

RESTAURATEUR

Official Publication of the Western New York Chapter of the New York State Restaurant Association

SERVING • ALLEGANY, CATTARAUGUS, CHAUTAUQUA, ERIE, GENESEE, NIAGARA, ORLEANS AND WYOMING COUNTIES

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Welcome Jennifer! WNY Chapter Membership Representative



Jennifer Lingenfelter



The WNY Chapter of the NYSRA is growing! The eight counties, led by Erie County, now has 213 members, the most in upstate New York and more than some regions in the New York City area (Westchester/Rockland, Queens and Brooklyn). Not bad for good old, *Shuffle off*

to Buffalo.

In keeping with the growing numbers of restaurants that are interested in joining the association, the board of directors has appointed a highly qualified individual as our Membership Representative. Jennifer Lingenfelter will be working part-time explaining the benefits of being a member of the WNY Chapter of the NYSRA and seeking new memberships.

Jennifer is the Community Support Manager of LocalFoodService.com., a division of Food Service Enablers. She is responsible for maintaining the web-site with current food service issues on a daily basis. Jennifer also is responsible for coordinating the very successful Restaurant Week that now is the second largest in the United States! Additionally, her enthusiasm and experience in working the front of the house at Carrabba's has earned her "Employee of the Year."

Jennifer is a life-long resident of Western New York and a graduate of Medaille College with a degree in Information Systems.

The WNY Chapter is very pleased to have Jennifer carry the message - "*It doesn't cost to join the association - it pays.*"

Jennifer's e-mail: wynysra.jenn@gmail.com

Buffalo Hotel Supply hosted our Membership Mixer

The WNY Chapter of the NYSRA successfully held a new "Membership Mixer" November 7th. A host of restaurateurs showed interest in joining the WNY Chapter at the affair hosted by Jim Bedard of Buffalo Hotel Supply.



Andrew Waters (EnergyMark) & Holly Anderson (Andersons). Holly won our door prize of a year's membership to the WNY Chapter!



Mark Supples (Mothers) & Jennifer Lingenfelter



Corey & Cheryl Kley (Rue Franklin).



Nickel City Chef Book Launch

Tuesday, October 25th @ Artisans



Krista & Kirk Van Wagner (Curly's) serve some delicious pork loin



Christa Glennie-Seychew (Buffalo Spree) looks over a display of appetizers. Several hundred attended the event.



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inning, and MORE! Let's-Go-Buff-a-lo!

Fall is definitely here, and there is a different buzz in the air this year in addition to the falling leaves and cooler nights. The Bills and Sabres have captured our imaginations with their hot starts and we are feeling good about what may be....there's hope this year for great finishes!



Robert Free
President

While it's cool to be optimistic and hopeful about our hometown teams, it's important to also be realistic. I know, I know – you're saying "C'mon Rob, why are you being a buzz kill!?" Trust me, that's not my intention here at all. I'm just saying that we need to keep trying to improve upon what we already do in the restaurant industry so that we all can keep winning.

And as the Board for the WNY Chapter, WE are committed to help YOUR business grow, and win. The restaurant association offers so very many cost saving programs and opportunities, many of them specific to our WNY chapter. We can help you win, but you have to take advantage of what's out there!

That is what our upcoming Membership Mixer is all about -- Giving you the information you need to succeed – and more so, save some serious \$\$\$\$. So, if you are interested in making your WNY establishment a winning team, I urge you to come to our free Mixer on Monday, Nov. 7th at Buffalo Hotel Supply. All chapter board members will be there to answer any questions you may have while you enjoy complimentary cocktails and hors d'oeuvres. Just by attending you have a chance to win some great door prizes. Bring a fellow restaurateur with you and get a \$100 gift card to BHS if they join NYSRA. Whatever your motive for attending, it is surely a winning move!

Oh yeah, there is M.O.R.E. I mentioned that the WNY Chapter Board is committed to help your business grow, and we mean that. Starting in November, we have implemented our Monthly Outreach Restaurant Experience (M.O.R.E.); which has the Board visiting member's restaurants for working dinner meetings on a monthly basis. The goal of this program is twofold: Accessibility and Payback.

Accessibility – We want to be accessible to YOU! At these dinner meetings, we invite

YOU to sit in so that can let us know how we can better serve our members.

