

OFFICIAL 2017 SUMMER NEWSLETTER

“Back in the saddle again!”

Hello my friends! The latest edition of the Bobby Jayz Café newsletter is from me, the owner/operator, Robert J. Ott. Last spring, I knew the success of this café had much to do with my commitment and involvement. The past 4 1/2 years of my life has been a time of great change and unexpected circumstances. I am now a single father to two beautiful children. Nevertheless, through time and self-realizations, my heart and passions in life slowly started to return. Often I am told not to share personal things in life to my customers, but at the same time what I do and whom I work with each day is slightly different than other individuals in the food service business. All of you work at the same location where I do and the success we reach for is largely a part of teamwork. Just like my staff, you the customers are part of the formula.

First, I wish to thank everyone for the support we had for the 6-year anniversary back in May of this year. We could have had 25 more specials to provide that day as they all sold out. The special guest musician I selected was more than I could have hoped for. Ethan Tucker is a true friend and talented musician and I am fortunate to have him in my life. His music was fantastic and I could feel the positive energy in the air. Each person I talked with that day shared such positive comments and an overall good feeling flowed through the café. All I can say is thank you for the support and involvement in our anniversary celebration!

Prior to moving down to the Olympia area I owned a business called the Modern Day Café. For 10 years I provided food service to the Western Regional Center of the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). I was involved in every part of that business and became very close to my customers. Several years ago I went to Tacoma to attend a Michael McDonald concert. We ended up going to the wrong location and had to take a shuttle over to the correct building. While standing on the shuttle, a man standing above me said, “Robert, it is great to see you. I was one of your customers at NOAA and since you left, things have never been the same. We miss you much!” We shook hands and talked for a couple of minutes. That conversation was stuck in my mind for a long time. I am seldom at the café register interacting with customers these days since the credit card systems are not user friendly for one who is blind. Much has changed since NOAA, but the importance of my relationships with patrons is still a top priority.

Since I started getting back into the success of Bobby Jayz Café, many good things have happened behind the scenes. The most challenging task since I have been involved in making this operation a success has been the ability to get our customers taken care of and out the door. Since my last newsletter, I have fine-tuned some small, but very important nuts and bolts. The first was the credit card system. Today my friends we have a system at each register that are wired to the internet so more than one can be working at the same time. We moved the second register adjacent to the first and now people are able to see where to line up and not clog up the area in front of the counter. We also

added a third register back on the island, which enables us to get customers out of the congested area for faster service. We finally have placed signs so that guests and everyday customers are clear on which direction to go and where to stand in line. We've removed certain items from the grill menu so the grill cook can work. Our specials have been studied and service tested so the great food we offer can be served to you faster and efficiently.

Lastly, I feel it is important that I take this subject and share it to my customers as a way of reaching out. I have said in the past and will say it again that communication is the key! My goal is to improve the communication with my staff and my customers. This is a huge way of improving business success for all. The funny thing for many is how a man (me) who is completely blind has to have discussions with his staff on how vital our facial expressions are in communication. I am working on improving the visual methods of communication from my staff to my customers and it is a project that will most likely never be perfect, but always improving. A comment can be interpreted 50 different ways and have different meanings when spoken even though the words are the same. The speed, facial expression, use of hands simultaneously, contact of eyes, personality, outlook on life and countless other things assist in making that a make or break comment! It's a process and continuous method of value that must always be recognized.

Aside from my involvement with my staff, I must also reach out to my dedicated café patrons to help out our customers who may be guests. Often when we are having visitors from other locations attending our café for lunch or breakfast, the direction and location on where to line up for service is commonly challenged. Please don't feel out of place by stepping forward to offer a helping hand. Don't be afraid to give some guidance to a guest or just sharing a of couple words that may assist he or she in where to get certain items as it will make a huge difference. It is teamwork for all of us to make that café a success. None of us were a part of how the café was designed many years ago, but nevertheless we are part of it. Coming together and working and enjoying it can truly be nothing less than a win for all! Happy summer my friends, I hope each and every one of you enjoy your time with both work and family during our moments of great sunshine.

Feel free to contact me if there is ever anything I can possibly assist with and don't forget that we cater to more than just government meetings. This summer alone we are providing our food service to three weddings!

Your friend,

Robert J. Ott

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