The Moonhanger Group is helping Macon thrive one restaurant at a time.

Men On a Mission

Plus:
- Cooking Gluten-Free: How you can accommodate this growing group of diners
- Gin Gets Crafty: A new class of gin and how to use it
We know a thing or two about good cooking in Georgia, and as a sponsor of the GRA and Emmy award-winning TV show Atlanta Eats, Gas South proudly supports our state’s rich culinary tradition. We’re also pleased to offer GRA members **customized rate plans and waived service fees on natural gas.** We serve the savings — you create the flavors. It’s a recipe for success!

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Restaurant INFORMER

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The Opportunity To Contribute

For Chad Evans and Wes Griffith, what started out in 2009 as a way to reinvest in the community they loved has turned into a dedicated effort to revitalize Macon’s downtown and make the city a fun and inviting place for their kids to grow up in.

Fast forward seven years, and you can’t talk about the vibrancy of downtown Macon without mentioning The Moonhanger Group, their company that currently owns four restaurants and a music venue in the city. These two have made it their mission to not only run successful restaurants, but to give back to the community that they love so much.

“We wanted to make a cultural impact,” Griffith told our writer Kevin Hogencamp, who visited Macon this summer to write “Macon Mojo,” on page 18. “We wanted to be a part of celebrating the history and heritage of a community that we have both grown to love.”

Or, as he said when I met up with them in August, “We’re just looking for an opportunity to contribute.”

Restaurants draw people to a town. They are the place where business meetings are held, where life’s milestones like birthdays and graduations are celebrated and where marriage is proposed. Without restaurants, a community’s fabric would quickly unravel.

So, as a restaurant owner or employee, you have a unique opportunity to support and grow the neighborhood around you in a profound way.

Customers want to know you care, but giving back is more than just a marketing decision. Whether you donate unused food to the local food bank, help with emergency relief efforts when disaster strikes, or host a fundraiser for a neighboring organization, having a deeper commitment to the surrounding community can help your restaurant strengthen its own culture and sense of community, too.

This month, look around you and see how you can make your town better. Ask your employees if there is a cause they want to support, volunteer to sit on a local nonprofit or charity’s board, or connect with your local economic development groups to see if there’s a way your business can foster more vibrancy in your community.

Need some inspiration? Check out the annual Restaurant Neighbor Awards, which recognize four restaurants across the country for outstanding community service and gives $5,000 to each of them to support their favorite charity or community project. You can find out more at wwwchooserestaurants.org/Industry-Involvement/Awards.

Christy Simo
Editor
MESSAGE FROM THE CEO
Keep Food Safety a Top Priority

For restaurant owners and operators, employee and patron safety is a top priority. Following the proper food safety guidelines can protect your restaurant from foodborne illness outbreaks, negative publicity and loss in sales. The Georgia Restaurant Association (GRA) provides the 17,000 restaurants in the state of Georgia with the most up-to-date information and educational resources to ensure that they are aware and comply with all safety regulations.

In 1994, the National Restaurant Association set out on a mission to increase awareness on food safety education. National Food Safety Month occurs every September and encourages restaurant owners, operators and employees to make a commitment to educate themselves on proper food safety techniques. The theme for this year is "Let it Flow" and focuses on the flow of food through restaurants by providing training activities, posters, infographics, videos and more to reinforce food safety techniques and procedures among restaurant staff. Each week offers different resources on things like food storage, thawing and holding, preparation and more.

A ServSafe certification is an indicator that restaurant employees are well-versed in the proper food safety techniques. The course covers the causes of foodborne illness outbreaks, proper food storage, how to avoid cross-contamination as well as hygiene, cleaning and sanitation. Of course, ServSafe also offers courses in alcohol training and allergens.

Georgia requires at least one foodservice staff member to have successfully completed a ServSafe Certification Program. By streamlining the education of staff members, we ensure that all foodservice professionals are on the same page in regards to food safety. The GRA provides resources to assist in obtaining a ServSafe certification by partnering with a set of preferred instructors and posting instructor information and a calendar of upcoming classes to help you schedule a course. The GRA also conducts quarterly food code briefings by working with health inspectors in various counties. These presentations, in the form of webinars and seminars, give operators a chance to get their questions answered by restaurant inspectors and stay up-to-date on the changes in the food code as well as how to increase their score and reduce violations on their next inspection.

We have worked with health inspectors in Gwinnett, Newton, Rockdale, Henry, DeKalb, Douglas, Clarke, Chatham, Macon-Bibb and Fulton counties to provide these briefings to restaurants in those counties and the surrounding areas. We are also working to expand our reach and provide these resources to even more restaurants.

The GRA provides many tools to help owners and operators increase safety in their establishment. By taking these precautions, they can increase the level of cleanliness and sanitation, preserve patron and employee safety and maintain a reputation of being a business that prioritizes safety while providing an unforgettable dining experience. For more information about National Food Safety Month, ServSafe and the GRA, visit www.garestaurants.org or call 404.467.9000.

Sincerely,
Karen Bremer, CAE
CEO, Georgia Restaurant Association

Why Become a Member of the Georgia Restaurant Association?

Whether you are looking to get involved with shaping public policy, for discounts on programs and services that are critical to running a restaurant or to stay informed about changing laws and regulations affecting the foodservice industry, you’ll find it all at the GRA.

Online applications are available at www.garestaurants.org. For questions, contact GRA Director of Membership Ryan Costigan at ryan@garestaurants.org or (404) 467-9000.
Prepare Your Restaurant for Anything During National Preparedness Month

Each day in the restaurant industry is different, with its own challenges and successes. Yet all of this can come to a screeching halt in the event of a natural disaster.

Disasters can happen at any place and at any time. For a business owner, being both prepared and equipped to take action to protect and prevent further damage ensures the survival of that business.

One of the main components of the Georgia Restaurant Association, (GRA) is education, providing resources so owners can anticipate needs before, during and after a natural disaster strikes. These resources can help restaurant owners and operators restore business operations as quickly as possible.

One of the most important things to incorporate in your restaurant is a preparedness plan. Planning ahead in the short and long term can mitigate damage by establishing things such as allocating

The federal government's Ready.gov features resources aimed at helping businesses prepare for disasters and helps businesses assess their preparedness.

THANK YOU to the following members for their continued support!

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Featuring easy to use modifiers including liqueurs, amaro and vermouth. Distributed by Savannah in Georgia
inventory so it does not spoil in the event of a power outage, keeping extra supplies on hand and important contacts.

Define procedures for before and after the disaster by creating a list of emergency contacts that include public health and safety officials, and work with health inspectors to ensure compliance before reopening. Ensure your employees are also well-versed in your action plan by outlining best practices and individual duties in your employee handbook. They, too, must be involved in the planning process to ensure a seamless transition should your restaurant have to temporarily close its doors.

The federal government’s Ready.gov features resources aimed at helping businesses prepare for disasters and helps businesses assess their preparedness. Part of these efforts includes the National Preparedness Month, which occurs throughout the month of September each year. It reminds people to actively prepare throughout the year for any type of emergency that could threaten our lives and business.

**Disasters can happen at any place and at any time. For a business owner, being both prepared and equipped to take action to protect and prevent further damage ensures the survival of that business.**

This year’s theme is “Don’t Wait: Communicate.” Each week, you can find resources such as infographics, instructional videos, brochures and even communications materials to share with your staff. Then, on September 30, consider taking part in America’s PrepareAthon, in which you and your staff can learn how to prepare for specific hazards through group discussions, drills and exercises. (Learn more at community.fema.gov.)

These resources outline how to make a disaster plan and how to involve and educate your community about your preparedness plans. These resources are also a great tool if you are simply starting this process and cover a wide variety of topics such as social media, marketing, insurance, food safety and more.

