

# SUPER BOWLS

*A Mediterranean meal, one piece at a time, at Olive Oil Grille.*

| BY STEPHANIE KALINA-METZGER



It started out with a bang early one Saturday morning in May 2017.

The implosion of Senate Plaza had turned into a spectator sport with many area residents gathering, some with lawn chairs, to witness the spectacle, which paved the way for a flurry of development that is still occurring in the Erford Road area.

When brothers John and Niko Kranias got wind that the Camp Hill Commons strip mall was open for business, they realized that the Olive Oil Grille had found a home.

“We had evaluated various markets and chose Camp Hill Commons due to the large amount of businesses in the area, including hospitals and nursing homes,” John said.

## BLUE ZONE

The Kranias brothers are no strangers to the restaurant business, having learned at the side of their father, who owned a pizza shop in Gettysburg. When their dad retired, the sons took over for a time before selling the business, moving to Greece and operating a restaurant there.

“Living in Greece, we learned a lot about the Greek culture and Greek food in the Mediterranean region,” John said. “It was a great experience.”

He said that they learned about a region of the world called Ikaria, which is designated as a “blue zone.” For those unfamiliar with the term, a “blue zone” is a region of the world where people live longer than average, with diet being an essential part of a healthy lifestyle.

Upon returning to the states, the brothers moved to Mechanicsburg and set up shop in Camp Hill Commons as a fast-casual Mediterranean restaurant, implementing some of the concepts they had learned about in Greece.

The restaurant, which seats about 60, is open for lunch and dinner seven days a week. Customers queue up at the front and proceed forward, assembly-

line style, to build a bowl or fill a pita.

They start with a “base,” such as rice, arugula, a “power blend” of super foods (kale, brussels sprouts, radicchio and broccoli), or an “ancient grain mix” comprised of quinoa, lentils and pearl barley, mixed together with olive oil and salt. Dips and spreads like tzatziki, yogurt dill aioli, fire feta (spicy) and roasted red pepper hummus can be added, along with a protein like grilled chicken, pork or beef. Toppings are next, with choices such as herbed white beans or tomatoes and cucumbers. To top it all off, customers can choose one of six “finishes” like vinaigrette or white balsamic herb dressing.

If this seems complicated, it can be, especially for the first visit, but staff is always at the ready to walk customers through the myriad choices. The Kranias family also has their website set up to make pre-ordering easy.

“The combinations are practically endless,” said Niko, adding that there is something for nearly every diet, with keto, vegan, vegetarian and gluten-free choices.

Customers can rest assured that they won’t encounter a “deer in the headlights” look if they arrive with a series of questions. John’s wife Maryam sees to it that the staff is trained to know every detail for those with dietary restrictions.

## POSITIVE ENERGY

The owners pride themselves on the fact that no freezer, microwave or fryer is used in the making of their food.

Daily deliveries come from local purveyors like Strites Orchard, Bow Creek Farms and others to ensure fresh food, all the time. The restaurateurs are particularly proud of their olive oil, which hails from a 10-acre grove in Corinth, Greece, which they own with one of their cousins.

“We brought some in for the back of the house to use in our recipes and are thinking of importing some for sale in the restaurant,” John said.

A selection of seasonal soups is also available, like the hearty French lentil. Delicious, with plenty of flavor, it’s capable of laying to rest any preconceived notions that vegan, gluten-free soups are all bland.

Maryam, who is also the marketing director, pointed out that the mini pita kids’ meal also offers a choice of the aforementioned ingredients and has thus far been well received.

“One child was here eating and dancing, and the parent told me she only dances when she loves her food,” she said, with a laugh.

John DiMaggio, a Dillsburg resident, is another happy customer.

“I like it because there are so many options and, every time I’ve visited, I’ve had a good experience,” he said. “The quality is consistent and the staff is so friendly. I feel like I’m a valued customer, and it’s nice to have something to bring home to the family for dinner sometimes.”

Jeanne Edwards finds the restaurant conveniently located within walking distance from her home.

