

## Outside Dining

My wife and I decided to venture into the world of outside dining. We figured it was time. Let me start off with an apology, while we had been doing Franklin takeout, we went to a non-Franklin restaurant for our first trip because we heard they were using their large lawn to expand their seating. I wanted to feel safe for our first venture.

My statements, except when I explicitly say it, are observations not judgements.

### The Landing in Hillsborough

We arrived at 5 PM on a Friday and it was not full but well attended. We did not make reservations because it kills a restaurant for people to break reservations. I wanted to check out the restaurant first and then decide. As we were driving there, I said to my wife, "Be ready to turn around and head home." She agreed.

There was plenty of parking with space between cars. I didn't feel like I'd be trapped passing people in the parking lot. People and staff kept good social distancing in the waiting line. Everyone had a mask at that point. In fact, the only people the whole time without masks were people seated at their tables and a single couple at the bar.

They had tables set up on the patio and about 8-10 tables out on the lawn. The patio had fewer tables than normal but not that many fewer to my eye. They were however at least 6 if not 8 feet apart. We asked for the lawn where the tables were at least 15 if not 20 feet apart. I likely would have stayed if we were to sit on the patio, but I was much more comfortable on the lawn.

I never saw a staff member without a mask. They also wore gloves. They did however interact with each other at less than 6 feet.

When we were seated, we took our masks off but kept them nearby. When the waiter first started coming to our table, he would stand only a little farther than a waiter would normally stand. He quickly noticed we put up our masks when he approached so he then kept a few extra feet away when he could. We brought hand sanitizer and cleaned our hands before we ate.

When it came time to pay, I asked the waiter, "how much" and never touched the bill. I had brought bills of several denominations so I could give him the right amount without needing change or exchanging a credit card.

Judgements – The only thing I didn't like is there was a party of at least ten sitting in the gazebo at tight spacing so they all could fit. By ages and interactions, I estimated they were not a family unit. From a community point of view, I was not happy to see it. My guess is if one person at that table was infected, several others would be even though they were outside. The good part of it was, we were the closest table to them and had to be at least 30 feet away from them. I wasn't worried for ourselves, I was worried however for them and the community.

In all it was a good experience. Oh yeah, the food was good. Next time I dine out I'll pick a Franklin restaurant to review.

I encourage others to comment below on their experiences with outside dining.