



## What's A Caterer To Do?

### What's a Caterer to do Part 13

Part 13! How could that be? Not sure if this update will be lucky or unlucky but here goes. So we're wrapping up July 4th weekend 2020. Some people speculate that our independence as a country may have been compromised with lockdown, quarantine, masking, social distancing and all the other buzz words associated with this UNBELIEVABLE (there's that word again) Covid-19. Honestly, I'm grateful to be an American citizen and every time I travel (which honestly is not that often) and come back through customs, I thank God that this country is my home. Despite all the unrest, unemployment, uncertainty and unhappiness that seem to plague our country right now, I recognize that freedom is not free and those before us paid a big price for our liberties. I'm forever grateful.

Life in the catering industry 114 days after Covid-19 gripped our country, continues to be quiet, but never dull. The requests that we receive and are able to fulfill, vary from a custom 1st anniversary package brimming with delicious edibles and drinkables complete with sunflowers and balloons planned by a very romantic, thoughtful husband and delivered to a park to surprise his wife of 1 year, to 60 individually packaged meals delivered to a hospital unit in gratitude for tender loving care that was given to a loved one, to a handmade grilling apron "just a little bigger" than the one that was tucked in the Father's Day basket back in June.

If I wasn't living this nightmare, I absolutely would not believe it. Our sales last month were down a whopping 80% from last June. July isn't usually a big catering month, but our forecast for this July is about 60% less than 2019. Yet, we move forward with optimism. We strive, we struggle, we stretch trying to keep it alive until we reach the "better days ahead" that we keep hearing about. Our illustrious full timers are working a day or two a week as needed, and are part of the "shared work program" that allows them to collect partial benefits with a reduced work schedule. The problem is they really want to be back on full-time schedules. For now, this is the best we can do.

Sensible!!! That's what we are. Maybe we should change our name to Sensible Catering. We have and use lots of common sense. As much as I've heard that common sense is no longer common, we as a team are loaded with common sense. We also use good sense when making decisions on behalf of our clients and our

catering team. We are not here to jeopardize anyone's health or well-being. We do all that we can do while operating sensibly within the guidelines that have been set for our industry. Having said that, people do need and deserve great food, well-presented for every occasion or no occasion at all. As staff begin to return to the workplace, a surprise luncheon or breakfast of appreciation might be a thoughtful thing to do. For those in our lives that are too compromised to get out and about, a week's worth of dinner's delivered to their door might be well appreciated. A special, edible thank you to our medical, legal and accounting professionals as well as our law enforcement and local leaders might be a great way to say "Thanks".

We can do this on your behalf. We do this everyday!

During these crazy days, I find myself doing things on behalf of the business that I haven't done in years. Calls to the business phone are forwarded to my cell phone. I'm apparently the first line of contact for our security system, so this week two restful night sleep's were sacrificed, one for a high temp freezer alarm, and another for a burglar alarm. The alarm company calls in the middle of the night with breaking news, then wonders why I'm not coherent or able to recall our password, code name or anything else that they may want or need. Of course a drive over to the business in jammies and slippers, with my husband in tow, must happen to ensure that everything is ok...thankfully it was. I cook. I wash dishes. I bake. I sample our food to make sure it's seasoned properly and is truly "tasteful". By the way, that's a dangerous assignment! Sometimes, it's hard to stop after an itty-bitty tasting spoon sample of something delicious. At Weight Watchers, these tiny samples are called BLT's. No not a bacon, lettuce, tomato sandwich (although that sounds yummy) but bites, licks and tastes . These add up and when you wonder why the summer wardrobe might be a little snug, the BLT's might be the answer. I've also found that tired feels like hungry. So we don't just eat when we are truly hungry, but sometimes when we are tired too. I have to be careful, because a catering kitchen and bakery is full of all kinds of delectable temptations that will temporarily fill a void but linger much longer.

So enough of my droning hyperbole (not sure what that means, but I like saying it!). This week we will keep ourselves occupied with a birthday basket, a family meal delivery, box lunch orders large and small, hot and cold, and a small drop off shower on Saturday. Am I complaining? Heck no! It sure beats sitting around watching tv all day or watching the flowers wilt in the upcoming heat wave. It's all good for now! Hope you are too. Enjoy the summer weather this month. No doubt, once we get used to it, the weather will change.

Take good care and stay cool! Sandra

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*"Persistence is what makes the impossible possible, the possible likely, and the likely definite ."*

*~Robert Half*

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