The GRA knowledge center is also a valuable resource for restaurateurs looking to take the first step in establishing a preparedness plan. The GRA lists various resources on our website, such as sample emergency contact lists and employee communication plans. These brochures, documents, videos and more can reduce the financial impact you endure after a natural disaster, help open your doors as quickly as possible and assist your community on the road to recovery.

The GRA strives to support all restaurants in Georgia in any unexpected event, providing quality information for restaurateurs to protect their business, patrons and employees. For more information on the Georgia Restaurant Association and National Preparedness Month, visit www.garestaurants.org or call 404.467.9000.
CHAIRMAN’S 2016 GRA RECEPTION

GEORGIAN CLUB
5 P.M. TO 7 P.M.
09.19.16

Join the Georgia Restaurant Association for hors d’oeuvres, cocktails and networking with foodservice and hospitality professionals after the first day of the Atlanta Foodservice Expo!

For more information, visit www.garestaurants.org.
After 40 years in the culinary industry, Chef Eric Karell finds the greatest thrill in this business is seeing others succeed right along with you.

Eric Karell, CEC, CCA, AAC, has been a member of the ACF for 40 years and a member of the Atlanta Chefs Association since 1980. During that time he has held every elected office except treasurer, been named “Chef of the Year,” “Member of the Year,” and was the local Chairman during the ACF National Convention. He attended the University of Michigan and is a 1978 graduate of The Culinary Institute of America.

Chef Karell accomplished this while being Executive Chef at some of Atlanta’s best operations such as Bones, The Atlanta Athletic Club and The Cherokee Town and Country Club. With his long-term perspective, Restaurant Informer felt Chef Karell could give some insight into the state of the culinary industry.

RI: How did you first get involved in the ACF?
Chef Eric: There was a gentleman at the CIA who was very enthusiastic about the organization and gave a group of us a talk about its merits. I pretty much signed up on the spot.

RI: Did you become involved right away in ACF activities?
Chef Eric: No, I was caught up in graduation, then a group of us moved to Atlanta almost immediately. I didn’t start getting involved until I worked for one of my mentors, Chef Kurt Eisele, who was then at The Atlanta Athletic Club, in 1980. He was president of the chapter and very persuasive.

RI: So you worked at the Atlanta Athletic Club more than once?
Chef Eric: Yes, I was Chef Eisele’s sous chef for a while, then left to test the waters. In 1990, after being Certified Master Chef Chef Thomas Catherall’s executive sous chef at the Cherokee Town and Country Club for three years, the management from the Athletic Club asked if I would be interested in taking the position there.

RI: What has being a member of the ACF meant to you personally?
Chef Eric: There’s no question its put me in a position for career advancement, continuing education opportunities and to network with some of the greatest chefs of the world. I’ve been fortunate to work for two of the greatest chefs in the country, Thomas Catherall, CMC, and Certified Master Chef Mark Erickson. These men are gifted, talented, forward looking and compassionate. Without the ACF, I would not have been in a position for that to happen.

RI: What are some other benefits of being an ACF member?
Chef Eric: At one point, the apprenticeship program needed another instructor. I began to teach, and it became part of my professional life.

RI: Would you say that was one of the more rewarding parts of your career?
Chef Eric: Absolutely, that and seeing the associates who work with me move up and succeed. I still hear from many of my old apprentices and enjoy their success more than my own. It’s also thrilling to see professionals like Heather Hurlbert become superstars. Few people know Heather started as a line cook with me, then one day we looked at each other and decided she should move to the pastry shop. Watching her become the preeminent pastry chef of the country and seeing former apprentices and associates become executive chefs and corporate chefs, that’s the best part of my career.

RI: How do you view the culinary scene today?
Chef Eric: The explosion of dining facilities has left an obvious shortage of trained culinary workers. I think a few places are struggling now, more than ever, with consistency. There seems to be a bit of menu redundancy creeping in again. And it still amazes me how many
fundamental errors are made, even in good restaurants.

**RI: Could you elaborate?**

**Chef Eric:** I call them the points operation. The first is how the guest is met at the door. Is the host smiling and welcoming, or do they look stressed? Second, after the guest is sat, how long before they are recognized, asked for a drink, watered, etc. Then there’s the menu: Is it organized, focused? I believe a few operators try to be what they aren’t – just cook what you know, and practice until its perfect. If you don’t understand molecular cuisine, the guest will pick up on it. And please, serve hot food on hot plates. This is a common error, and I would say 75 percent of the eateries in Atlanta ignore this. If you have a floor manager, make sure they go to every single table and make every guest feel special. I had a boss once, who was sort of a jerk, but, my gosh, he was the most charming sonofagun you ever met. The servers should be up on water refills, and never, ever, should a guest have to pour their own wine! Finally, as soon as coffee and dessert are delivered, drop the check. Guests hate to sit there, playing with coffee spoons and sipping their water, waiting for the bill.

**RI: Wow, it sounds like you’ve thought about this.**

**Chef Eric:** Well, I’ve done some consulting, and that’s my free gift. If an operator isn’t doing all of those things, then I can create recipes and engineer menus but it won’t help without those basic points.

**RI: How do you define success in the culinary profession?**

**Chef Eric:** I imagine it depends on the individual. I also believe it shifts with age. Many things I felt were successes years ago seem like ordinary accomplishments now. I supervised two PGA Championships at the Atlanta Athletic Club in 2001 and 2011. After the tournaments, I felt exhilarated, as if I’d reached a professional milestone. Success is the satisfaction of pulling off some extraordinary events and seeing the success of my associates. I’ve also had time to watch my children grow up and be a part of their lives. Some folks aren’t that lucky.

**RI: Any regrets?**

**Chef Eric:** I started my career in the age where the “Chef as Autocrat” was still accepted. Surprisingly I never worked for any. I was lucky that way. However, I chose to adopt that as my persona. I didn’t realize until later that I could have gotten a lot more out of my staff with a lot less volume. So I guess my biggest regret is not being nicer to people.

**RI: Here’s the tough question: What is your all-time favorite restaurant?**

**Chef Eric:** Unfair, unfair. Well, all of Pano’s (Karatassos) restaurants are top notch. We are blessed with such a variety now. I’ve been very lucky to travel and have dined at some spectacular places everywhere I’ve gone. But I’m going to say Hall’s Chophouse in Charleston is my favorite. When my daughter was in college in Charleston, we stopped in every time we visited.
A Food Expo with a Twist
Win booty, learn new culinary techniques, compete, taste and drink at the Atlanta Foodservice Expo Sept. 19-20

Atlanta Foodservice Expo 2016, now at the Cobb Galleria Centre in Atlanta Sept. 19-20, will feature a slew of new additions to the show floor.

The Booty Lounge, an area for attendees to win booty, shake their booty and tattoo their booty, has already drawn attention on social media. The cheeky tagline, “You Bring Your Booty – We’ll Bring Ours,” has attracted many to register for the show and sign up for their tattoo giveaways. Winners will be chosen every few weeks until the event. To add to the mischief, $1,000 will be awarded to one winner on Monday, Sept. 19 at 12 p.m. for tattooing the Atlanta Foodservice Expo logo on his or her body. Tony Olivas with Sacred Heart Tattoo will be the featured artist during the two-day event.

To win booty, exhibitors are providing various giveaways to the lounge. Attendees can win by spinning a prize ball. Details on earning spins can be found at www.AtlantaFoodserviceExpo.com/Booty, but one way to earn spins involves getting down on the dance floor!

Along with the Expo’s education, culinary demos and competitions, and Monday happy hour reception, one of the highlights of Atlanta Foodservice Expo is the tasting pavilions featuring the latest products in foodservice. Cheney Brothers will exhibit in a new, larger capacity at this year’s Expo featuring 15+ lines. Savannah Distributing will feature leading wine, beer and spirits brands in three pavilions, and a pavilion featuring local Georgia products will also be on display.

