

Frank Minear makes food his life's work

By STEPHANIE UJHELYI sujhelyi@the-review.com Published: November 30, 2015 3:00 AM



REVIEW PHOTO // Kevin Graff // Frank Minear, owner of Frank's Family Restaurant, holds a cherry crumb pie. The restaurant is celebrating three years in business today.

Frank Minear admits that he originally was like every other little boy who dreamed of being a police officer or firefighter when he grew up; then, at age 13, a culinary legend appeared on his television screen.

Today marks the third anniversary of Frank's Family Restaurant, but Minear acknowledges that it was definitely rough in the beginning. "Taking over a

location that didn't have the best reputation toward the end of their tenure is an uphill battle," he said.

Minear grew up one of the six children raised by a single mother 10 miles north of Alliance in Deerfield.

"I had asked my mom what I should be when I grow up. She told me that if she was rich, she would send me to law school," the longtime city resident

continued. "But since we are not rich, she advised that I should find a recession-proof job. Later, as I'm watching Julia Child come on PBS, I thought, 'This interests me.'"

Working at area restaurants while pursuing his degree in restaurant management at Maplewood, he accumulated more than two decades as a journeyman at various restaurants.

"I worked my junior and senior year in high schools and had wanted to go to chef school, but I was lucky enough to learn the basics from the owner's son while working at Cippriano's," Minear explained. He also worked in and managed several local chain dining establishments like Pizza Hut, Friendly's, KFC and Brown Derby.

"I learned a lot about operations, including what worked and didn't. I filed it all away until I opened my own business in 2012," he added.

For example, while working at Olive Garden, Minear

discovered the keys to making pasta and serving it quickly.

While Frank's menu seems extensive, he said one can keep overhead down by carrying items that can have multiple purposes in different styles, allowing patrons to enjoy homemade food at a reasonable price.

"I believed that Alliance needed a family-style restaurant, and Frank's is one of only a few in town with that atmosphere," Minear, a former Review advertising representative, explained.

He said his experience with the newspaper served him well. "It was a huge asset, as it allowed me to utilize my experience to build and create my own marketing strategy," he said.

Minear recently debuted a series of gluten-free and sugar-free offerings.

The former Cub Scout master still sits on the Salvation Army board and holds a membership in the Alliance Historical Society; however, he admits that free time is a premium these days.

Minear makes time for God and family, attending Alliance Christian Church with wife Christina and the couple's four children. He also has an 18-year-old son, Caleb, from a previous marriage.

"I probably spend 17 to 18 hours a day at the restaurant -- except Saturdays, which is our family night, and Sunday, when we close at 3 p.m. We usually go out to somewhere else to eat that night," he admitted.

One day a month, the restaurant hosts fundraising dinners that allows 50 percent of the sales to go to the beneficiary organization, which provides the volunteers to host, serve and clean up.

"We are pretty much booked up year-round, and have helped to raise more than \$13,000 for organizations like the Pilot Dogs and Men's Challenge," Minear said, adding that it is a win-win for all involved. "Not only has it helped out with some great causes, but it has helped us to build our clientele. If you take care of your community, your community will take care of you."

Recently, his efforts were recognized when Frank's Family Restaurant was named the Alliance Area Chamber of Commerce's Small Business of the Year.

Minear, who was the former chef for the Sebring Mansion, recently was hired to handle catering for the Alliance Women's Club and enjoys doing special events. As business picks up, he

said he continues to trust in God.

"Once I realized he wouldn't have given me this business just for it to fail, I stopped stressing and fretting," Minear concluded. "If you take care of the people who come in your door and treat them like family, you get their loyalty."

[Click to read this article on www.the-review.com](http://www.the-review.com)

