Course

Slow Roasted Nebraska Trout with wild Indian rice, crispy sweetbreads and sunchoke-vermouth sauce

Third Course

Muscadine Glazed Quail with dirty rice spoonbread, butternut squash, roasted shallot and Tuscan kale hash and Brussels sprout-onion jam confetti

Fourth Course

Orange Clove Braised Border Springs Lamb Shank Ragoût with toasted faro risotto, belle chèvre, rosemary gremolata and crispy lamb bacon lardon

Fifth Course

Warm Southern Comfort "Lost Bread" with Valrhona chocolate, Charles City hickory nuts, candied yams, and sorghum molasses

Guests also have the option of booking a superior room at The Jefferson Hotel with the **Friends of Beard Benefit Dinner Package**. For the special rate of \$495 plus tax, the package includes a one night stay in a superior guestroom, two tickets to the benefit dinner in Lemaire, dinner gratuities and valet parking. Reservations for the overnight package may be made by calling 800-424-8014.

About the James Beard Foundation

The James Beard Foundation was founded in 1986 to celebrate, nurture and preserve America's diverse culinary heritage and future. A national not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization based in New York City, the foundation offers a variety of programs, scholarships, events and awards to recognize those in the food and beverage industry. For more information, visit www.jamesbeard.org.

About Chef John Currence

As the chef/owner of City Grocery in Oxford, Miss., Currence has been involved in the opening of many successful restaurants including Nacho Mama's, Kalo's, Ajax Diner, City Grocery Catering Company, Bouré, Big Bad Breakfast and Snackbar. He is a contributing editor for *Garden and Gun* magazine and is currently working on a video series, *Adventures of The Big Bad Chef*, which documents trips through the lesser known food spots of the Deep South. In 2009, he was awarded the James Beard Foundation award for Best Chef South.

About Chef John Fler

Chef John Fler is the executive chef and owner of Canyon Kitchen in Lonesome Valley, Cashiers, N.C. The former chef of Blackberry Farm, Fler is known for transforming local ingredients into world-class Southern cuisine, earning him praise from such publications as *Gourmet*, *Bon Appétit*, *Food & Wine* and *Southern Living*. Fler was named one of the Rising Stars of the 21st Century by the James Beard Foundation and nominated for Best Chef Southeast in 2006 and 2007.

About Chef Colby Garrelts

Colby Garrelts is the executive chef and co-owner of bluestem Restaurant in Kansas City, Mo. At bluestem, Garrelts showcases his Progressive American Cuisine, which is a culmination of his experiences in such renowned kitchens as the five-star, five-diamond restaurant TRU in Chicago. He has been a finalist for Best Chef Midwest by the James Beard Foundation. Chefs Colby and Megan Garrelts have been showcased in *Food & Wine*, where he was a Top 10 Best New Chef, *Bon Appétit*, the *New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal*.

About Chef Walter Bundy

Chef Walter Bundy is the executive chef of Lemaire at The Jefferson Hotel in Richmond, Va. His farm-to-table menu continues to showcase his commitment to creating upscale Southern cuisine and features produce from local purveyors and the hotel's urban garden. Under his culinary guidance, Lemaire was named one of the country's Best New Restaurants in 2009 by *Esquire* magazine.

The Jefferson Hotel has been welcoming guests to downtown Richmond since 1895. With 262 luxurious rooms and suites, The Jefferson Hotel is also home to Lemaire Restaurant, TJ's Restaurant and a renowned Sunday Champagne Brunch. It is a member of Preferred Hotels and Resorts Worldwide and Historic Hotels of America and one of only 38 hotels and resorts in North America to earn both the Forbes (formerly Mobil) Five Star and AAA Five Diamond award. For more information about The Jefferson Hotel, call 800-424-8014 or visit www.jeffersonhotel.com.

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