While an all-inclusive badge is available through September 17 for only $25, Restaurant Informer readers can register for a free badge using the code RINF16.
Attendees will have the opportunity to sample multiple products both inside the pavilions and out. To view the full list of exhibitors and offerings, visit www.AtlantaFoodserviceExpo.com/Exhibitors.

Attendees will have the opportunity to sample multiple products both inside the pavilions and out. To view the full list of exhibitors and offerings, visit www.AtlantaFoodserviceExpo.com/Exhibitors.

While an all-inclusive badge is available through September 17 for only $25, Restaurant Informer readers can register for a free badge using the code RINF16. Badges include all one-hour sessions, culinary demonstrations, competitions, a Monday happy hour reception and access to the show floor.

This year’s education lineup includes:
• Wine Pairing Session with Concentrics Restaurants & Savannah Distributing
• Georgia Grown Farm-to-Table Discussion
• Active Shooter Drill: What’s Your Business Liability and What Can You Do For Your Staff and Customers’ Safety
• 3 Things That Make You the Most Profits in Corporate Catering
• Driving Restaurant Sales & Exploding Profits through Grassroots Marketing, a Productive Team and Smart Operations
• Rules of Thumb for Restaurant Financial Performance
• Ask an Attorney Legal Session
• Boost Your Beverage Sales
• Facebook is Not a PR Strategy
• And more!

Full details on this year’s education program can be found at www.AtlantaFoodserviceExpo.com/Education. The ACF Atlanta Chefs Association will once again

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put on the culinary demonstrations and competitions at this year’s Expo. Culinary demos will take place at the top of every hour, and attendees will have the opportunity to learn unique culinary techniques. This year’s culinary demo lineup include:

- Dress Your Plate for the Camera!
- Bee Keeping 101 for Chefs
- Modern Skills and Techniques for your Ice Centerpiece
- Butcher Your Own Meat and Save!
- And more!

Full details on this year’s culinary demonstrations can be found at www.AtlantaFoodserviceExpo.com/Demos

The decision to move the event to the Cobb Galleria Centre, (the first three years were at the Georgia World Congress Center in downtown Atlanta), was primarily due to a high demand from exhibitors and attendees alike who prefer the convenience of a venue outside of the downtown area. Attendees will also be able to park for free to attend the Atlanta Foodservice Expo 2016.

Make sure to send your team, and mark your calendar for Sept. 19-20 at the Cobb Galleria Centre. Register online at www.AtlantaFoodserviceExpo.com with promo code RINF16 for a free badge to this year’s Expo, and sign up to win a free tattoo while you’re at it!

Win $2,000 at the Atlanta Foodservice Expo!

Do you have what it takes not to get 86’d from the competition and win $2,000?

ACF Atlanta Chefs Association is proud to bring back the 86’d Atlanta competition, which will be held at the 2016 Atlanta Foodservice Expo and sponsored again by Cheney Brothers.

The competition will begin with eight competitors, move through four rounds and end with one winner! The competition will be held Sept. 20 at the Cobb Galleria. Enter today to ensure your spot at the competition. For details or to register, go to acfatlantachefs.org. – Eric Karell
For Executive Chef Michael Deihl, gas cooking was paramount until a presentation by Georgia Power. “When I heard the presentation and saw the demonstration, I began to question my previous thinking.” After the initial demo, and countless hours of research later, he came to a conclusion: changing over to electric appliances was the perfect way to increase productivity and enhance his already phenomenal dishes. Greater cost savings, quicker preheat, lower maintenance costs and superior, even heating are the perfect ingredients in making a better kitchen. But don’t just take Chef Mike’s word for it – visit Georgia Power’s Customer Resource Center today and get turned on to the benefits of electric cooking. To learn more go to georgiapower.com/CRC or call 770-216-1400.
As restaurant owners, you play an important role in everyday society. When that society’s needs change, it’s important to stay in step with what your diners are looking for. Understanding the needs of the relatively new demographic of gluten-free diners is essential for growing your business. According to the advocacy organization Beyond Celiac (formerly the National Foundation or Celiac Awareness), an estimated 30 percent of Americans are eliminating or decreasing the amount of gluten in their diets. In 2012, more than 200 million gluten-free options were requested in restaurants across the country. Fast Casual magazine reports that “26 percent of consumers say they look for a restaurant that offers diet- or allergy-sensitive menu items.”

Gluten-free can be confusing (and frustrating) for you and your staff, as a large number of the consumers are not necessarily following a gluten-free diet for medical reasons. However, there is a sizable amount who are, and you need to understand why and how you can help them enjoy delicious, healthy and safe meals at your restaurant.

What is Celiac Disease?
Celiac disease is a serious genetic autoimmune digestive disorder in which the immune system attacks the body when certain foods are eaten. It damages the villi of the small intestine, interfering with the absorption of nutrients needed for good health. Continued exposure to gluten (a protein found in wheat, rye and barley) can result in malnourishment – vitamin and mineral deficiencies – and other conditions such as anemia, osteoporosis, neurological disorders and more.

How Common is Celiac Disease?
Originally thought to be rare, celiac disease is now recognized as one of the most common genetic diseases worldwide – it is estimated that one in 100 people worldwide has celiac disease.

What Does a Celiac Disease Diet Consist of?
There is no medicine to cure celiac disease, so a strict, 100-percent gluten-free diet is the only treatment. Since gluten is a protein found only in wheat, rye and barley, the healthiest and safest diet for people with celiac disease consists of whole, fresh foods in their natural, unprocessed state – fruits, vegetables, legumes, nuts, seeds, meat, poultry, fish, dairy, eggs and gluten-free grains such as amaranth, buckwheat, rice (brown, white, wild), millet, quinoa, sorghum and teff.

Although thousands of foods are naturally gluten-free, gluten is found in a wide variety of processed food products, sometimes as a hidden ingredient. If a product is labeled “wheat-free” it may still contain spelt (a form of wheat), rye, barley (malt) or non-certified gluten-free oats.

A Note about Oats
Oats are naturally gluten-free. However, a majority of them are processed on the same equipment as wheat, rye and barley, so they are contaminated with gluten. If you use oats, purchase only those that are certified gluten-free.

How Much Gluten can Trigger an Effect?
Just a crumb of gluten is enough to make a person with celiac disease sick and cause serious damage to their bodies.
Managing cross-contact in the kitchen and front of the house is crucial.

**What are the Challenges for Celiacs When Eating Out?**

When dining out, food safety is the biggest issue. Ensuring the ingredients of each recipe, including those in pre-packaged foods – seasonings, condiments and sides – are free of gluten is the first and most essential part of food safety. Storage procedures and managing cross-contact along the entire preparation and service line is just as vital.

**Celiac Disease and the Law**

In August 2013, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) finalized a standard definition of “gluten-free,” easing the very difficult challenge for celiacs to know which foods were safe for their medically necessary gluten-free diet. The FDA regulation states that when the words “gluten-free,” “free of gluten,” “no gluten” and “without gluten” are on a FDA-regulated item, it means that the product either:

- **Inherently does not contain gluten**
- **OR meets the following criteria:**
  - Does not contain an ingredient that is a whole, gluten-containing grain
  - Does not contain an ingredient that is derived from a gluten-containing grain and has not been processed to remove gluten
  - May contain an ingredient that is derived from a gluten-containing grain that has been processed to remove gluten (i.e. wheat starch) as long as the food product contains less than 20 parts per million (ppm) of gluten

AND, any unavoidable gluten in the food due to cross-contact or migration of gluten from packaging materials is less than 20 parts per million (ppm) gluten.

