



PLAYERS

SPECIAL EDITION

by **Dick Odom**

Skillet & Glass, September 30, 2020

One of our youngest, and early member commits

is a graduate of Johnson & Wales University, Charlotte with an Associate degree from the University's College of the Culinary Arts. He learned soon after graduating and test flying in the kitchens of a few high end restaurants in Charlotte and in Aspen, Colorado, that if you knew your trade and practiced your skills behind the bar, plus had a winning personality and gift of questioning, listening, and exchanging dialogue, you could make a lot more of the bucks as a bartender, especially in a classy restaurant.

Drew Deas found something just short of his dream job when he landed behind the bar at the Palm restaurant at Phillips Place in Charlotte about 3 years ago. Jody and I had spoken with him one week and decided we would go up and let him serve us wine, cocktails, and dinner at the bar of the Palm the following weekend.

We marveled at the way he efficiently went about making cocktails and serving dinner to us and the others at the bar that evening...easily having conversations (think--listening, asking questions, offering comments, compliments, and smiles) with and to folks from a variety of cultures and from what appeared diverse backgrounds. His moves up and down the bar, back and forth from the bar to the shelves holding the spirits, to the sink, the cash register, the kitchen...all with a bit of glide. To watch him was like watching a veteran athlete for whom the game had slowed down for him—no glitches, no surprises, no stumbles, no mistakes—all smooth motions and all the time with a smile that showed big dimples he's had since a baby. His dad, Danny Deas, has been a best friend since he and I were freshmen at Clemson. So, I've known Drew since he was born. Danny is a member of our guild as well.

Just short of his dream job. Drew's dream..."I'm going to open a bar and restaurant named **Drewsky's**", a nickname he picked up likely in high school and accepted as appropriate for his personality and for his bar and restaurant—I learned he might name it **Drewsky's Pub and Grub**.

I tagged Drew as our mixology expert, but he has taught me a lot in the kitchen as well. We were cooking in my kitchen one evening and I think we had Bolognese sauce on the stove top, and I was skimming the fat from time to time. Drew noticed what I was doing and said if I were to slide the pot so that the flame was under one side, then the heat would push the fat to the other side at the top and it would be easier to skim. Another hack learned from a pro with a lot of experience in the kitchen.

I am sad to tell you that we lost Drew to an inoperable brain infection a couple of weeks ago while out in Aspen working for a former boss, and very close friend, because he was on furlough at the Palm due to COVID-19.

Just a few short weeks ago, I texted my daughter about Drew's serious condition. Salley's 42, Drew 36, not many years difference in age, and she's known him too since he was a baby. She said, "Prayers going up for that sweet boy!" I thought "sweet boy", that's the way we will all remember Drew, even though he's 36 years old, he's still that sweet boy.

We miss seeing him, but Drew lives, he lives in our hearts, and I can see him smiling, and laughing, and entertaining us....loving us, smiling--those dimples--forever!

Wish all of you could have known him.

Remembering Joseph Andrew "Drew" Deas, April 30, 1984 – September 13, 2020



Drewsky