

To:

Deschutes County Fairgrounds & Expo Center

Att: Roxia Thornton Todoroff

From:

Jocelyn Tureck

Food Services Manager

VFW Post 4108, Redmond, OR

(541-420-8589)

R.E. OHA Fundraising Dinner for 360 guests on 2/28/2015

I have been requested to give feedback on our experience catering from the kitchen at the fairgrounds.

The first item I would like to address is the level of helpful hospitality extended by Butch. He met with us several times, answered all the questions I could come up with, and made his cooler available for storage of our prime rib the day before our event. He was on site at the agreed upon time of arrival. Butch balanced his presence to address all questions and give us many helpful tips with freedom to work without feeling like he was looking over our shoulders. This is hard to do. Butch could not have done it better. He was there from start to finish. It was very comforting to have Butch there as we closed up to ensure that we left the facility cleaned as he wished. To those who do not manage a kitchen: This is like having unknown relatives arrive at your house and take over. An individual able to deal with this and stay relaxed is very rare.

My dealings with Roxia were very easy. She made each step needed clear. Roxia was always available for contact. I enthusiastically endorse her professional manner of presenting the criteria as it was in a period of flux. Our group, as I understand, was the first to cater from the "outside".

I cannot stress enough the belief that to have a second project in progress at the same time as this size of event would cause unworkable situations in the kitchen. No caterer will find all they need in house, and will bring items of their own. The dishwashing and sorting out of what belongs to who would be dismaying. Our group would always need all ovens, and still not have enough. [We cook items at the VFW to make up the difference). Let me just say that we would not consider catering this event if another caterer were working at the same time out of this kitchen. Butch might be an exception.

It would be helpful in the future to have a cleaning checklist for a cater crew to follow. The crew would have something to look at for expectations, and Butch would have something to check off at the end his long day.

Something is going to get broken. Perhaps a price list for breakage/loss at least for china would be good. (We only broke one small dessert bowl, but Murphy says larger losses will happen at some point as the kitchen rental program goes forward.)

A list of items the caterer is to provide would be helpful. Examples:

Foil

Plastic Wrap

Dish Soap for Pots/Pans

Cleaning Towels

Coffee/Condiments

All Linens for Tables plus Skirting for Buffets

Aprons & Food Gloves

We asked these questions ahead, so no worries for us...

On a personal note for our crew: we'd love to have a table in the kitchen with chairs to take a break and have a meal. We start work on the day of the event at 7:30 a.m. and get done around 11:30 p.m.

Our average age is around 58. We all work for free and are proud of what we do, but these old chickens need a place to roost now and again.

The bottom right Blodgett convection oven needs a temp dial. The middle tilt grill may need adjustment for temperature. When set at 300 degrees, it boiled product when filled ½ full within 25 minutes of turning it on. The one to the left set at the same temperature did perfectly.

If you think about buying any implements for the kitchen, I recommend about 4 large high-heat rubber spatulas. They rock. I never go anywhere without them.

To wrap up, your kitchen has many great tools to make a job go easily. We especially loved the ovens, tilt grills, giant mixer, warmers for holding food, rolling racks, ample cooler space, and huge work areas. We thank you for allowing us to cater here. Your 15% charge on gross profit seems reasonable.

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*I have 20 years experience in professional food service. My last paying job was Executive Chef of The Pine Tavern Restaurant in Bend Or. I held that position for 7 years. This is a fine dining establishment set on the Deschutes River. In the summer, we expected to do 300 covers for lunch and 350 for dinner each day. I say this only to let you know that these observations do not come from a rookie.