While the final FDA gluten-free rule applies to packaged foods, which may be sold in restaurants, the FDA does say “that restaurants making a gluten-free claim on their menus should be consistent with the FDA’s definition.”

**What Can You do to Ensure the Safety and Health of Celiac Diners?**

Before you advertise that you offer a gluten-free menu, make sure you can provide a truly safe food environment for celiacs to eat.

- Inspect and review all ingredients to know which ones are sources of gluten, and eliminate as many as possible
- Use whole, fresh foods
- Train your staff on celiac disease and their role in the safety of your guests
- Purchase equipment (knives, cutting boards) that are used only to prep for celiac guests

- If possible, set-up a designated area to prep and serve gluten-free food
- When a guest makes a reservation, ask if anyone has celiac disease
- Have your hostess and waitstaff ask if any guests have celiac disease upon arrival
- Get trained and certified

While converting your restaurant to an entirely gluten-free environment is probably prohibitive unless you started with that intention in the first place, managing a gluten-friendly restaurant that allows celiacs to enjoy your food is possible with the proper training and food safety protocols and quite conceivably a profitable option as well.

---

**Sources of Gluten**

**Rye**
- Bread
- Flour

**Barley**
- Flakes, Flour, Pearl
- Malt in various forms
- Malted Barley Flour
- Malted Milk Or Milkshakes
- Malt Extract
- Malt Syrup
- Malt Flavoring
- Malt Vinegar
- Brewer’s Yeast

**Wheat (varieties & derivatives of)**
- Atta
- Bulgur
- Couscous
- Durum
- Einkorn Wheat
- Emmer
- Farina
- Farro
- Graham
- KAMUT® Khorasan Wheat
- Matzoh
- Modified Wheat Starch
- Seitan
- Semolina
- Spelt
- Triticale
- Wheathberries
- Wheat Germ
- Wheat Starch

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**Common Symptoms of Celiac Disease**

Although the symptoms of celiac disease are not immediately life-threatening, the autoimmune disorder affects not only the gastrointestinal system, but many other bodily systems, resulting in a wide range and severity of symptoms, including, but not limited to:

- Abdominal Pain
- Anemia
- Bloating
- Delayed Growth
- Depression
- Diarrhea
- Dental Enamel Defects
- Fatigue
- Infertility
- Joint Pain
- Pale Sores in Mouth
- Migraines
- Nausea
- Numbness in Legs
- Osteoporosis
- Weight Loss

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**Tracy Stuckrath, CSEP, CMM, CFPM of Thrive!** helps organizations worldwide reduce risk, maximize budgets and improve customer experience through safe, healthy and delicious food and beverage programs. Learn more at [www.tracystuckrath.com/foodservicetraining](http://www.tracystuckrath.com/foodservicetraining).
H ave you ever cooked for 12 hours straight and still had no time to eat?
It started with food but it’s bigger than that now. Your passion and your determination put you on a bumpy journey filled with fear and failure. But it’s all been worth it.

That’s why we provide food and ideas that inspire your menu, tools that attract more customers, and solutions that optimize your business. With all of this lined up, you’ll make more than what’s on the menu.

Discover more at USFoods.com
The Moonhanger Group not only operates several legendary restaurants in Middle Georgia, it has used its talents to help revitalize Macon’s city center into a thriving hive of activity.

By Kevin Hogencamp
It’s 11 o’clock on a steamy Sunday morning in Macon, and every seat is filled at H&H Restaurant, the city’s soul food icon.

Sounds of success are reverberating off the brick walls of the unembellished Forsyth Street business The Allman Brothers made famous.

The clanging of dishes. The waitstaff’s cheerful, Southern-twanged can-I-get-you-anything-elses. The buzz of more than a dozen conversations.

It’s music to the ears of Moonhanger Group’s Chad Evans, who with his business partner Wes Griffith resurrected the legendary restaurant in 2014 after it closed its doors the year before. It’s one of four restaurants – plus the historic Cox Capitol Theatre – the pair have purchased or opened in the last seven years in downtown Macon.

A young server approaches with an enthusiastic “Have y’all decided on anything?”

Evans chooses the ribeye accompanied by scrambled eggs with cheese, hash browns and biscuit toast.

“Medium, please, on the steak,” he says, leaning back to get a panoramic view of the classic comfort food venue, which first opened in 1959 and was featured this year in a Wall Street Journal meat-and-three profile. Aside from Sunday brunch, it’s open for breakfast and lunch Tuesdays through Saturdays.

“Nice crowd. And we’re a ways from the church crowd getting here,” Evans says.

The only absent sound on this morning, perhaps, is the cash register’s ching-ching from back in the day when “Mama Louise” Hudson handled the money.

“Even coming here as a kid, I knew there was something special – something larger than life – about this place,” says Evans, a native of nearby Fort Valley.

An hour later, three blocks away on Cherry Street, Evans strolls through The Rookery, a tourist attraction in its own right and one of the oldest restaurants in downtown Macon.

The popular beer-joint-turned-foodie sanctuary, which made Garden & Gun magazine’s best burger list in 2014, is rocking. Juicy burgers and milkshakes (including the popular Jimmy Carter, made with banana ice cream and peanut butter with a stick of bacon to scoop it up with) are ordered left and right. And it’s barely noon on Sunday.

“I own the place,” Evans says, “and I usually have trouble eating here.”

A nice problem to have.

**Potential Realized**

Indeed, these are good days for Moonhanger Group, the ever-expanding hospitality firm Evans and Griffith started after buying The Rookery in 2009.

Griffith says that by naming burgers after local musicians and focusing on quality, The Rookery began “building excitement about what we do and tapping into hometown pride.”

“Another key was letting everyone who was working for us know they were part of something big,” he says.

After getting business systems in place at The Rookery, Griffith and Evans opened the chic Dovetail, one of the first farm-to-table style restaurants in Macon, on the second floor above The Rookery in 2012.

The project spun off from The Rookery’s propensity to do business with local dairies and grass-fed beef producers.

On a roll, Moonhanger took over the management of the historic Cox Capitol Theatre in 2013. After resuscitating the H&H, the pair opened El Camino taqueria and cantina in 2015. The Dovetail, too, was jam-packed this Sunday. Featuring a sophisticated take on Southern cuisine with most of its menu committed to locally sourced food, Dovetail helped introduced craft cocktails to Macon.

*Like many in the restaurant industry, for Wes Griffith and Chad Evans, the path to their current success has been circuitous.*

Around the corner, the Cox Capitol lobby was dead quiet, but only because Macon Film Festival patrons were inside screening the satirical Manifest Destiny: The Lewis & Clark Musical Adventure.

When Moonhanger Group decided to open a restaurant in the space next door to the theater, they simply broke through the wall to the Cox Capitol Theatre’s existing kitchen, which now preps the tacos, tortas and burritos for El Camino and also serves hungry concertgoers during events and shows.

Moonhanger’s downtown-centric slant delights Josh Rogers, who leads the effort to bring jobs, residents and a sense of place to downtown.

“Macon has always had all the potential in the world,” says Rogers, NewTown Macon’s president and CEO. “Now, we’re seeing things fall into place.”

That’s in no small part to Evans and Smith’s efforts to bring more restaurant offerings to the city’s downtown area.

“Wes and Chad have been critical components,” Rogers says, “in helping Macon get our mojo back.”

Just a decade or two ago, Macon was a sleepy Southern city that many passed by while traveling elsewhere. Today, however, it’s a thriving community with a vibrant downtown and lots of things to see and do for tourists and residents alike. Its urban core has more than 600 occupied storefronts and counting, including about 40 restaurants.

Rogers isn’t the only one taking notice; for its contributions to downtown’s re-emergence, Moonhanger received a President’s...
Choice Award in 2015 from the Historic Macon Foundation, which seeks to revitalize the city's neighborhoods and downtown by preserving its architecture and sharing its history.