“I like the freshness of the foods they offer and the fact that it’s not microwaved,” she said. “They just do a wonderful job with the flavors.”

Edwards said that she especially enjoys the soups, the salad bowls, the specialty fountain drinks like blue raspberry lemonade and the staff.

“They are just really friendly,” she said.

The Kranias family said that they are very happy with the reception they’ve received from the community so far.

“I love cooking, and seeing the reaction from the people is what I like the most,” John said. “Just the other day someone said to me, ‘Thank you for being here.’ We work long hours, and that positive energy is what keeps us going.” **B**

*Olive Oil Grille is located at 71 Erford Rd., Camp Hill. To learn more, call 717-761-4455 or visit [www.oliveoilgrille.com](http://www.oliveoilgrille.com).*



## FOUR SCORE POUR

*After a Gettysburg ghost tour, you now can sample the spirits.*

BY STEPHANIE KALINA-METZGER

If it weren't for a certain series of events, Yianni Barakos may not have had the knowledge, or the impetus, to open the Mason Dixon Distillery.

He peppers the story with humor as he harkens back to his childhood describing a trip to Greece.

"I visited my grandparents' village as a kid, and I like to say that my heritage is hillbilly because you build what you need and you fix what you have," said Barakos.

The boy became intrigued as he observed his coppersmith grandfather tinkering with the community still.

"They would grow grapes and make their own wine and tsipouro," said Barakos, explaining that the strong, distilled spirit produced from the residue of the wine press is similar to Italian grappa.

While visiting, the 11-year-old Barakos decided to take notes about the distilling process, which he found fascinating.

"I'm pretty sure my grandfather knew what I had in mind and, at some point, he stopped answering my questions," Barakos said.

After he returned home, he decided to put into play some of the lessons he had learned, with results that could have been disastrous.

"I almost burned the house down," said Barakos, who fully expected to be scolded.

Instead, he was given a ride to Walmart, where his father purchased a hot plate and told him to keep it outside. Today, the two men work side-by-side as partners.

### GIVE IT BACK

Barakos didn't initially intend to make a living as an entrepreneur.

"I started as an assistant project manager in the construction field and was promoted to a junior project manager before my car accident, which kept me in bed for two years," he said, explaining that the trauma of the accident left him with a condition called "scapular dyskinesia," in which the brain stops firing muscles.

Barakos vowed not only to fight the condition but to work while doing so.

"The doctor tells me to prepare myself for a lifetime of pain," he said. "Right now, I'm the healthiest I've been, but

I have too many limitations to work for someone else."

In his quest for the perfect venue, Barakos came upon a former furniture factory located on E. Water Street in Gettysburg.

"The 10,000-square-foot warehouse was in terrible shape, but it spoke to me," he said.

His mother, laying eyes on the sprawling, dilapidated space, burst into tears.

"Give it back," she commanded.

He was drawn to the building due its 100-year-old history of furniture making and its importance providing work to the community.

"They took a raw material and turned it into a finished product, which is what we do," said Barakos, who contracts with a local Gettysburg farmer to grow the grain.

He chuckled reflecting back on his mother's reaction because she needn't have worried. With hard work and determination, he and his father George transformed the space into a state-of-the-art distillery with a large kitchen, an area for production of spirits and a welcoming restaurant and bar, with restored brick and a seating style modeled after a typical German beer hall.

Dave Spitzer met Barakos when the distillery was nothing more than a dream.

"When he told me about it, I thought it would be amazing if he could pull it off," said the Gettysburg resident, adding that Barakos and his father put an amazing amount of work into the two-year renovation project. "I figured it would be great for tourists to have something more to do than just tour the battlefield."

### BIG LOVE

The current liquor lineup is vodka, corn whisky, white rum, aged rum and spiced rum.

"We make cocktails for just about any palate, and all our mixers are made from scratch," Barakos said.

Additional offerings are in the pipeline. Mason-Dixon is partnering with Biglerville-based Hollabaugh Bros. fruit farm to produce a pear brandy. Rye whisky is also on the horizon.

"It's a big love of mine," said Barakos, who also features seasonal releases. "Our first-ever bourbon release sold out in 2½ days."

