

"For God loved the world so much that He gave His only Son
so that anyone who believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life."
THIS is Christmas! (John 3:16)

Dear family and friends,

Greetings and love to you during these holy-days! I hope you can all look back on the year with satisfaction and gratitude for the ups and downs that come with all of life's happenings.

This was a momentous year for me. I left one profession, started my own business (yikes!) in a completely different one, and my beloved father passed away. How does that rate on the life changes stress-point scale?

Yes, this was the year I hung up the blackboard chalk, donned an apron and wielded a chef's knife, leaving one arena that for 20+ years had been rubbing blisters on me, and jumping into one that fits more like a cozy slipper. In less than one year, Barb's Tasteful Helps grew from an embryonic idea to a full-blown personal chef service and catering business. Growth is still needed to get the financial factor up to par, but from indications, it's coming.

As a personal chef, I plan very customized menus for my clients, do all the planning and shopping, go to their home with all needed equipment and supplies, and in one day (and many hours) prepare, package, label and store (mostly in freezer) 9-10 dinner meals for the number of people in their household. Then I clean their kitchen, pack up and leave, pooped but happily satisfied. I'm a sole proprietor with no employees, handling all aspects of the business myself. The business end, especially, has required much training and learning. I admittedly prefer the cooking end, but there's no business without the business end!

What a fabulous thing a personal chef service is...for busy people, new moms, retirees, medically recovering, a novel gift. My clients save time, have less stress, and can eat the healthy delicious meals they want, but often don't because of the planning, work and time involved. That becomes my job. And let me tell you, the physical, mental and organizational work on my part is enormous! But what a joy to be serving the needs of others, making them happy, and using the gifts God has given me!

In September, my healthy and vigorous 70-yr.-old father had a stroke and went to be with the Lord. Oh how he loved us and we loved him! As the family spread his ashes on the waters of Casco Bay in front of his beloved Maine island home (from a lobster boat!), we knew he left us a legacy of wisdom and wit, guidance and strength, loyalty and love...gifts that will bless us the rest of our lives. Thank you, Dad.

I'm not really into all the Y2K hype, be it the fear and stockpiling, or the mega bash celebrating, but I do have PLANS for New Year's Eve...I'm catering an elegant sit-down 8-course dinner for 35 people, with only a bartender and two girls, who the clients are providing, to help serve and clean up from 4-10 PM. So much for small-party catering! I wouldn't have taken the job if I felt it wasn't feasible, but I wouldn't mind your prayers!

However you spend your Millennium arrival, my wishes and prayers for you are for a meaningful and enjoyable Christmas season, and JOY, FAITH and HOPE for everyday!

*Love,
Barb*

Make sure scallops are sea, not bay. Thanks for your shopping help!