Creating Community

Chad and Wes were first introduced by mutual friend Brad Evans (no relation to Chad) – at The Rookery, no less. Brad Evans is a partner with Griffith in the local radio station 100.9 The Creek and publisher of the 11th Hour arts and entertainment newspaper.

Like many in the restaurant industry, for Griffith and Chad Evans, the path to their current success has been circuitous. Griffith originally studied English and has a master's degree in poetry; Evans studied literature greats like Shakespeare and Virginia Woolf at Oxford University in England.

A Macon native with strong roots in the community, Griffith involved himself in the city's renaissance efforts upon returning home from college.

"Wes always had this relentless enthusiasm about downtown Macon and about music," Chad Evans says. "He definitely saw [Macon's] maximum potential before most people did."

Exploding with energy and determined to make a difference, he joined the Cox Capitol Theatre and Bragg Jam (the annual local arts and music festival) boards of directors and enlisted in other community-service initiatives.

Evans, who is also a signer-songwriter and frontman of the group Hank Vegas, cut his restaurateur teeth as a 26 year old, when he started the Georgia Bob's barbecue restaurant with his father. (He sold his share of the business shortly before undertaking The Rookery venture.)

As Griffith and Evans became more acquainted, their cohesions – art, music, food, culture and business – emerged.

"We wanted to make a cultural impact," Griffith says. "We wanted to be a part of celebrating the history and heritage of a community that we had both grown to love."

After throwing some ideas around, the two decided to parlay their commonalities into an occupational opportunity: The Rookery.

Owner Jim Kee, as it turns out, was willing to sell the then-33-year-old downtown institution.

When the pair purchased The Rookery in 2009, they made a few small changes, like renaming menu items and adding outdoor seating, but overall they left the vibe of the place intact.

Today, The Rookery continues to welcome locals, college students from nearby Mercer University and travelers stopping for a bite to eat while heading down I-75 or I-16. The electricity spills over to the sidewalk patio, which serves as a beacon of sorts that Macon is open for business.

"Inside and out, there's a real element of lightness, of community, to the place," Chad Evans says.

He adds that Griffith's focus, attitude and vision are infectious – "he's an agent of change and a powder keg of potential," Chad Evans says. "Wes's value and core – the cloth he's cut out of – really struck me from the beginning."

Moonhanger's payroll has swollen to more than 150 employees and counting, and the pair is planning to expand The Rookery, adding another dining room, a larger waiting room with some retail components and more kitchen space.
“I can’t think of anybody more important for downtown Macon than the two of them,” Brad Evans says.

**Behind the Scenes**

While Griffith primarily handles the business’s financial affairs and Evans has the larger grip on operations, their roles overlap.

That’s a good thing, Chad Evans maintains.

“It’s not important who’s contributing what now; it doesn’t matter,” he says. “We’ve gotten through the Vietnam of starting the business – the not knowing,” he says. “We’re on the other side of that marsh – that swamp.”

Over brunch, Evans brandishes his phone, which he’s deliberately avoided for a solid hour. He demonstrates an app called Slack, which aims to bring business systems together in one place.

“This thing allows me to track everything we do,” he says.

Broken ice machines. Labor numbers. Late deliveries. Inventory. Social media postings.

“Quickness of information is essential to what we do,” he says. “We’ve gotten better along the way at preventing problems by being proactive.”

Even the Moonhanger Classic softball game held this August was planned exclusively via Slack.

“We ordered uniforms, got the vendor and umpires – everything without ever getting together and meeting about it,” he says.

Face-to-faces, though, are a Moonhanger staple.

Evans meets with the restaurants’ managers every two weeks, and The Rookery leadership team meets twice a day. Agenda topics include sales analysis, business metrics, personnel issues and project updates.

“All the bones to make sure everything is working fluently,” he says.

Griffith says that from Day 1, a prevailing Moonhanger principle is its unwavering commitment to quality.

“At the end of the day, we’re guided first and foremost by putting a superior product out,” he says. “We don’t dumb down a product just to make it cost less.”

NewTown Macon’s Rogers says that that approach has been a game-changer for the local restaurant scene.

“‘They’ve raised the bar,’” he says. “‘The quality of the product you have to put out to be competitive in downtown Macon has grown exponentially.”

**Reinvesting in What You Love**

Jessica Walden, whose Rock Candy Tours promotes the city’s legendary music history, says Moonhanger “is the cornerstone to Macon’s downtown renaissance.”

“It can also be credited for waking us up and reminding our Southern city of what we do best – food and music,” she says.

By luring red-hot musicians Chris Stapleton, Jason Isbell and the like, the Cox Theatre venture is a deliberate effort to help bring downtown back to its Southern music roots.

The studio for The Creek, an Americana-themed venture that devotes much of its airtime to spinning locally produced tunes, coexists with the Moonhanger corporate offices downtown.

“At the end of the day,” Chad Evans says, “both of us are just pretty good Southern boys and want to make our parents proud and leave our children something they are proud of.”

Walden says she’s particularly proud of what Moonhanger did with H&H.

“Not only did they rescue the establishment, they retained its dignity and flavor, in everything from the food to the well-worn décor,” she says.

Legend has it that in the early days of the restaurant, “Mama Louise” Hudson ran a tab at H&H for a group of hungry, long-haired musicians just before the youngsters left Macon to go on tour. The Allman Brothers later reimbursed Hudson, patronized the H&H throughout their pilgrimage to Southern rock superstardom, and even took their favorite cook on tour.

In 2006, Hudson was honored by the Georgia Music Hall of Fame for her contributions to the state’s musical legacy. Today, the restaurant’s walls are lined with memorabilia from The Allman Brothers Band, and most days you can find Mama Louise there, too.

Fittingly, H&H is the starting point and the first stop on Walden’s two-and-a-half-hour walking tour. Trolley and motor coach tours also are available.

“As a tour company, we couldn’t tell the Macon music history story without Louise Hudson and the H&H,” Walden says. “‘And with the Moonhanger Group, we have an exciting new chapter in that story.”
Sometimes it seems like new spirits categories are popping up every day, and it can be hard to stay on top of all the trends. One to definitely put on your radar, though, is barrel-aged gin. Hardly brand new to the scene, barrel-aged gins have been appearing since 2008, when two producers on opposite sides of the world started experimenting with putting gin in a barrel. Both Maison Ferrand’s Citadelle Reserve from France (available locally through Savannah Distributors) and Ransom Spirits in Sheridan, Ore., (available from Quality Wine & Spirits) were struck with the idea almost simultaneously.

“Hey, people have been drinking gin since the 1700s, but people didn’t used to bottle spirits. So what would that gin have been transported in … wait, a cask! We should try that!”

Their methods were entirely different. Citadelle developed an elaborate solera method for their barrel program: a pyramid of cognac and Pineau des Charantes barrels, stacked youngest to oldest, aged separately then blended into the next oldest, from which only half the spirit is ever emptied before the newer batch goes in. Each batch is constantly being blended with all previous batches.

Ransom, which also conveniently owns a winery, decided to clean out some pinot noir barrels and age their gin in those. Ransom also decided they didn’t want to merely make a dry gin run through a barrel. They wanted to use only botanicals that would have been used in the 1700s. You know, to see what would happen if they tried to make a totally forgotten gin style. Their Old Tom gin became the first domestic gin of its kind on the market since Prohibition.

That’s the thing with barrel-aged gin, and – let’s face it – with craft spirits in general. The spirit of exploration that drives craft distillers to create new spirits also drives them to make things no one has made before. Or if it has been made before, to try to make it just a little bit different.