Spitzer suggested that customers may be pleasantly surprised if they're open to trying a spirit that they think they may not enjoy.

"He made a rum convert out of me, even though I prefer vodka," Spitzer said. "He got me to try a rum-and-coke, and I really enjoyed it. The rum is so flavorful and the coke machine pumps water out from the distillery, so you get the most amazing coke out of it."

As for food, Mason Dixon focuses on seasonality, with an ever-changing selection.

"We like to keep a small base menu, while running six to 10 specials every week," said Barakos.

A few constants are fried Brussels sprouts finished with honey, lemon drizzle and a dried fruit and nut relish, French fries with shredded short ribs, and poutine with homemade gravy. Spitzer recommends the Sunday brunch, with a favorite being the pastrami hash. Another popular brunch item, according to Barakos, is a pumpkin spice beignet with a cream cheese drizzle.

What you won't find are distractions.

"We installed sound panels to help absorb echo so that all you hear is the gentle roar of conversation," said Barakos. "There are no televisions, no open wi-fi, just great food, great drink and great conversation. I provide the first two and foster the atmosphere for the third."

Barakos said that, although he's resting a bit easier now that the bulk of the hard construction work is behind him, he's not going to quit creating and, like his grandfather, will continue to tinker.

"You could say I'm stubborn and that I have perseverance," he said. "One thing I refused to do, and that was give up. If I can be an inspiration to others, then that would be a life well lived." **B**

*The Mason Dixon Distillery is located at 331 E. Water St., Gettysburg. To learn more, call 717-398-3385 or visit [www.masondixondistillery.com](http://www.masondixondistillery.com).*



Christian DeLutis, center, and the team at Koda.

## TASTE TIMES TWO

*Koda, Newfangled offer a flavorsome collaboration.*

BY STEPHANIE KALINA-METZGER

Those of us who grew up with Italian grandmothers know what it's like to live in an environment where food is an expression of love.

We've seen firsthand the smiles a good meal elicits. So, it's no surprise that, as adults, we, too, are interested in creating a similar mood.

As a child, Christian DeLutis observed his grandmother creating praiseworthy meals from simple ingredients and soon learned that he was happiest behind a stove. His passion led him to the Pittsburgh Culinary Institute and, upon completion of the program, to top kitchens in Baltimore, Washington, D.C., and Ireland.

After spending years away from home, DeLutis decided that it was time to return to the area.

"Family is here," he said. "I missed home, and I wanted to bring here what I learned over the years."

Arriving back in central PA, he soon went to work with Tröegs Brewery in Hershey to develop their "snack bar." The project was so successful

that it created a national buzz, with magazines like "All About Beer" singing its praises, using words like "adventurous, forward thinking and experimental." After five years at Tröegs, DeLutis decided that it was time to move on, to take his career to the next level and become his own boss.

### SHARED & LOVED

Owning his own restaurant was a long-held dream for DeLutis, and he felt that the best way to execute his vision was to start from scratch.

He worked with locally based Yingst Homes to build his restaurant in an emerging planned community located just off Nyes Road between Locust Lane and Union Deposit Road in the Union Station development.

"We chose this area because it is not as tucked away as some planned communities," he said. "We are convenient to most locations on the East Shore, and there is a parking lot out back that accommodates 100 cars."

In a nod to his mother's pet name for him, DeLutis chose the Native American word, "Koda," for his eatery,

which means 'little bear.'

Upon walking into Koda, the dining room immediately stands out or, in current parlance, is "Instagram worthy."

An enormous, blue neon sign hangs over the open kitchen spelling out the restaurant name and its founding year in Roman numerals. The space, with its high ceiling and unfinished wainscoting, has an industrial vibe, with elements of Americana pulled from various decades.

Hobnail drinking glasses hail from the 1930s, and tufted booths evoke the steakhouses of the 1950s. One can almost picture the British model Twiggy perched on any one of the mod, white plastic chairs that complement rectangular tables of the same color.

