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## OLD MAGNOLIA NO MORE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**MATAWAN:** The banquet facility known as “The Magnolia Inn” located at 227 Route 79, Matawan, Monmouth County, New Jersey, owned and operated by the Merri-Makers Catering Group has been sold to a New Jersey partnership as reported by **Barry Bielat, of Bielat Santore and Company, Allenhurst, New Jersey**, the broker for the sale. The new owners are comprised of financial investors and experienced caterers who will operate the facility together. This new group intends to upgrade the premises, concentrating on the design and décor of the building as well as the surrounding grounds.

The Magnolia Inn was the first of the Merri-Maker company’s catering facilities. It began as a family operation in Matawan and has since increased in size and in reputation over the past twenty-five years. Additionally, Merri-Makers has grown as well, and now operates four catering businesses in New Jersey including the New Jersey Convention Center and Expo in Edison, New Jersey. “Actually, that is the reason they sold the Magnolia Inn,” states **Bielat**. “They have a lot on their plate and they want to concentrate their efforts on the larger, corporate catering affairs, such as those in the Expo Center in Edison and the Reception Center at the PNC Arts Center in Holmdel, New Jersey.”

The new owners bring a wealth of experience and know-how to the Magnolia Inn, as well as their own management style and fresh ideas. Their first move was to change the name of the facility immediately after closing from the ‘Magnolia Inn’ to ‘Sterling Gardens.’ Subsequently, they have plans to move the bar from its present location in the ballroom, thus adding additional seating for 45-50 people. This move will increase the ballroom’s seating capacity to over 200.

Sterling Gardens in Matawan will provide catering services for all types of affairs. Its efforts will be concentrated on weddings, bar mitzvahs and other private parties such as rehearsal dinners, showers, anniversaries and the like. Moreover, the property at Sterling Gardens has a beautiful outdoor garden which will be utilized for ceremonies, cocktail parties and picnics. Finally, Sterling Gardens plans to promote an off-premise catering business utilizing a secondary building on the property.