

Smiling face of Michael's leaving Western

BY KARMEN DOWLING

Vicky Bountis always thought she would retire from Western.

Instead, the well-known 43-year-old Great Hall Catering and Michael's Dining Room Supervisor is leaving sooner than expected, returning to Greece at the end of March.

"I love my job and I will miss the people and my job," says Bountis, who has been at Western for 14 years. "But life is unpredictable and we have to take it as it comes. Last year I lost my best friend and husband - and I need to move back to Europe to be with my family."

Bountis says she will miss the staff she worked with on a daily basis, as well as Catering Managers Catrona Graham and Yolanda Echeverria. She offers thanks to Susan Grindrod and Frank Miller for successfully managing the huge operation of Hospitality Services and is appreciative of Frank McCabe from Hospitality Services for hiring her. But the person she will miss the most is Michael Coleby, Assistant Director & Executive Chef for Great Hall Catering.

"I grew with him as Great Hall Catering and Michael's crew - he kept me by his side, supported me and believed in me," says Bountis. "Michael is the reason I have been here all these years; he's not just my employer, he is my friend."

Bountis says she is sad to leave, noting Western is a proud chapter of her life.

"I have always felt good about getting up in the morning and coming to work," says Bountis, who is most often seen behind the counter greeting customers as they enter Michael's Dining Room.

Coleby says everyone is sad to see Bountis go.

"Vicky is Michael's," he says. "The first thing customers see is that smile - one smile from her is like 1,000 welcomes. She has that same smile for every person



Karmen Dowling, Western News

Michael's Dining Room Supervisor Vicky Bountis and friend and mentor Executive Chef Michael Coleby share a happy moment before Vicky leaves Western at the end of the month.

who comes in, always giving the appearance that she gives them the best service, the best table.

"It's going to be very, very hard to fill her shoes. She has tiny feet,

but huge shoes."

Bountis says she doesn't have work plans for when she returns to Greece and doesn't know what her future there will hold,

although she does know she'll be back to visit Western and friends here.

Persons wishing to say goodbye are welcome to attend a farewell

reception on Friday, March 31, 3:30 - 5 p.m. in Michael's Dining Room (room 3340, Somerville House).

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