



# Sassy Sunny Side Up

**B**odacious. Audacious. Brazen. Uncurbed. Outlandish even. These words readily trip off the tip of your tongue if you're asked to describe St. Marys' one and only Cindy Deen. She's the wild one in the red corvette. The crazy lady on the silver screen. The therapist behind the bar. And a good friend to many who call St. Marys home. She is many things to many people, but one tag you can't pin on her is "shy."

"She never met a stranger, even from the time she was very small," said her sister, Dot, one of six siblings, all of whom Cindy is very close to.

"Rowdy" by her own admission, Cindy Deen takes to fast cars like a crow takes to a junecbug. From her 1971 red Stingray to her current red Corvette, she says that wild cars have always held a special attraction for her. No surprise there. Hard work and uh...charm...earns Cindy the new Corvette she drives every year, but she has a fast and different answer for those with enough gumption to ask her how a bartender affords a new Corvette. We'll leave it at that.

Tender lovin' trash talk and good southern sassin' are Cindy Deen's trademark. Sometimes people try to prepare their guests before taking them into Seagle's Saloon where the queen reigns supreme. But, truly, you're never really



prepared to meet Cindy Deen for the first time. Not even the folks from Hollywood, who recently met Cindy and were so taken, they decided to put her in their movie. Not to many people's surprise, she was cast as "Crazy Lady," a shotgun totin' wild woman that chases "thievin' young'uns" off her property. Cindy was one of just a handful of locals selected to play speaking roles in "Eye of the Hurricane" and is proud to boast of her debut performance.

"Typecasting," she called it. Nevertheless, the movie moguls were thrilled with the outcome. And Cindy's sister likes to tease her that Cindy's son, Windham, had to go all the way to California to get a part in the movies, and his mama merely had to step outside her front door.

First the apple, then the tree. Windham (the absolute light of Cindy's life) has already been in several movies and is pursuing acting as a serious career. Now comes his mom (the tree) with no theatrical ambitions and a plum of a role laid in her lap.

One has to wonder what kind of people bred up a girl like Cindy Deen. Well, Cindy will tell you that her mama was the most wonderful person on Earth—"the world's greatest mother."

"She was a beautiful rendition of her heritage," said Cindy. "Scotch-Irish and Cherokee Indian."

*continued ...*

## Real People

## Miss Cindy Deen

Sadly, Cindy's mama passed away several years ago, and Cindy says, "I miss her every day of my life," tears always unchecked when Cindy speaks of her mom. About her dad, Cindy says, "He was a cop on a Harley." (Now there's a juxtaposition for you...hmmmm.)

Like her favorite childhood cartoon character, Road Runner, Cindy Deen has a way of slipping through painted canyon entrances that others (like Wile E. Coyote) merely slam up against. The peal of devilish laughter is often your only warning that "something this way wicked comes." Yes, she has been blessed with a wicked sense of humor. That, too, having carried her through her childhood, often getting her in trouble. Like the time she nearly got expelled from school for writing a love letter from one male teacher to another. Today, that same wicked humor is flaunted each night as she deals with patrons from behind the bar at Seagle's Saloon in the historic Riverview Hotel.

Guests come from far and near to get sassed by "the meanest bartender east of the Mississippi." Cindy Deen has her favorites, of course. Some having passed over to that great saloon in the sky. Rolf Rawl and John Crouse were two of Cindy's pet customers. Rolf with a sense of humor as wicked as Cindy's, and John simply the salt of the Earth. She holds them both ever so close to her heart, a heart as big as the state of Texas.



Cindy's son, Windham

For those who have seen the softer side of Cindy Deen, it is a poignant revelation. For behind the veneer of tough grit that belies the real Cindy Deen, lives a tenderness unfettered.

Cindy Deen is the one who will be the first to find a home for a stray animal (or adopt it herself). Cindy Deen is the girl you can pour your heart out to when you've been wronged by your sweetheart or your best friend. Cindy Deen is the one you want to hold your hand at your Daddy's funeral. She's a girl who lives inside her heart, and that's an awfully big place to live.

So next time you find yourself wandering up near the St. Marys waterfront, be sure and drop in for a visit with Miss Cindy Deen. But don't you dare ask for a frozen drink, and for goodness sakes, know what you want to order before she asks. Don't try to tell her how to run a bar, and don't be insulted by her sharp tongue. In fact, be flattered. The more she likes you, the tougher the ribbing you're bound to get. No one

doubts that God broke the mold after he made Cindy Deen. Thankfully. Because it's hard to imagine any world, any universe, most less any town, big enough to accommodate two bodacious souls as vibrantly brassy and sassy as St. Marys' own Cindy Deen. Bless her heart. ■

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