As for the food, DeLutis describes it as "nostalgic" and explains that he considers it "vintage cuisine viewed beneath a modern lens." The made-from-scratch, Americana-inspired dishes include creative takes on comfort foods like Swedish meatballs (venison, currants, egg noodles, gravy), gnocchi (scallop, lobster,

fennel cream) and crispy duck leg (baked beans, barley, bacon, molasses).

Last month, Brenden Orth was one of the first customers to visit the restaurant, just days after it opened. He left praising the homemade pretzel rolls that arrived hot at the table topped with honey butter and the pork tenderloin served with bacon, red cabbage and dumplings.

“Everything was delicious and seasoned perfectly, and my wife thought her salmon was the best she’s ever had,” he said.

The couple made a point to save room for dessert, ordering apple pie and baked Alaska.

“We shared and loved both,” Orth said.

DeLutis attributes the early praise to a well-choreographed team.

“I make no decision without the other three chefs: the chef de cuisine, the pastry chef and the lead cook,” he said. “We all have to nod in agreement when making decisions.”

Through experience, he’s learned that a positive, supportive work environment is key to maintaining top-notch employees.

“I believe that will result in good food and good service,” he said. “We’re not trying to be pretentious here.”

#### FUN, APPROACHABLE

But good food isn’t the only reason to venture out to Koda. In a trend that’s becoming increasingly popular, the restaurant is partnering with a new brewery, which is located under the same roof.

Newfangled Brew Works opened just before Koda, but the timing worked out well. The two operations share about 12,000 square feet of space, but they’re technically separate. So, you can enjoy a craft beer in the casual brewery or slip into Koda for a great meal and cocktail.

Run by brew master Adam Cole, Newfangled prides itself on serving crisp, American-style beers. So, while you’ll find a solid IPA and wheat beer, you probably won’t be faced with anything on the bleeding edge of hoppy or sour.

Cole earned his beer bona fides at well-known breweries like Harrisburg-based Appalachian Brewing Co. and Victory Brewing Co. in Downingtown. He said that his degree in biotechnology has translated well into brewing, too. Then there was his experience as a bomb technician in the Air Force, which, he said, has helped him enter the tough world of business ownership.

“I learned not to sweat the small stuff,” he said, with a laugh.

For now, Cole anticipates turning out between 700 and 1,000 barrels annually, offering four standard beers, along with seasonal brews. Wines and spirits will also be available, as will casual fare like tacos, chicharrones and pork carnitas served from an on-site taco truck.

The brewery, which accommodates about 100 patrons, is meant to be an easygoing, fun experience, marked by live music and even party games like Jenga, Connect4 and Ping Pong.

The partnership between Koda and Newfangled enables patrons to enjoy a beer, cocktail or glass of wine at either one place or the other, or both. Even though Cole and DeLutis are running

each business separately, both are united in one goal: to foster socialization by creating a fun, approachable destination where everyone feels welcome. **B**

*Koda and Newfangled Brew Works are located at 8001 Union Station Blvd., Harrisburg (Lower Paxton Township). For more information, visit [kodabbg.com](http://kodabbg.com) and [newfangledbrew.com](http://newfangledbrew.com).*



*Newfangled Brew Works*



*Photos by Dani Fresh.*

# A BREW WITH A VIEW

*Hit the deck for a unique, scenic dining experience at Cold Springs.* | BY STEPHANIE KALINA-METZGER



**O**n a crisp autumn day, it's tough to beat a fine craft beer sipped out on the deck. And few decks in the region can compare with the one at the new Cold Springs Inn & Brewing Co., located directly above the Yellow Breaches Creek, about halfway between Dillsburg and Mechanicsburg.

Partners Chris Crowley and Dennis Mulroy may not have opened the business if it weren't for the permission to add the two-story deck.

"The fact that they allowed us to build it over the creek is what sealed the deal," said Crowley, explaining that the structure needed approval from the state Department of Environmental Protection. "The place ran as an inn during the early 1900s and, years ago, there was a lower deck, so the piers already existed, and we were grandfathered in."

He added that workers first had to put up netting to ensure that nothing fell into the creek.

