

January 2022 Banquet Announcement

Pursuant to Wisconsin Traditional Archers Bylaws 5.13 on Virtual Meetings and 5.14 Emergency Bylaws on Pandemic conditions, on October 1, 2021 the board of directors voted to cancel the annual banquet scheduled for the weekend of January 21st, 2022 on a canvass of 9 Yes votes to 3 No votes. Voting information is on file with the Secretary.

Why? This was a difficult decision as we know how important our annual banquet is to our members. We list the issues addressed as:

1. Losing a month to the scheduling and implementation process with a January banquet date.
2. Hotel staffing shortages described to us as Covid related.
3. No current menu for selection of food choices and pricing for our event.
4. Amber Grill hours being Mon-Sat 4 pm to 10 pm at this time. No breakfasts or lunches.
5. Hotel contractual requirements for Covid procedures and ramifications for non-compliance.

I will try to describe the problems with each point above.

1. Hotel reservations with the cheaper block rate were due with a 12/23 deadline. The deadline for the return of YOUR WTA banquet registration materials including meal selections, WTA buck advance purchases and fees would have been due by 1/7. Polling of vendors and sponsors for donations and shipment of those items donated should be completed by 1/7 or earlier. Note the printing of the banquet program could be delayed, etc. Bottom line is so much would have to happen either during the Christmas season or very shortly thereafter. Most people are focused on the holidays with loved ones. This is understandable and a reality that we will face. This could create major problems in meeting attendance, financial and social gathering goals.
2. The hotel staffing issues for items #2 and #4 go hand in hand. When questioned directly about the short hours of the Amber Grill within the hotel, we asked them if you are having difficulty staffing the restaurant, how can we feel confident that there will be adequate banquet service for our meals? The answers were that their staffing shortages are Covid related, and they would work very hard for us as a team. Realize they pay more for staff, we pay more in service charges. Note meal charges do not include the costs of staff to serve the meals to our tables.
3. The food service industry has been turned upside down by Covid. Periodic food shortages from the farm to commercial kitchens has been a problem all year. Their supplier offerings and pricing is very fluid to where they have no established menu or pricing for banquet meals. Our only option was to make generic selections like pork, or chicken with actual pricing only available when they receive food in for our event. In general, I have read in the news that food service pricing has increased 10 – 15%. If we raise per plate prices to you 20%, we most likely would not also cover the extra cost to serve it up. How much are you willing to pay for food? The hotel is now operating on an open wallet concept. Planning is bad for us and for them.
4. See #2 above.
5. The hotel lawyers have written contract clauses that demand our compliance with CDC, state and local regulations in place at the time of our event. This includes a statement about being able to shut down the event for non-compliance without penalty for the hotel. This is a problem only when it becomes a problem, but this stipulation is not favorable to the WTA.

One last note to our membership. We are scheduling a 2022 annual membership meeting at our Bowjam event at the Ojibwa Bow Hunters Club in New Berlin on April 23rd. Look for an update on this event in the February Stumpshooter and on our various forms of social media on the web. Thank you for your patience.

Michael Theis
President