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Consistency is key to success at Brickyard, with BBC events



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been using Southern Pride smokers for 20 years. And we still have the original one. It's still working – knock on wood (laughs)!”

Serving the best barbecue, Bryan said, “I think a lot has to do with consistency of our product over the years. We haven’t changed. We haven’t, in the era of COVID, done the ‘shrinkflation’ thing. We’ve stuck with our sizes, proportions, our recipes. I think that’s what’s paid off for us.”

Matthews said, “We haven’t changed. Our house rub, our barbecue sauce recipe, everything is from day one. Credit Randy Hagar for coming up with all those recipes, our old chef from Tin Pan. He was the creator of all those recipes still used to this day.”

Bryan said, “I think that has a lot to do with it. We weren’t all over the board, changing product, changing sizes, looking for a different this or that. It’s consistency.”

Outside of the kitchen, Bryan said, “We have a lot of staff that’s been here 18-20 years. They’ve been great to us. I think the locals in the community also like to see that. They know them; they’re comfortable with them; they keep coming back.”

GM Steve Matthews said, “As far as customers coming in, they, in my opinion, almost want to feel like part of something. You’d be very hard-pressed to come in here, on any given day, at least six days a week, and not see Eric bus-ing tables or wiping something down; Ken working behind the bar; I’m hopping out of the kitchen here and there.”

Eric said, “Being here and working it has actually helped us out. You see all the successful places in town: Ken and Ed down at the Griffin, they’re working. Ken’s in the kitchen. Ed’s bartending. If you’re not there to be with your patrons, or at least say ‘Hi’ here and there, they’re not going to be loyal customers. They’re just going to be another face in the crowd.”

Banquets at BBC

Next door at the Brickyard Brewing Company, the focus has shifted to banquets. The two-story building was rebuilt and reopened in 2021 following a fire in 2020. But the pandemic, labor and supply shortages have prevented the



In front of the patio bar at the Brickyard are, from left, Steve Matthews, Eric Matthews and Ken Bryan.

restaurant from offering daily dining.

Bryan said, “It’s an evolving philosophy. We’re still short on kitchen help.”

He added, “Right now, we’re doing pizza and appetizers. Small fare Thursday, Fridays and Saturdays, trying to maximize our days of the week.”

The banquet facility, on the other hand, is available – and booking – seven days a week.

Matthews said, “Since the get-go, the whole top floor is all about banquets, and even downstairs. And we’ve converted our old brewery space into a smaller banquet facility for meetings. So, we’re getting a lot more smaller parties. If you have to have a meeting for 25 people, it’s a perfect room. It’s sealed off. It’s perfect.”

“Banquets drive 50%-75% of the sales over there, and then we’re open Thursday, Friday, Saturday, just because, during the week-days, it’s a lot to try to staff. We could probably pull it off, but it’s too much. We kind of learned from COVID to kind of focus our efforts on how you can run it the best, and that’s how we kind of figured it out right now. It might change in the future.”

Bryan said, “We hope that next year (it can change). We see a big influx of business this summer compared to last summer.

“Next year we’d like to be open a little bit more, if all goes well.”

BBC has become a go-to destination for special occasions and

corporate gatherings, Matthews said, because “it really has to do with quality of service and food. We do plated. We’re doing a wedding this weekend: 130 people, plated dinner. We can do everything. Everything is homemade. And we don’t just microwave it and send it out.”

Bryan said, “We’re booking weddings two, three years down the road. It’s amazing, the banquet business we’re doing.”

“It’s not only banquet business in-house; we do a tremendous amount outside the building. Graduation parties – we probably did 100 graduation parties in the last two months.”

The Brickyard team planned to serve 900 people spread across two events this past Wednesday.

Matthews quipped, “A lot goes on behind the scenes. That’s why Ken’s rubbing ribs for us!”

To learn more about BBC banquets, contact Brittani Jackel at 716-344-6946.

Bryan said, “We do barbecue to steak and lobster. A lot of our high-end banquets upstairs, we do filet.”

Of course, the BBC also is known throughout Western New York for its ample assortment of homemade, uniquely named pale ales, IPAs, lagers, pilsners, stouts and porters.

Find more details and a full menu online at <https://www.brickyardpub.com/>. The Brickyard is located at 432 Center St., while the BBC is at 436 Center St.

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