"That is sacred ground there," he said, with a grin.

During the warmer months, the business attracts kayakers, so special accommodations have been made for them.

"We offer changing rooms, dryers and lockers where they can store their stuff," he said.

The Yellow Breaches is also famous for its fishing, and Crowley is hoping that families will come out to take advantage of it.

"The kids can fish from the lower deck, as long as they are supervised," he said.

Mulroy said he learned of the availability of the inn after bumping into the former owners, Brad and Barb Maxwell, who informed him that they would be selling the establishment.

"After 28 years, they were ready to retire," Crowley said.

After purchasing what some have referred to as a "dive bar," the two set to work.

In addition to building an upper and lower deck, the partners went to work renovating the interior. Among their many changes were ripping out a drop ceiling and adding wood floors, low- and high-top seating, a new bar, attractive lighting fixtures, flat-screen televisions and windows to transform what was once dark and gloomy to a space filled with natural light.

"There was not a window in the place," Crowley said.

The extensive work took about two years to complete.

"It took 12 months to rip it apart and another 12 to build it before we were ready to open in June of this year," Crowley said.

## ON THE MENU

The pair has been ramping up the food side of the business slowly, Crowley said.

Among the choices are pulled pork and pit beef sandwiches, along with a small selection of salads and finger foods like fried pickles, mozzarella sticks, tortilla chips and salsa and chicken fingers.

The greatest attraction, though, may be the inn's own craft beer.

The Maxwells sold their liquor license separately, so Cold Springs Inn now operates under a brewery license.

"Mom-and-pop joints are affected by the cost of liquor licenses, and they are being bought up by the supermarkets," said Crowley. "So, we decided to operate under a brewery license, which allows us to sell Pennsylvania beer, wine, cider and spirits."

The owners tapped award-winning brewers Kristen Richards and Steve Nott to take on the challenge. Nott had experience in home brewing and competing against others to hone his skills.

"I enter competitions primarily for the feedback," said Nott, who also worked at Bube's Brewery in Mount Joy.

Richards has also been active on the home-brew circuit, winning numerous awards over the years. She credits a friend for getting her started by buying her a home brew kit.

"It's how I got bit by the bug," she said.

The pair brews twice a week using a three-barrel system to keep up with demand.

"We have over nine beers on tap, including a stout on nitro, which helps to soften the beer on the palate, making it a little softer and creamier," Richards said.

Additional beers include an IPA, a hefeweizen, a pale ale, a Belgian saison and an interesting sounding habanero-based smoked wheat called an "endorphin enhancer."

Richards said that, when she started, she was relegated to learning by reading books.

"What's changed over the years is that more people are doing it," she said. "Now, I can have conversations with other brewers and get information from them on tips and tricks of the trade."

Both brewers like that their beers are being well received, even if it does mean maxing out the three-barrel system.

"We fill them as much as we can," Richards said.

Thus far, Crowley has hired some 40 people, mostly part-time, to keep things running smoothly. He added that business is brisk enough to rely on word-of-mouth advertising for now. As far as changes are concerned, he may tinker around the edges of the menu as the weather cools.

When asked what he enjoys most, Crowley said the answer is easy.

"It's the people," he said. "I just enjoy meeting new people and interacting with them." **B**

*Cold Springs Inn & Brewing Co. is located at 993 Park Pl., Mechanicsburg. For more information, call 717-790-9395 or visit [www.coldspringsinn.com](http://www.coldspringsinn.com).*

# FRUIT LOOP

*Shopping in circles at the Round Barn.*

BY STEPHANIE KALINA-METZGER

When you think of a barn, a certain type of structure almost certainly comes to mind—boxy, with a sloping roof and a huge front door.

It's probably not round.

But near Gettysburg, there is a unique structure that draws people from miles around.

The Historic Round Barn, otherwise known as the Noah Sheely barn, was built in 1914 and later purchased by the Knouse family, who converted it to a farm market and wedding venue.

According to Charles Leik, past president of the National Barn Alliance, round barns were built with efficiency in mind.

