

# Creative ways one mom has stepped up to help neighbors, community and restaurants due to Covid-19 pandemic

*Bonnie Kearns didn't want to feel helpless. Knowing that her neighborhood was homebound with concerns of the Corona Covid 19 virus, she kicked into action.*

GLENVIEW, IL, UNITED STATES, March 30, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Bonnie Kearns of Glenview IL is extraordinary. She didn't want to feel helpless and knowing that her neighborhood was homebound with concerns of the Corona Covid 19 virus, she kicked into action.

"It takes a village. It really does. Our little block in Glenview is just one component in the quarantine," she said in a recent interview.

In efforts to curb the spread of COVID-19, moms have been texting each about limited trips to the grocery store. Every other day, someone "takes one for the team" and makes the dreaded trip. "Asking everyone if they need anything, deliveries are dropped off on porches in plastic bags and we send a quick text that food and paper towels have arrived."

We're relieved we don't have to face the impending doom of touching doors, credit card machines, carts, anything outside of our control for just another day.

Our new normal:

- Cooking every meal became exhausting quickly. It is difficult to figure out what to make. "I felt like a failure," says Bonnie. I was staring at a box of Mac & Cheese and felt like raising a flag in defeat. Then I received



Bonnie and Patrick Kearns and family



Sarah Stegner, co-owner and co-chef, Prairie Grass Cafe in Northbrook IL

an email from [Prairie Grass Cafe](#) regarding curbside pickup and Sarah Stegner's cooking tip hotline, 847-920-8437 and Rohit Nambiar's selection of delicious reasonably priced wines to complement the food. Since I knew the neighborhood was suffering, I decided I would order food and wine for my neighbors who weren't comfortable leaving their homes. I texted moms to take a break from cooking tomorrow and that we would have pot roast and wine delivered to their doors with Clorox-wiped delivery boxes. This snowballed with other opportunities to help.



Prairie Grass Cafe logo

- Sarah Stegner said "after I got her call, things started to come together for us. I thought it was a great model for how we could sell in large quantities. I thought, wow, I have to let other restaurateurs know to think outside the box to help make curbside and delivery viable. People are picking up for their neighborhoods, too. This may be a solution. We have also added to a neighborhood in Evanston IL and are going to add a couple of high rise buildings in Chicago."

- Bonnie continued: "I knew that medical professionals and first responders desperately needed help. A mom in our Facebook group mentioned that he was trying to boost morale in his office and ordered his employee's lunch. After reading it twice, I realized it was my pediatrician's office. I was feeling helpless seeking ways I could provide relief to people that so desperately needed it. Bingo. I knew I could order wine from Prairie Grass and have it delivered to their office for the staff. That's what I plan to do. I also plan to order lunch from our neighborhood deli and have it dropped off."

- I had planned a surprise birthday party for my husband at Chicago's Kaiser Tiger in the West Loop on Saturday, March 14. Obviously, we had to cancel the 40-person dinner with less than a day's notice. It made me sick to know that servers were depending on the income and the loss to the restaurant would be great. I didn't care about the deposits or what I was going to be charged; it became so apparent that people weren't going to be celebrating anything anytime soon. The event planner was completely understanding. The next day, Governor Pritzker issued the stay at home order. After receiving the Prairie Grass Cafe email, I immediately figured out what I could do to help Kaiser Tiger and the people in their area. "Surely, the EMTs, firefighters, urgent care workers, and hospitals in the West Loop had people that needed to eat. Since I have no idea when we would be able to reschedule the party, I asked the restaurant to use the money for a better, more worthwhile cause and did not ask for a refund, said Bonnie.

Other suggestions from Bonnie:

- Larger businesses and their customers that can afford to forgo their event deposits could use the money towards a greater cause.

- oCatering contracts for events that are happening in the next 1-3 months likely had 50% or more of the costs already due and are non-refundable.

- oWe can creatively rethink how that lost deposit can be used for other things - a credit to that restaurant in gift cards, catered lunch or meals for the less fortunate or neighborhood hospitals, doctors' offices, fire departments and other essential businesses that are staying open during this time. Anything to let these restaurants keep that revenue and perhaps put it towards the people that need it now. Not in 5 months. Now.

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