Gin plays perfectly in this world, because the number and concentration and style of botanicals used in American craft gins can vary so wildly. With this constantly shifting baseline, why wouldn’t you add in the extra variable of barrel regimen? Some producers take their dry gin and put it into a barrel, but what kind of barrel? Some producers use grain-neutral spirit to make their dry gin, and some producers use more of a white whiskey base with its own unique mash bill. Some age for 2 months or 6 months in barrel, some age for over a year.

In fact, barrel-aged gin producers aren’t even technically allowed to label their products “barrel-aged gin,” because by
definition, gin isn't supposed to be "aged" at all. So you'll always see the bottles with words such as "rested" or "reserve." St. George Spirits out of Alameda, Calif., even calls theirs "Reposado" to further confuse the casual consumer.

It might seem overwhelming at first to even think about how to use or sell this category of spirits. But if you consider it like wine, with every individual producer or vintage or vineyard site telling its own unique story, then it becomes less overwhelming and more authentic, interesting and magical. What story does this gin have to tell, and how can I help tell it?

Why Barrel-Aged Gin?

"We knew we wanted to stay with just making gin, focusing on gin," says Holly Robinson, co-founder of Captive Spirits in Seattle, where she has produced the label Big Gin since 2012, along with her husband, Ben Capdevielle. Ben is a third-generation distiller, having learned the craft from his father and great-grandfather, who were moonshiners in Iowa and Wisconsin.

"So we took the next step with what we personally enjoy in gin. Ransom was one that we really admired."

Big Gin bottles a London Dry gin as their flagship, but they also make Bourbon Barreled and Peat Barreled versions. "Ben is a believer that a lot of the world's greatest spirits are aged in used bourbon barrels," Robinson says.

The couple has a barrel broker they work with in Kentucky, who gets them used 6- to 7-year Heaven Hill barrels, still wet from bourbon.

They then age their gin in the barrels for six months, so there isn't a significant time investment to add to the expense. "It's the shipping of the barrels that's costly," says Robinson. She says, however, that Captive Spirits is usually able to pass the barrels along for another use to craft beer brewers that they barter with.

Robinson sees that the demand for bourbon and scotch, and their subsequent price increases, has helped peak interest in other barrel-aged spirits. "We just released a peat-barreled Big Gin, and it's been getting a lot of cocktail placements."

Sell it as a Gin or as a Whiskey?

On the other side of the country, Philadelphia Distilling has also been producing a barrel-aged version of its Bluecoat gin for the last several years (available locally through Ultimate Distributors). Their take is just a little bit different. They use only brand new, medium char American oak barrels, just like a bourbon producer would.

"People need to realize that [my gin] tastes totally different than Ransom, or one aged in a bourbon barrel or a cabernet barrel," says William Burke, national sales director for Philadelphia Distilling.

"Who are we marketing it to? That's a very good question. We're still figuring that out ourselves. You don't find a lot of the large gin companies doing this. There are some [such as Beefeater Burrough's Reserve Oak Rested Gin], but they don't do too much with it. This is really coming out of the craft world."

Burke says Bluecoat is aggressively marketing to whiskey drinkers, as the new barrels they use really introduce the notes you find in bourbon: vanilla, toffee and cinnamon. When you employ a used barrel, he says, you pick up the notes of whatever was in the barrel before, rather than just the barrel influence.

Like Big Gin, Bluecoat passes their used barrels along to beer makers, both to recoup the cost, and also to allow breweries to make something truly unique. "We're just trying to break even on the barrels, but a lot of craft breweries are interested in the barrels, because there aren't a lot of these out there."

How Do I Mix This?

With a wealth of new barrel-rested gins on the market, how does a bar manager or mixologist navigate the category? Do you use the barrel-aged gins like a gin, or like a whiskey?

"That's the cool thing; it's really a cross over," says Robinson. "The bourbon-barreled gins work well in an Old-Fashioned or a Sazerac, but also a Negroni. People are using the Peat Barrelled [gin] in classic scotch cocktails."

She says that cocktail-savvy establishments usually have an intense bar staff with ideas of their own, but for more mainstream establishments, she usually recommends building on the classics and just giving them a slight change with the barrel-aged gin.

"If you get someone who is a big gin drinker, or even a big bourbon drinker, they want to try the next thing on the shelf, so it's an easy turn around." She adds that Big Gin kept the proof pretty high on its barrel-aged products to make them more mixable. "It's 47 percent alcohol. We want to make sure that when you are stirring it into a cocktail, the flavors are still abundant."

Burke says that Bluecoat tries to market its Reserve Gin as both a gin and a whiskey substitute. "You are taking what is already a complex spirit and making it even more complex. People don't really drink gin on the rocks, but you can drink ours on the rocks," he says. He doesn't usually recommend to buyers that they promote Bluecoat Reserve in a gin & tonic, but rather in the Martini, a classic cocktail he featured at this summer's Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia. (See recipe in sidebar on page 24.)

Eduardo Guzman, beverage manager for Ford Fry Restaurants, uses barrel-aged gin at several of the group’s restaurants, including JCT. Kitchen.
Shaken, Stirred and Strained
Curious about how to use this new kind of gin? Here’s a few recipes for inspiration.

Endless Summer
1 ½ oz. Bluecoat Barrel Reserve Gin
½ oz. Royal Combier
¾ oz. Blueberry Cordial
½ oz. Lemon juice

Combine all the ingredients in a shaker, add ice and shake well. Double-strain through fine mesh into a chilled coupe and garnish with a brandied cherry.

Eduardo makes his own blueberry cordial, but Thatcher’s Blueberry Liqueur would be a fair substitute.

Endless Summer

Courtesy of Eduardo Guzman, from the menu at JCT. Kitchen in Atlanta

Brass Button
1 ½ oz. Cardinal Barrel Rested Gin
½ oz. Cardamaro
½ oz. lemon juice
½ oz. saffron syrup

Combine all ingredients in a shaker, add ice and shake well. Strain into a chilled coupe, and garnish with a large swath of orange peel.

To make saffron syrup: Combine 2 cups of sugar with two cups of boiling water and stir to combine. Add 6 threads of saffron and allow to sit over night. Strain and store in the cooler for up to 2 weeks.

Brass Button

Courtesy of Chris Sturdivant, from the menu at Cakes & Ale in Decatur

Martinez
2 oz. Ransom Old Tom Gin
1 oz. Carpano Antica vermouth
¼ oz. Luxardo Maraschino
1-2 dashes orange bitters

Combine all ingredients in a mixing glass with ice. Stir for 15-30 seconds. Strain into a chilled coupe, and garnish with a lemon peel.

Recipe developed by cocktail historian David Wondrich for Ransom Spirits

Bee Sting
2 oz. Bourbon Barreled Big Gin
¾ oz. fresh lemon juice
½ oz. Tippleman’s Ginger Honey Syrup

Combine ingredients in a shaker with ice and shake well. Strain into an old-fashioned glass over fresh ice and top with a splash of soda.

From the menu at Grindhouse Killer Burgers in Atlanta

South Side, Antique
2 oz. Treaty Oak Waterloo Antique Gin
1/4 oz. lemon juice
½ oz. simple syrup
3 dashes Fee Brothers grapefruit bitters
3-4 mint leaves

Muddle mint leaves gently in a mixing glass. Add other ingredients with ice and shake. Double-strain into a chilled coupe and garnish with a peel of grapefruit wrapped around inside of glass (do not express).

Courtesy of Lara Creasy, from the menu at Ford Fry’s restaurant State of Grace, Houston, TX

Here to stay?
Is this a growing category, or a mere flash in the craft cocktail pan? Both Big Gin and Bluecoat are soon moving into larger facilities this year, with plans for more barrel space and a tasting room they can open to the public. And the Bourbon Barreled Big Gin came home with the Gold Medal for Contemporary Gin at the 2014 International Wine & Spirits Competition in London. Sounds like it might be here to stay.