"If you look at a cow from above, you'll see that it's a wedge-shaped animal, so you could array this cow around a central feeding trough," he said. "You had your cows with the heads toward the silo and the business end in the larger circumference of the round barn."

Additional benefits included an open floor plan where farmers could work in a continuous direction unimpeded by posts supporting the building.

According to Leik, the round barn had its share of detractors.

"Your neighbors would probably give you a hard time for building something so unusual," he said. "And your local carpenter was probably not very excited to deal with an awful lot of geometry that he was unfamiliar with."

Another drawback was that the round barn was really only good for dairying. So, the farmer was locked into one business once the structure was built.

The popularity of round barns waned in the 1920s with the onset of prefabricated barns and the agricultural depression after the end of World War I.

## LOCALLY MADE

The Knouse family bought the barn more than three decades ago.

"They built it to house cows, horses and mules, and it stayed in the same family until we purchased it in 1984," said Kevin Knouse of Knouse Fruitlands, a multi-generational, family-owned orchard.



After a decade of renovations, the family opened the barn to the public and now operates it as a farm stand and wedding venue.

"We spent quite a bit of time doing work on the structure, which included replacing the roof," said Knouse, adding that the current roof needs to be replaced again, with estimates in the \$400,000 range. "It didn't last as long as we anticipated."

Those who visit the Historic Round Barn & Farmers Market today will not only find a large selection of produce, but other products. Some of the more popular items are sauces, spreads and salad dressings.

"Vendors make items like jellies and jams with our fruits," said Knouse. "We pull in a lot of locally made products that you can't find anywhere else."

## HISTORY, FOOD

Craig Nye often travels from Mechanicsburg to shop at the Round Barn. He said that, until his first visit, he had never seen a round barn, except in pictures.

"From an architectural standpoint, I find it interesting," he said.

Nye said that he is impressed with the selection he finds there—from the baked goods to the produce to the arts and crafts. He recommends that visitors climb the staircase to view the inside of the roof.

"It's interesting to see the upper part of the round barn from the inside," he said.

Nye also enjoys the petting zoo, which includes pygmy goats, horses and donkeys, and likes learning everything he can about the Lincoln Highway. He was happy to see a nod to the old route on the property.

"It's a painted gas pump that is one of many that were installed along the Pennsylvania portion of the Lincoln Highway in 2003," he said.

Julie Rudisill is another frequent customer.

"I love the architecture, the history and the pies, sauces and other homemade food," said the Lancaster resident. "Their barbecue sauces are also good, and the people are very friendly."

With the popularity of barn weddings, the Knouse family recognized the opportunity to turn the place into a wedding venue, hosting their first about 12 years ago.

"In the past eight years, we've done additional work to make it a marketable venue for a wedding," said Knouse, estimating that they average about 25 a year. "We offer the facility and rental items, and the families are responsible for everything else."

Their woodland wedding chapel is a popular addition.

"There's a view of the valley for miles, and we provide transportation from the barn to the wedding site," he said. "But it's within walking distance for those who prefer to walk."

According to Knouse, people generally learn about the business via word of mouth.

"We also draw a large crowd from the Gettysburg tourism area," he said.

Through all the challenges, including the expensive roof that looms large, Knouse said he loves what he does.

"Agriculture is a tough job, but being able to share my family's heritage and passion for fruit growing, while continuing the family legacy, is extremely rewarding," he said. **B**

*The Historic Round Barn & Farm Market is located at 298 Cashtown Rd., Biglerville. The farm stand opens the last weekend of April and runs seven days a week through October and weekends in November. To learn more, visit their website at [www.roundbarn.farm](http://www.roundbarn.farm).*

# SLICE OF TRADITION

*Smoke & Pickles carves out a place in Mechanicsburg.*

BY STEPHANIE KALINA-METZGER

**D**avid T. Mills has worn many culinary hats over the years. He started as a dishwasher at 16 years old and quickly worked his way up the ladder to become an executive chef at the tender age of 19.

He then worked in food service and as a culinary arts instructor, while pursuing a certificate in brewery science at Tröegs Independent Brewing in Hershey.

