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STAFF PHOTO BY CHRIS ZUPPA

John Fields in front of his Oella restaurant, the Trolley Stop. Fields, whose family has lived in Catonsville for years, is starting his fourth year running the establishment, where he says the customers are the 'stars of the restaurant.'

# Trolley Stop feeds on history

## Restaurant serves up local favorites in Oella landmark

BY PATRICE DIRICAN  
OELLA

If it ain't broke, don't fix it. And if it's running like clockwork, don't touch a thing.

That was John Fields' general thinking three years ago when he bought The Trolley Stop, an Oella tavern and 19th century landmark where the No. 9 and No. 14 streetcars used to load and drop off passengers.

"Some restaurants you don't want to make major changes to or you'll blow it," explains Fields, 40, who has spent more than 20 years working as a cook in the Baltimore area.

As primary owner of the family-run business, which employs a staff of 38 including

two sisters, his father and a nephew, Fields has maintained most of the dishes and same rustic ambiance that made the Trolley Stop a favorite among locals and tourists alike for the last 20 years.

"Everything was pretty classic," says Fields of the food selection. "We just updated it. It's a very, very basic light-fare All-American menu."

Open year-round — except for Thanksgiving and Christmas — The Trolley Stop serves up breakfast, lunch and dinner seven days a week in the two-floor restaurant, which holds up to 140 patrons.

Featured are a Maryland crab dip appetizer and crab cakes, prime rib, a variety of pasta

dishes and daily specials, along with a fresh catch of the day.

The menu also boasts a choice of 20 different sandwiches, including the "Trolley Burger," a half-pound of chargrilled ground sirloin topped with baked ham and cheddar on a Kaiser roll.

"We are definitely the most reasonably priced place to eat in the area," Fields challenges, "and we're 40% to 50% cheaper than across the river."

The establishment can also accommodate private parties in two separate dining rooms

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