Lara Creasy is a consultant with more than 15 years experience in beverage management. She has developed wine and cocktail programs for such restaurants as St. Cecilia and King + Duke through her consulting business Four 28, LLC.
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THE FILTHY FIVE

Recurrent food safety and sanitation violations can make your diners sick. Here’s what to look out for.

By Cristina Caro

Roughly 1 out of 6 Americans will get sick from something they eat. According to the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, reducing this number by 1 percent would save about 500,000 Americans from getting sick.

Identifying potential trouble spots will help protect your customers and your brand. So put on your inspector cap and look closely at the following photos of actual violations observed in foodservice operations. These “Filthy Five” are common preventable recurrent deficiencies in food preparation and storage. Can you spot the risks to food safety?

Observation 1. It’s 10:30 a.m. You do a quick inspection of the walk-in cooler and see apples, shell eggs and shredded cheese sharing a shelf, while raw salmon filets and chicken breasts sit side by side on another shelf. (See Fig. 1.)

Your food handlers share equipment and storage areas. The work pace is quick. They move items around while completing their tasks and often forget to put items back where they belong. Which TCS foods (those that require time and temperature control for safety) are stored incorrectly here?

On the left, ready-to-eat (RTE) items are on the bottom shelf next to shell eggs. While it’s fine to store the eggs on the bottom (preferred by health inspectors), they cannot be next to dairy or other RTE foods.

On the right, two different proteins with different minimum internal cooking temperature requirements are stored together – salmon requires 145o F while chicken requires 165o F. Both of these storage violations pose a risk of cross-contamination and foodborne illness.

What would you do to solve the problem? The answer is simple: Put items where they belong.

Also inspect the food and containers for contamination. You may need to transfer items to clean/sanitized containers and clean any liquid spills. This extra measure would further reduce the chance of contamination and foodborne illness.

If the health inspector had seen this, you may have been required to discard foods and assuredly receive point deductions for unprotected food. Frequent self-inspections will allow you to correct these trouble spots and prioritize training needs.

Observation 2. You walk by the wait stations during lunch service and notice food and non-food items stored improperly. (Can you spot them in Fig. 2?)

In each of these photos, chemical spray bottles are stored near clean wares and exposed food. This is an obvious chemical contamination risk to the plates, the to-go containers and the lemons. Furthermore, the lemon wedges are uncovered in an open area while the station is unattended – and they are out of temperature control.
Why didn’t the servers see and correct this? They work quickly and often place items nearby for convenience instead of where they belong. Employees don’t realize that a coworker might bump into the spray bottle while passing by, causing the chemical to spray onto the stored plates or cut lemons. If no one else is at the wait station to see it, customers might get served chemical-sprayed lemons and food containers.

How do you fix this trouble spot? This is a teachable moment, so snap a few pictures for discussion later. Remove the spray bottles, change out the clean wares and discard the lemons. Make sure all cleaning supplies are stored separately (and properly labeled), especially at waiter stations. Decide if you will continue the use of spray bottles. When time permits, assemble the waitstaff and explain the hazard and corrective measures.

**Observation 3.** It’s between shifts, and you decide to do a walk-through of the BOH to assess cleaning and sanitizing procedures. You see the following trouble spots in the dish area and adjacent prep tables. (See Fig 3.)

On the left, clean utensils are exposed to contamination risk. The eating surface of the forks may be contaminated (by hands, dust or other debris) because they’re not stored with the handles up.

In the center and on the right, cutlery is left out and exposed to contamination – one on the table, the other wedged between the prep table and wall.

Clean wares often get left out for a while before being stored properly or used. Less attention is given to this step, thus posing a risk to food safety and to customers. In this case, you have time to call over the staff and explain the hazard. The at-risk utensils must be cleaned and sanitized again and then stored properly. You may consider posting a color photo in each area, illustrating the proper storage of silverware, cutlery and the like.
**Observation 4.** Kitchen staff is preparing food for dinner service. You observe food handling procedures and spot several food risks. (See Fig. 4.)

On the left, too much beef is being prepared at one time. The meat is spilling over the board onto the prep table, possibly contaminating the plastic wrap and nearby cutting board, and the knife handle is unnecessarily touching the meat.

On the right, two raw chicken breasts are placed next to cooked breasts that are almost done on the grill.

Food handlers work quickly and look for ways to be more efficient. This can lead to shortcuts in food prep. You must monitor food handling to ensure proper procedures are being followed every time, otherwise your food may be at risk of time-temperature abuse and cross-contamination.

How would you correct this dilemma? Speak to the food handler at each station. Explain the hazard. Return a portion of the meat to the cooler to protect its temperature. Make sure the green cutting board is cleaned and sanitized before use. Discard contaminated plastic wrap; move the container to a shelf or other safe place.

**Observation 5.** Shift change has occurred, the cleaning and sanitizing duties are completed and you do a quick inspection of equipment and storage. You are surprised to see the cooler door open and no one around. (See Figure 5.)

There are no employees inside the cooler or near the area. The cooler temperature is set for 38o F, but the gauge reads 44o F. Boxes are stored on the floor.

In the far right photo, tools and supplies for temperature monitoring are left on top of the meat slicer.

Employees and vendors alike access equipment areas during the workday. Cooler doors are constantly opened. Equipment is unplugged for cleaning. During busy periods, equipment and storage areas are overlooked, and tools and supplies are misplaced.

In the pictures above, a delivery arrived and was placed into the walk-in by the vendor. The door is left open for the additional product cases. The employee who was to inspect the delivery was called away and abruptly left his tools by the entry (on top of the cleaned and sanitized meat slicer).

When will the employee return? Will the delivery person close the cooler door? Were any of the boxes inspected for proper temperature and product specification? Were any of the other products in storage compromised by the rising cooler temperature? Will the meat slicer be cleaned and sanitized again before use? (It should have been covered when not in use.)

Any of these errors could lead to foodborne illness, which is why we have temperature logs, cleaning logs, sanitizer logs, cooling logs and so on – to monitor and correct trouble spot as they happen.

To control these “Filthy Five,” perform self-inspections at least weekly to identify deficiencies and trouble spots. Adjust workflow and procedures to reduce exposure to contaminants and uncontrolled temperatures, such as covering food and equipment when not in use; placing instructions and visual reminders at workstations; cross-training employees; and having safety moments during pre-service meetings.

Don’t delay repairs or training, and don’t ignore minor deficiencies. If you do, this will become your new standard and increase the potential for foodborne illness. Just a 1 percent improvement can make a big difference.

Cristina Caro, MBA, RDN, LD, is a featured presenter for the Atlanta Foodservice Expo (Sept. 19-20, 2016), the Southern Convenience Store and Petroleum Show, NACS Webinar series and the Georgia Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Caro is active in food safety audits and education, menu evaluation and modification, and operational improvements to enhance profitability. Learn more at foodtraininggroup.com.
GRA Pac the Roof

On August 16, more than 250 people packed the rooftop of Ponce City Market to support the GRA-PAC, the only Political Action Committee that is dedicated to serving the restaurant industry in Georgia. The GRA-PAC seeks to educate members and elected officials about restaurant industry positions, protect the bottom line for the entire foodservice industry, engage in activities and events to enhance the GRA's advocacy position and promote the restaurant industry's importance to the Georgia economy. For more on the GRA-PAC and how you can donate, go to www.garestaurants.org.

10th Annual Give Me Five Benefit

In August, Share Our Strength’s 10th annual Give Me Five dinner raised more than $110,000 to support the national nonprofit’s No Kid Hungry campaign to end childhood hunger in Georgia and across the country. This year’s event was held at the Piedmont Driving Club and featured a five-course dinner from acclaimed chefs and sommeliers.

