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Tips main source of income for many waitresses, waiters

By MIKE DAVIS
Staff Writer



TIPS — To Insure Prompt Service. Tipping is a gratuity and gratuity is something given voluntarily. Though tipping is a voluntary act, many waitresses rely on tips for their income and get offended when customers "stiff" them.

"If you get prompt service or good service, I think that a 15 percent tip is in order," waitress Peggy Maher said.

On the other hand, Maher said, there is no excuse for poor service. Though tips are a necessity for the waitresses, tips should be earned, she said.

Waitresses generally get paid about \$2 an hour, Maher said, and are expected to make up the difference through their tips.

"The government taxes me as if I were making \$5 in tips per hour," Maher said.

So if a waitress does not get a tip, she actually is paying for the customer to sit in that restaurant, she said.

Maher said because she works in a nice restaurant she usually gets the 15 percent gratuity, but waitresses in all-night restaurants usually aren't as lucky.

People should expect to tip at any restaurant, Maher said, or they shouldn't eat out.

"This is how we get paid," Maher said. "It's not like we're doing it for fun. It's a lot of mental work and a lot of foot work."

Maher said waitresses are blamed if the food is bad or if the food is late, and neither problem is the fault of the waitress. Though graciously receiving complaints is part of the job, Maher said customers should have more compassion.

Complaints with the food or service, availability of the waitress

and the mood of the customer all play a part in tipping, but Maher said there is no set pattern.

Waiter Greg Able said, "Old people are the worst tipppers — 60 years old and up."

Some students are good tipppers, whereas others aren't, Maher said.

"A lot of them tip well and a lot of them don't tip at all," she said.

The only consistency about tipping, Maher said, is that she usually gets better tips from male customers. Able said he gets better tips from female customers.

Bartender Laura Caldwell said, "It (her tips) depends on what I'm wearing to work."

Caldwell said getting good tips almost is an art. If you try harder, you get better tips, she said.

Maher said waitresses have particular peeves.

It's infuriating when people leave a dollar after monopolizing the waitress' time, she said.

Able said the worst insult for a waitress is when people leave a little change or a dollar tip for a full meal.

"You know they knew to tip, but they tipped that small amount," he said. "That's telling the waiter 'you were sorry and we didn't enjoy it.'"

Able said one time a table of drunks, after ordering an unusually large amount of food and enlightening him with their use of various vulgarities, left his tip (\$1.10) in a bowl of hot sauce.

A second peeve is when people order large amounts of food or expensive dishes and fail to tip 15 percent.

"If people can afford to order the most expensive thing on the menu, they should have brought enough money to tip," Maher said.

Also, leaving a poor tip or no tip at all after occupying a table for an unusual amount of time makes waitresses cringe, she said. When customers "squat" it keeps the waitress from being able to serve more customers. That keeps the waitress from earning more tips, Maher said.

"My main bitch about the students who come into the bar... is pitchers of beer at our place are \$2.85 and people who give you three bucks and keep the 15¢ to me are pretty poor," Caldwell said.

"Fifteen cents doesn't even buy a pack of gum any more, but if you add up the 15¢ for us, it does a whole lot."

Maher said customers also should realize that waitresses often tip the bartenders and busboys 10 percent of the waitress' tips at the end of the evening.

"They are helping out tips by busing our tables," Able said.

Maher said the best customer to have is a waitress or waiter, "somebody that does it for a living and knows what goes on in your mind and what goes on in the kitchen."

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Father of murderer writes to victims' families

Associated Press

DALLAS — The father of convicted murderer Abdelkrim Belachheb wrote a letter of condolence to the families of his son's six victims, according to a television reporter.

The letter was passed on by a reporter for ABC's "20/20," who met Belachheb's father in Morocco while preparing a report on the mass shooting for an upcoming segment of the television program, the Dallas

Morning News reported Saturday. The younger Belachheb, a Moroccan national, was convicted in November of the shooting deaths of six people at Ianni's Restaurant Club in Dallas last June 29.

The letter, said one of the family members, "helps a little bit." "It helps a little bit to know someone else is still thinking about it after all this time," said Frances Wilson, sister of victim Jan Smith.

"I feel for his parents because I know what they must be going through to think their son could do such a heinous act."

Another family member, the mother of victim Linda Lowe, said she was touched by the letter.

"He (the elder Belachheb) wanted for me to have this letter and tried in his own way to express love and kindness," said Gloria Edge. "It goes to show us that other people's hearts

Chorus performs concert

By KENNETH PEMBERTON
Reporter

The Texas A&M Women's Chorus performed its Spring concert Friday night in Rudder Theater.

The concert contained a pourri of songs ranging from lively, upbeat tunes to slow, melodic poems about love.

The program opened with a short song called "Now We Thank Our God."

The next piece was "The Plan of the Blest," a number that meshed peppy and brooding sections together. The song told the pelican that symbolized Christ and his crucifixion.

An echo choir joined the chorus for a poem taken from the song "The Princess."

After the intermission, trumpets, a tenor saxophone and a trombone accompanied the women in "Feel the Power," an upbeat song about living and experiencing God's glory.

Halfway through the show, a member of the Singing Circle presented balloons to Renee Cain, a soprano who was celebrating her birthday Friday night.

The second half of the concert included songs about Brother Simon and Garfunkel, a song from the musical "Cats" as a salute to America. These songs were intermingled with more serious numbers.

Also, a quartet performed three songs, one of which was a humorous rendition of "Let's Call You Sweetheart."

At the end of the concert, the chorus members presented bouquets of flowers to the conductor, Patricia Fleitas.

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