We want your candid opinions, ideas, and constructive criticism.

Payback - We want to put money back into YOUR restaurant.

We want you to win! Fill those seats!

Rob

PS. If you are interested in having a MORE meeting at your restaurant, simply drop me an email or give me a call

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Melissa A. Fleischut - Director of Government Affairs - New York State Restaurant Association

STRAIGHT AHEAD

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Fred Sampson

Measuring Your Service and Why it is Important and The Consumer's Spending Plans

Part of my preparation in writing a column is to try to see that the topics are relevant to today's industry needs, be it marketing, planning, operations, economics or, as in this instance, service. I also seek out sources that will lend credibility to the topic under discussion. I recently came across an article written by Shep Hyken, a consultant who helps companies develop loyal relationships with their customers and employees. The article is entitled "The Five Levels of Service." I have taken excerpts from it.

Hyken recently compared and rated a number of companies on their level of service, using a scale of 1-5, and he then assigned a descriptive name to each.

1. Unacceptable—This is bad service at any level. Call it poor, terrible, less than stellar. Bottom line, it is unacceptable for any reason.
2. Basic—Commodity and minimum standards.
3. Good—Your customers identify your service as "satisfactory."
4. World Class—This is a big jump from good. It is beyond satisfactory. Customers think of your company as great. You create value. Customers compare you with others in the industry.
5. Trademark—Others are compared to you. You are the industry benchmark for great service.

He then suggested to his readers that they do a self-assessment using the following questions.

1. What level of service do you and your restaurant provide for your customers?
2. How would you describe your service based on the above descriptive level of service?
3. What restaurants in your area could be assigned to each level of these levels of service?
4. What companies outside your industry could you assign to each of these levels of service?
5. What do the companies who have "World Class" and "Trademark Service" (both inside and outside your industry) do that you would like to emulate?
6. If you are not already at the "Trademark" level—and very few companies are—what would it take to get you a step closer or even all the way there?

These questions could make for some great discussion. Recognize that service is a process. It is ongoing. You and your restaurant should always be striving to improve, even if you are already at the "Trademark" level. While some people have taken service

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Sampson Continued...

to a scientific level with measurements, testing, etc., the basics are common sense. It is about people taking care of people and thinking about how to do it.

Is service more important than food? Well, one in five Americans actually say they value good service over good food, according to survey of 13,000 U.S. and Canadian consumers conducted by Empathica, a customer-experience management programs provider for restaurants, banks and retailers.

However, 55% of Americans think that restaurant service is getting worse (32% do not think that service is deteriorating and 13% aren't sure). Furthermore, one in four Americans says they would tell others not to go to a restaurant where they had received poor service (as well as never going there again themselves).

In addition to measuring how consumers felt about service, the survey also probed spending habits and attitudes which were weighted to reflect the latest U.S. and Canadian census distributions, including region, gender and income. The survey showed that there were significant differences between men and women:

One in five women indicated that they "never" eat at restaurants, versus just one in ten men. Also 48% of women – compared to 40% of men – said that a coupon would be the best way to motivate them to try a new restaurant.

Nearly two-thirds (63%) of respondents said they are eating at home more often now than in the past. Furthermore, when asked how many times per week they eat at restaurants, 41% of the respondents said just once a week and 18% said not at all.

Now for the good news: 68% said they are just as loyal to their favorite restaurant now as in the past. And 15% said their loyalty had increased.

Empathica's main recommendation to restaurant operators based on the study: Understand your top promoters and worst detractors in order to create a better customer. Although they are dining out less frequently and spending less, Americans expect unprecedented levels of service, and this is a factor in maintaining their brand loyalty.

I want to thank Media Post News and Karlene Lukovitz and their Marketing Daily report for the statistical information in this column.

Comments can be sent to fredsampson1@comcast.net

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George Schaeffer

Spoof on The Downtown Room

Somewhere in the 1970's, probably around 1975 a guy by the name of Joe DeLamielleure was a big name in Buffalo. "Joe D" was the all pro guard of the Buffalo Bills Football team and the fans loved his grit. Joe was part of the "electric company" that made way for OJ Simpson to rush for his record yardage. However, Joe being a lineman, nobody ever really got to see his face. But I digress from the "Downtown Room."