He's recently hit another milestone. Earlier this year, he opened Smoke & Pickles Artisan Butcher Shop & Kitchen, adding to the flavor of historic downtown Mechanicsburg, itself in the midst of a revival.

## ANCIENT PRACTICE

Many of Mills' ideas for his shop originated with trips to Italy, Spain and France, journeys that were both eye opening and inspiring, he said.

"We ventured into a small town in Chianti in the Tuscany region [of Italy] called Panzano, where we visited a butcher shop," he said. "It was an extremely busy place, and the butcher was blasting AC/DC as he handed me a water glass full of Chianti."

It turned out that the butcher was the renowned Dario Cecchini, who's been featured on many food programs, including in the Netflix documentary series, "Chef's Table."

Cecchini is an eighth-generation butcher, committed to doing his job in the traditional way. For instance, he uses all parts of the animal—an ancient skill that has been passed on through the family. This resonated with Mills' sense of sustainability.

"When I returned to the states, I realized how broken the food system was," he said.

His newfound knowledge led him to try to make changes in his small corner of the world in central Pennsylvania. He now serves on the board of the LEAF (leadership, education and farming) project in Carlisle, whose mission is to cultivate youth leaders through meaningful work in the food system. He also joined the nonprofit American Culinary Federation, where he currently serves as president.

"That [affiliation] gave me the opportunity to dive into what was next," he said.

He's since run into his Italian butcher/mentor stateside, as Cecchini has appeared at York's Pullo Center, hosted by Caputo Brothers Creamery.

"I got wind that the same butcher I observed in Italy was slated to break down a hog on stage, while playing AC/DC, of course," said Mills, with a chuckle.

## LOCALLY SOURCED

Mills' first task at Smoke & Pickles was to remodel the space on Market Street to accommodate several meat cases, a work area and a separate eatery, which includes seating for 27 customers.

Products for sale include pre-marinated steaks, roasts, farm fresh eggs, sausages, stocks, burgers, beef, pork, bacon, chicken, turkey, guinea fowl and duck, to just name a few items.

Those who prefer to dine onsite can choose from a variety of handhelds served on homemade rolls. Popular choices are the "Screamin' Eagle," prepared with boneless fried chicken, house-made sauce and slaw, and the "The Mechanicsburger," made with ground beef and bacon and served with Bibb lettuce, red onion, garlic aioli and a fried tomato. "The Smoker," another much-ordered option, features pulled pork, house barbecue sauce and slaw.

Customers can usually find Mills working onsite in the food preparation area. Both he and his staff are available to answer questions about the provenance of the products that he showcases each week.

"I visited every single farm," he said, speaking about his products. "It is important for me to see how the animals are raised. You can tell how they are cared for, and, if you can smell the farm when you get there, they are not doing things how they should be."

It's also important to Mills that antibiotics are kept to a minimum.

"Most of them don't use any," he said, adding that he knows of one farm on his list of purveyors that has administered just four shots in the past decade. "That's a testament to how he cares for the animals."

Candace Bordner was one of the first customers to visit Smoke & Pickles. The Mechanicsburg resident, who dined onsite, said that she was impressed with the quality of ingredients used for food preparation and the fact that all the products are sourced ethically and sustainably.

"I love that they list where everything is from," she said.

Owen Bower, Jr., drove from Halifax to purchase a bone-in prime rib for Easter and, while there, also bought pickles and a dry-aged, grass-fed tomahawk steak.

"My girlfriend lives in Mechanicsburg, and we were waiting for it to open," he said. "I like the fact that everything is local. It's worth the splurge."

For Mills, opening an artisan butcher shop is the culmination of a dream, and he's delighted that it has been received so enthusiastically.

"I'm just happy to revive the cozy, reputable, neighborhood butcher shop that meets all the traditional standards of the past, while breathing creative new life into the locally sourced food movement," he said. 



*Smoke & Pickles Artisan Butcher Shop is located at 30 S. Market St., Mechanicsburg. Learn more by visiting their Facebook page or calling 717-795-4852.*

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