

PHIL BARTH

Finding One's Passion: The Mission of Phil Barth

Graduate: Class of 1994 Chef, Kitchen Manager By: Alexa Wollenmann, Spring 2011

Ding! Order up! Who would have thought Forest Park graduate, Phil Barth, would live in California and secure his dream of becoming a chef. A 1994 graduate, Phil Barth, as salutatorian, spoke in front of his senior class. Not only does he have the pride of saying he was a Ranger, he also earned many rewards while at Forest Park. Phil has fond memories of Forest Park earning a second basketball sectional title, his track team winning their first sectional; his winning 110 meter high hurdles race at sectional and his 100m relay team going onto state finals.

After many successful events in his high school career, he excelled and made more dreams come true, such as graduating from Purdue University with honors and an engineering degree. After spending one semester in Melbourne, Australia, he worked at an engineering job in the San Francisco Bay area.

After living two years in California, Phil decided that switching careers would be a challenge, but the best option for him. He started a business in Jasper as a yoga instructor. He named this new business “Fire Horse Yoga, Massage, & Wellness.” Phil incorporated his love and passion for healthy food into this business.

In 2006, Phil married Jasper native Dana Weidenbenne, which he says was another glorious highlight. Along with that, Phil and Dana just recently had their first child Quinn Amberlie. With the desire to enhance his culinary gifts, Phil moved to New York City for several months and attended National Gourmet Institute for Health and Culinary Arts. “Being in New York was a great adventure and learning experience,” he recalls. Today, Phil and his wife live in San Diego, California, where he is responsible for the entire food inventory in their catering company, Dining Details. At Dining Details, personal chef services for small and large catering events are provided. The staff also produces school lunches for local and private schools. Phil works with more than twenty vendors to source and order all of the ingredients they need for their chefs and cooks to prepare menus for parties and events. Phil also manages the entire inventory, keeps track of some of the recipes, production schedules, and on top of that he spends about 20-30 hours a week cooking in the kitchen. He mainly works on catering meals. Phil also assists in scheduling kitchen staff, and developing and documenting the recipes. Creating new menu items, pricing, keeping track of food cost, and making sure the supplies are fresh and up-to-date just highlight the scope of his responsibilities.

A stellar example of courage to stay true to oneself, Phil says, “I encourage students to really seek out things they are interested in and passionate about. Then learn how to incorporate that into a job that can pay and support you and possibly a family. Before deciding to go to college or a trade school, I think it is important to have a vision of what you want to do.” He also states, “It is also never too late to change your mind, and put effort into something that is important to you. There is a big world outside of Dubois County, and you may have to travel far and wide to learn how to find a life that makes you happy, but sometimes, if you pay attention, opportunities may be closer than you think.”