



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Timothy M. Kennedy

Small Business Spotlight: O'Brien's Farm Fresh Meats and Smokehouse

TIMOTHY M. KENNEDY June 30, 2011

| ISSUE: **SMALL BUSINESS, CONSTITUENTS CORNER**



Senator Kennedy's Small Business Spotlight: O'Brien's Farm Fresh Meats and Smokehouse

Fast Facts:

- **Business name:** O'Brien's Farm Fresh Meats & Smokehouse
- **Owned by:** Patrick & Yvette O'Brien

- **Website:** www.obriensmeats.com
- **Address:** 32 Main St. Hamburg, N.Y. 14075
- **Phone:** (716) 646-6328
- **Business history:** December 2010; July 2006
- **Customer favorite:** Beef jerky, oven-roasted roast beef sandwich
- **Advice for businesses:** “Make sure you are committed and you work hard.”

Dreams can come true. Just ask Yvette O'Brien, owner of O'Brien's Farm Fresh Meats and Smokehouse.

Wanting to own her own restaurant since she was 19 years old, Yvette finally made her dream happen when she was 40 with the grand opening of O'Brien's Pub in July 2006.

Yvette and her husband, Patrick O'Brien, have been in the feed mill business for 25 years. When the O'Brien's opened up their own restaurant they wanted to sell local farm-raised beef. The O'Brien's get their all-natural and hormone-free meat from a farm in North Collins. After the remarkable feedback they received from their customers, they decided to sell their products at the Hamburg farmers' market. With an even greater positive response at the farmers' market, the O'Brien's decided to open their own smokehouse.

“People absolutely love to know where their food is coming from,” Yvette said.

All-natural, home-grown

O'Brien's Farm Fresh Meats and Smokehouse opened in the village of Hamburg on December 22, 2010, and it has already come a long way. They sell many different products – Yvette's favorites being the smoked salmon, smoked cheeses and the chicken-feta-spinach sausage. Yvette said her customers love their five different kinds of jerky: hillbilly, Appalachian, BBQ, turkey teriyaki or teriyaki.

“The extremely good quality of our food and our competitive prices makes us stand out from others,” said Yvette.

O'Brien's smokehouse offers all-natural beef products, daily lunch specials, homemade soups, a variety of smoked cheeses, fish, sausage and turkey, as well as other meats like pork and chicken. They also offer Friday night dinners and will soon be expanding their dinner menu for Thursdays and Saturdays.

Giving back

Yvette says the thing she loves most about her customers is the “family feel”.

“We get a lot of regulars and people who live in the village. Everyone is very community-orientated,” said Yvette.

Not only are their customers community-orientated, but the O'Brien's are extremely involved in the community as well.

Yvette is a board member of the Boys and Girls Club of Eden, a member of the Eden Foundation, a member of the Hamburg Chamber of Commerce, a member of the Village Business Advisory Council of Hamburg, and her husband, Pat O'Brien is the president of the Eden Chamber of Commerce.

“I love getting involved and giving back,” Yvette said.

Word spreading fast

Although the smokehouse sees familiar faces, Yvette says a lot of out-of-towners have been making their way to the smokehouse to see what they have to offer.

“People from West Seneca, Clarence, Cheektowaga, et cetera have been coming in,” Yvette said. “It’s been wonderful.”

Yvette loves owning her own business.

“I love the freedom of putting ideas into action, the flexibility and working with our employees. We have a lot of team spirit,” she said.

Connecting with customers

Her favorite part about her business is connecting with her customers.

“I love the people, and I love telling them about our products and how to prepare them.”

It seems the only small bump in the road for Yvette was getting the building finished.

“Everyone was wonderful in helping us get this up and running,” Yvette said, “but it took longer than we wanted.”

One of her biggest priorities right now is finishing the outside of the building.

“It looks like we are under construction,” Yvette said. “I feel some customers think we are not open when we really are open.”

The future

Yvette has future plans in store for the recently opened smokehouse.

One goal is to start selling other local farm-raised meat such as chicken and pork. Another goal is to expand.

“We own three store fronts and two are currently vacant,” Yvette said. “Right now we are not sure if we are going to expand or rent them out.”

With plans are in the works, Yvette sees her business “flourishing” in ten years.

“My daughter has been getting involved and I would love to keep it family owned,” she said.

Advice for other business owners

Opening up O’Brien’s Pub and the smokehouse wasn’t easy for Yvette and her husband.

“You should surround yourself around good people,” Yvette said. “We hired people who were very familiar with the business, and we hired a professional butcher.”

Although she has only been her own boss for a handful of years, she does have advice for others who may be looking into opening up their own business.

“Make sure you are committed and you work hard,” Yvette said.

Yvette and Patrick O'Brien do exactly that – and that is why their businesses have found such success.