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Author says Barberton chicken rooted in tradition, memory

Karla Tipton
Herald Staff Writer

When Eastern European immigrants came for the manufacturing jobs in Barberton, the first flag they planted was food. At that moment, the groundwork for a new local tradition also began, said Ron Koltnow, whose new book, “Barberton Fried Chicken: An Ohio Original,” is scheduled for publication Nov. 19 by The History Press of Charleston, South Carolina.

In an interview with the Herald, he said, “I believe that Barberton has something available that exists nowhere else, outside of Serbia and Croatia.”

Based on Eastern European recipes, the Barberton chicken dinner is a combination of ingredients, preparation, and the hot sauce and coleslaw side dishes, that creates a dining experience greater than the sum of its parts, transcending the restaurant that serves it.

Koltnow’s mission in writing the book is to spread the word about the taste of the chicken, specific to the Barberton restaurants. “That is my biggest goal in life.”

During the writing of this book, he has made an effort to find a restaurant outside of the city that serves similar fried chicken. “I have not found one,” he said. “One



Ron Koltnow

of my deep regrets is that (food and travel documentarian) Anthony Bourdain passed away before he could try Barberton chicken.”

“It’s the technique, more than herbs and spices,” he said. “It’s the combination of cooking it low and slow to give it that fabulous crust that binds the juice

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Norton lean-to must go

Jim Eritano
Herald Staff Writer

The Norton Board of Zoning and Building Appeals denied Karl Parsons’ application for a variance.

Parsons requested a variance for a lean-to on his Rockcut Road property. A lean-to is a shack or shed supported at one side by posts. The lean-to is already built and is attached to a garage he built in 2014. The addition of the lean-to brought the total storage area on the property to more than 1,600 square feet, well over the 1,280 square feet the building code allows for a lot of that size.

Several owners of adjoining properties spoke

against granting the variance at the Oct. 16 meeting. Commenters were more upset with how the storage is used than by the fact that it exists. Parsons’s hobby is working on cars and trucks. He takes working parts from non-working vehicles and either uses those parts to repair another or stores the parts under the lean-to. Over time, the accumulation of parts and vehicles has outgrown the structure and crept out onto the property. Neighbors say it is an eyesore.

The city noticed there was no building permit issued for the structure after complaints from several neighbors to the zoning board and at large

council member Charlotte Whipkey, who addressed the board.

Whipkey said she has gotten 13 complaints from four people. Of those complaints, Whipkey said nine of them came from one person, and one was from a person who wanted to remain anonymous.

Steven Kennedy, whose backyard faces Parsons’s, asked about the nonworking vehicles on the property. “It looks dump,” he said. “How can someone have all those cars and parts and so on, with no licenses on any of them?” Kennedy asked.

Zoning Inspector Bill Braman said he has paid several visits to the property (See LEAN-TO, Page 14)

Machine technology equals jobs

Students in Mr. David Clark’s Machine Technology program at Barberton High School continue to see abundant job opportunities.

After spending their junior year learning in the machine lab, most of Clark’s seniors are employed in the field.

Machine Technologies is offered at BHS for students from Barberton, Copley, Norton, and Wadsworth through the Four Cities Compact.



COURTESY PHOTO/ Joseph Vernacotola

Machine technology students already employed include, front row: Chase Sarver, SFS Intec and Jacob Bing, Akron Electric. Back row: Brooke Christie, Schaeffler Group; Marshall Moore, Schaeffler Group; Austin Berlesky, Akron Electric; Aidan Wade, Timken; Kyle Haynes, SFS Intec; Preston Matusiak, Akron Foundry. With them is instructor David Clark. Not pictured Danny Miller, Akron Electric.

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Community Correspondent

We are so grateful to those who have helped our group by participating in our events and/or donating to our treasury for programs held or planned for the future.

The Mum Fest Book Sale was well-attended and successful from both a financial and membership standard. We netted \$1789.15 and registered 10 new members.

We're ready for more donations for our next sale, the first floor book cart and our four Little Free Libraries. Bring books, CDs, DVDs, etc. to the library during regular office hours. Thanks to all who gave in donation jars at the book sale and at Kave where we raised \$440.

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Speak (Continued from Page 7)

do certain things, so they take it out on someone by picking on their peers.

He closed his presentation with a video of an Olympic athlete who sustained a hamstring injury during his run. The video showed his father's act of kindness as he helped him finish the race. The video demonstrated to students the importance of helping when they see their peers going through a rough time. Wells encouraged students to never give up on themselves and to follow the examples made in the video.

Students followed School Resource Officer Marty Eberhart outside to the Mobile Community Access and Response Center RV where he addressed cyber bullying and the harmful effects they cause.

"The last thing you want to do is to say something negative about someone online and then come to school the next day and find out that person you said something about took their own life," said Eberhart.

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Author (Continued from Page 8)

to the meat." Barberton's restaurants rely on Amish and Mennonite farms for fresh, not frozen, chicken, which contributes to the flavor.

Over the years, this exemplary flavor has not been lost on the diners who love it. Koltnow notes that on Mother's Day 1969, the five existing chicken houses served more than 25,000 dinners in a city of 36,000.

As for his favorite restaurant? "All chicken restaurants are equal in my eyes," he said with a chuckle.

Koltow devotes a chapter to each of the city's chicken restaurants, even some no longer in existence. Looked at in depth are Belgrade Gardens, Hopocan Gardens, White House, Terrace Gardens, Village Inn and Macko's.

The book also includes chapters on the history of Barberton and its founder O.C. Barber. He hopes these chapters "urge people to look at their own small towns and dig up some of the history, to find out the major things that happened there."

Kenmore (Continued from Page 7)

at hand. Jim Ballard talked about the changes being wrought by revitalization efforts and provided the first music, followed by singer/guitarist Chris Miller. James "Jamie" Keaton gave a heartfelt spoken word poetry reading, "The Life of the Black and Queer," describing the experience of living with dual identities, "both of which people want to closet." Katie Beck talked about her experiences in ethnically diverse North Hill, underscoring that shared stories can pave the way for greater understanding.

The multiethnic Gum Dip Theater troupe verbally and visually portrayed inclusive and exclusive behaviors and their contrasting effects. Williamson did double duty, introducing each act and performing an a cappella hip-hop rap with a positive message. Writer Yoly Miller told how a friend and mentor helped her realize "I was making myself the uninvited guest," which prompted her to come out of her shell. The final performer of the day, singer-songwriter and guitarist Angie Haze, brought the audience to its feet with a chant, "I am...you are...enough," affirming the worth of each of us just the way we are. Paraphrasing Yoly, to create a change for the better, we need to acknowledge what is wrong while highlighting what is good. If Saturday's event is any indication, this Akron neighborhood is committed to a revitalization of the spirit as well as an upgrade to the infrastructure.

"This is who we are now," says Kenmore community organizer Angela Miller, and she is going to make sure everyone gets the memo.