In Georgia alone, more than 700,000 children struggle with hunger. For more on Share Our Strength and how you and your restaurant can help connect these kids with their next meal, go to nokidhungry.org.
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Georgia Governors Tourism Conference
Sept. 11-14, College Park
giorgiagt.com

2016 Inland Seafood Experience
Sept. 12, AmericasMart Building 2 West, Atlanta
inlandseafood.com

Annual GRA Chairman’s Reception
Sept. 19 – The Georgian Club, Atlanta
garestaurants.org

Atlanta Foodservice Expo
Sept 19-20, Cobb Galleria Centre, Atlanta
atlantafoodserviceexpo.com

Atlanta Greek Festival
Sept. 22-25, Greek Orthodox Cathedral, Atlanta
atlantagreekfestival.org

Florida Restaurant & Lodging Show
Sept. 27-29, Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, Fl.
firestaurantandlodgingshow.com

OCTOBER 2016
Rock Shrimp Festival
Oct. 1, St. Marys
visitstmarys.com/rock-shrimp-festival.html

ACF Atlanta Chefs Association Monthly Meeting
Oct. 3, WCSF at Phoenix Foodservice, Forest Park
acfatlantachefs.org

Decatur Beer Festival
Oct. 15, Decatur
decaturbeerfestival.com

Taste of Atlanta
Oct. 21-23, Atlanta
tasteofatlanta.com

NOVEMBER 2016
Sunday Supper South
Nov. 1, Atlanta
sundaysuppersouth.com

Afternoon in the Country
Nov. 6, Foxhall Resort & Sporting Club, Douglasville
ideatlanta.org

Savannah Food & Wine Festival
Nov. 7-13, Savannah
savannahfoodandwinefest.com

GRACE Awards Gala
Nov. 13, Delta Flight Museum, Atlanta
garestaurants.org

PREFERRED SUPPLIER LIST

The companies listed below are leaders in the restaurant industry and should be considered a part of any restauranteur’s preferred supplier list. Each of these suppliers participates in Restaurant INFORMER’s Power of Eight marketing program.

For more on how to participate in or attend these events, see event websites. To see more upcoming industry events, check out www.restaurantinformer.com/restaurantbusinessevents.

GAS SOUTH
1.866.512.3129 chris.coan@gas-south.com gas-south.com/gra
Gas South is one of Georgia’s leading natural gas providers serving more than 260,000 customers throughout the state. We’re proud to serve the restaurant industry and are pleased to provide discounted rates and waive customer service fees for GRA members.

GEORGIA POWER
770.801.5988 ramaurer@southernco.com www.georgiapower.com/foodservice
Georgia’s Power’s Foodservice Team offers consulting services recommending the most cost-efficient electric cooking equipment options available to commercial kitchen operators.

POSTEC
678.424.4000 sales@postec.com postec.com
Independent provider of custom POS solutions and award-winning support services. Top-of-the-line hardware and software coupled with custom-designed solutions and backed by a support system to provide value to your business.

RDS
678.279.8041 vlister@rdspos.com www.rdspos.com
Provider of Aloha POS Systems, the management solutions for QSR, fine dining and franchise establishments. Excellent service and support packages tailored to our clients needs.

Savannah Distributing Co., Inc.
678.380.1212 ewittgen@savdist.com savdist.com
Georgia’s oldest wine and spirits wholesaler specializing in craft beer, craft spirits and a diverse portfolio of wines from around the world.

Sysco
404.765.9900 jaks.yvette@atl.sysco.com www.syscoatlanta.com
A leading foodservice marketer and distributor. Sysco distributes food and related products to restaurants, nursing homes, schools, hospitals, and other related venues.

US Foods
770.774.8300 william.ray@usfoods.com www.usfoods.com
US Foods®, your official food supplier, offers a broad range of products from national brands, private label, exclusive brands, equipment and supplies to all segments of the foodservice and hospitality industry.
Ama
Est. Opening Date: September 2016
76 Ponce de Leon Place NE
Atlanta 30306
Grilled seafood, crudo, pasta, charcuterie and an oyster bar. Dinner nightly; brunch on weekends.

Cafe + Velo
Est. Opening Date: September 2016
381 Edgewood Ave. SE
Atlanta 30312
Octane coffee, French baked goods and organic breakfast and lunch.

Southern Baked Pie Company
Est. Opening Date: September 2016
2665 Old Milton Pkwy. (The Atwater)
Alpharetta 30004
Sweet pies like buttermilk, apple, pecan, chocolate and more.

The Magnolia Room
Est. Opening Date: September 2016
4450 Hugh Howell Road
Tucker 30084
Traditional southern cuisine

Cheesecaked
Est. Opening Date: September 2016
720 Morosgo Road
Atlanta 30324
Second location. Cheesecake cupcakes and sugar free and vegan items.

Highland Bakery
Est. Opening Date: September 2016
25 Park Place NE (Georgia State University campus)
Atlanta 30303
9th Atlanta location. Breakfast sandwiches, soups, salads, fresh baked breads and pastries.

Regent Cocktail Club
Est. Opening Date: September 2016
3035 Peachtree Road NE, Ste. 140
Atlanta 30305
3rd location. Indoor/outdoor roof deck bar above American Cut Steakhouse with craft cocktails and light food menu.

Truman
Est. Opening Date: September 2016
123 East Court Square
Decatur 30030
Upscale bar favorites with full ABC.

Metro Diner
Est. Opening Date: October 2016
880 Holcomb Bridge Road
Roswell 30076
Chicken and waffles, shrimp and grits, meatloaf, pot pie, burgers, sandwiches and homemade desserts.

Donna Chang’s
Est. Opening Date: October 2016
297 Prince Ave., #11
Athens 30601
Chinese dishes like Kung Pao shrimp, General Tso’s chicken, Mu Shu pork and handmade pot stickers

Da Vinci’s Donuts
Est. Opening Date: October 2016
1447 Dunwoody Village Pkwy.
Dunwoody 30338
3rd Georgia location. Cake-style donuts, teas, coffees

Marlow’s Tavern
Est. Opening Date: October 2016
3575 Durden Drive NE, Ste. 301
Brookhaven 30319
17th Georgia location. American tavern fare with full ABC

Scout
Est. Opening Date: October 2016
321 West Hill St.
Decatur 30030
Modern Southern cuisine with full bar.

Cast Iron
Est. Opening Date: October 2016
701-5 Highland Ave. NE
Atlanta 30310
Seasonal dishes for dinner Tuesday-Sunday with weekend brunch.

Bulla Gastrobar
Est. Opening Date: November 2016
60 11th St. NE
Atlanta 30309
Spanish and Catalan dishes from The Centurion Group.
Full bar.

Babalu Tacos and Tapas
Est. Opening Date: November 2016
33 Peachtree Place
Atlanta 30309
Gourmet tacos and small-plate tapas, house-made guacamole.

Twisted Soul Cookhouse
Est. Opening Date: November 2016
1133 Huff Road NW
Atlanta 30318
Relocation from Decatur. Modern Southern cuisine.

Old 4th Distillery
Est. Opening Date: December 2016
536 Decatur St. SE
Atlanta 30312
Relocation from 487 Edgewood Ave. Larger location with rooftop observation deck, outdoor lounge and patio, tasting room, event space and distilling facility.

The information provided on this page on current real estate transactions, leases signed, ownership changes and business brokerage activity is provided by Restaurant Activity Report, P.O. Box 201, Willow Springs, NC 27592; (443) 974-8897; joe@rarleads.com; restaurantactivityreport.com
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Toast is a mobile, cloud-based POS system that’s both a restaurant point-of-sale system and management system. It fulfills online ordering, loyalty programs, gift cards and inventory with advanced cloud-based reporting on labor, sales and menus. New software updates are seamlessly done through the cloud—and free of charge to the customer.

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