A North Buffalo contingent makes its way to the Statler Hilton's jazz club - The Downtown Room one week-day night. There is good jazz to be heard, as it is the opening night of Ruby Braff (cornet) and his quartet, Michael Moore (bass), George Barnes (guitar) and Wayne Wright (guitar). We arrive around 8:00, and there is a line out the door! This is an hour before the show would start! This is unacceptable and we cannot locate Peter Hassett, who is manager and a fellow North Buffalo character. Peter is pretty busy readying for this opening night and and an unexpected packed house. At this point he really could not help us anyway. Fellow North Buffalo regular, Michael (Widow) Brady suggests that we just "bag it" and return to Checker's on Hertel Avenue.

I eye the floor manager and notice that she is pretty young and probably inexperienced, at handling this kind of crowd. I also note there are reserved tables. I make my way to the front of the line and summon her over. I explain that I AM Joe DeLamielleure (probably 3" shorter and 50# lighter) and Peter Hassett had set aside an 8 top for us. She looks at the rez sheet and of course, there is nothing. But I AM Joe DeLamielleure, and I know your boss! She certainly recognizes the name "Joe D" and her next move is the right one - right this way for 8 seats about an arms length from the stage. Now everybody in our group is shellshocked, much less Peter Hassett who sees us sitting front and center. Peter starts to approach the table and is quickly intercepted before he calls out my given name, to be advised that "Joe D" thanks him for the reservation and the table. Peter loved the ruse and besides the real "Joe D" didn't know jazz from a javelin, so there was little chance he actually might show up.

To make the spoof even better, I think some of the folks who were in the lobby sent over a round of drinks for "Joe D." and his friends.



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THANKSGIVING FACTS

According to what traditionally is known as “The First Thanksgiving,” the 1621 feast between the Pilgrims and the Wampanoag at Plymouth Colony contained turkey, waterfowl, venison, fish, lobster, clams, berries, fruit, pumpkin, and squash. William Bradford noted that, “besides waterfowl, there was great store of wild turkeys, of which they took many.” Many of the foods that were included in that feast (except, notably, the seafood) have since gone on to become staples of the modern Thanksgiving dinner.

The use of the turkey in the USA for Thanksgiving precedes Lincoln’s nationalization of the holiday in 1863. Alexander Hamilton proclaimed that no “Citizen of the United States should refrain from turkey on Thanksgiving Day,” and many of the Founding Fathers (particularly Benjamin Franklin) had high regard for the wild turkey as an American icon, but turkey was uncommon as Thanksgiving fare until after 1800. By 1857, turkey had become part of the traditional dinner in New England.

A Thanksgiving Day dinner served to the Civilian Conservation Corps in 1935 included: pickles, green olives, celery, roast turkey, oyster stew, cranberry sauce, giblet gravy, dressing, creamed asparagus tips, snowflake potatoes, baked carrots, hot rolls, fruit salad, mince meat pie, fruit cake, candies, grapes, apples, French drip coffee, cigars and cigarettes.

Today, because turkey is the most common main dish of a Thanksgiving dinner, Thanksgiving is sometimes colloquially called “turkey day.” In 2006, American turkey growers were expected to raise 270 million turkeys, to be processed into five billion pounds of turkey meat valued at almost \$8 billion, with one third of all turkey consumption occurring in the Thanksgiving-Christmas season, and a per capita consumption of almost 18 pounds.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thanksgiving_turkey#Turkey



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Located in a historic 1864 house in Allentown, this restaurant features fine dining in an ambience that's casual and relaxed. Suitable for power luncheons or a special night out, the restaurant boasts a dedicated clientele thanks to the quality of its food and service. Typical dishes include NY strip steak, shrimp and broccoli Alfredo, and BBQ ribs. There's a Sunday brunch (noon-4p). Aside from take-out, there is also a call-ahead service so that your meal is waiting for you when you arrive.

Most other opinions talk about their great happy hour, to their incredible wings and diverse beer selections. Gabriels Gate has been a WNY Chapter member since June 2005. We are proud to have them in our chapter.

(From Yahoo.com that gives them 4 1/2 stars out of 5.)



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