

Best of the Rest

BEST

Outdoor Festival

Taste of Bethesda

Twenty years ago, a group of Bethesda businesspeople started an event that drew a dozen restaurants and a couple hundred people. The idea was "to promote what Bethesda was becoming known for: restaurants," says William Edelblut, owner of O'Donnell's Restaurant in Kentlands.

Today, Taste of Bethesda is a tradition. Held the first Saturday in October, it attracts up to 40,000 people who consume everything from pizza to paella prepared by some 56 local restaurants. Admission is free, but four food tickets cost \$5.

For restaurateurs, the festival is a boon. Roberto Pietrobono, co-owner of Olazzo, estimates the restaurant serves pasta and cannolis to more than 1,000 people—six times the number of diners it would get on an average Saturday night. The Bethesda Urban Partnership (BUP) event is alcohol-free and one-day only. Set-up begins at 2 a.m. and by 7:30 that night, the streets are clean.

Just as locals know to clear their calendars for the festival, the skies typically clear, too. "God really loves us," says David Dabney, head of BUP. "We've never been rained out."

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Jim Turner takes jobs both big and small.



ERICK GIBSON

BEST

Computer Repair Hilltop Consultants

The CEO needed urgent technical assistance. So Jim Turner, founder of Bethesda-based Hilltop Consultants, rushed over to help.

The emergency? The CEO's daughter had spilled water on her MacBook, which stored an important school assignment. Turner personally picked up the computer late on a Thursday and had the file back the next day.

Personal attention to even the smallest job is one reason customers are loyal to the 6-year-old IT firm. Hilltop Consultants works with both residential and commercial clients, and offers fixed-rate service contracts as well as a la carte repairs. Prices for repairs, which may be made at its 4-year-old Bethesda store or via house call, can range from \$50 to \$250 for a complete system rebuild, Turner says.

"When we get a call about someone's home computer crashing, we know it's not just a device for entertainment," he says. "It's how they work, how they connect to the world, how they communicate. . . . We put a high priority on every client."

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STEPHEN WALKER