

Donna and Rick Balzaratti, owners of the Basketcase Cafe, are bringing some of their recipes into homes across the country with **Patsy Riley's** new cookbook, *When the Dinner Bell Rings at the Governor's Mansion*. The Alabama governor's wife has compiled a cookbook of over 300 recipes contributed by Riley, friends, family, caterers and first ladies and other representatives from all 50 states. The Balzarattis have two recipes included in the book: Donna's old family recipe of corn bread salad, and Rick's beef dish recipe. The Balzarattis have catered for the Rileys since 2004, including a meeting that Gov. Riley held in Dothan with Georgia Gov. Sonny Perdue and then-Florida Gov. Jeb Bush.

"It was such a last minute thing, we had cornbread salad that I had made for another catering event so I just added it to their plates. Thinking they might want to try something new and different. It's one of my family recipes, and if I can ever get people to try it, it's nice. It's different," said Donna.

"We've enjoyed cooking for the Rileys and every opportunity they've given to us. It was very flattering to have my husband's and my recipe included. I'm delighted with the response," she added.

The response has been amazing with the cookbook coming out in Nov. and selling over 3,000 copies in four



days. Patsy Riley came to the Basketcase Café for a book signing, and it didn't take long to sell out all of the café's copies. The Café received another shipment in Dec., but only have them while supplies last.

If you are interested in purchasing a copy of the "When the Dinner Bell Rings at the Governor's Mansion," please contact the Basketcase Café at 671-1117 or the Governor's Mansion Gift Shop at 334-241-8824 or www.governorsmansiongiftshop.com. **D**



The 2008 Downtown Christmas Festival was another huge success! With over 70 vendors, the popular Snow Zone made from 44 tons of ice, and 10,000 free ice cream sandwiches given by Blue Bell Ice Cream, the festival was able to bring in an estimated 10,000 people to Downtown Dothan. The crowds visited booths and businesses up and down Foster and Troy Streets, took delightful rides on the horse-drawn carriage and train, and were entertained by some of the best local musicians. This was the fourth year for the event, and the Downtown Group is already looking forward to next year! **D**

