

June 30, 2010

Trumbull Locker still smoking after 73 years...

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TRUMBULL TOWNSHIP — When people hear the name Trumbull Locker, they immediately think of “smokies.”

“Smokies have definitely been the backbone of this business, they are all done right here and are the main draw for the business,” said Mark Kovacic Jr., who manages the Trumbull Locker, located at 3393 Route 534.

The smokies are all made from an old family recipe utilizing the two old fashioned smoke houses that smoke with real hickory logs. Trumbull Locker sells eight varieties of smokies and jerky.

“People come here from out-of-state because of our smoked meats,” Kovacic said. “We sell so much, we cannot keep up.”

Mark Kovacic Jr. understands what it takes to run a successful family-owned and operated business: hard work, long hours and a love for the customers.

“I started doing small jobs at age 13 and was trained as a meat cutter by my dad and uncle, I eventually worked my way up to manager,” Kovacic said.

Kovacic’s father, Mark Kovacic Sr., and his uncle Chris Kovacic co-own the Trumbull Locker that has been a mainstay in the Trumbull Township community since 1947.

Rose and Jerry Lukes first began the Trumbull Locker 73 years ago. In the early 1970s Mark Kovacic Jr.’s grandfather, Ozzie Nelson, took over the business.

“My grandpa got my dad and uncle to come and work with him and they have both been here for 35 years,” Kovacic said.

Mark Kovacic Sr. and Chris Kovacic took over as co-owners in 1988.

“We have a friendly family atmosphere where everyone knows everybody,” said Cindy Kovacic, who is Mark Sr. and Chris’s sister.

“We really appreciate all of the locals who have supported us all of these years.”

In recent years, the Trumbull Locker has experienced some major expansions and renovations to keep up with the demands.

“In our retail store area we now have 13 freezer doors and 70 feet of shelf space,” Mark Jr. said. “We now offer a full line of deli meats and cheeses, local wines, produce, fresh meat, convenience items, grocery freezer foods, snacks, a full line of dairy products and more.”

Six years ago, the Kovacics moved the meat cutting area to the back and added huge storage coolers to accommodate not only beef and pork sides, but the growing deer processing business.

“We are the biggest in the state for deer processing, we handle between 1,800 and 2,000 deer each year,” said Mark Kovacic Sr.

The processing part of the business includes beef, pork and lamb.

“A lot of our business is from local farmers, and all of our meat is hormone and additive free,” Mark Jr. said.

Amazingly, the recent economic climate has not affected business at the Trumbull Locker.

“We are right up to last year’s numbers, we have remodeled our store, and we are out in the middle of nowhere, but the amount of people who find us is amazing,” Mark Jr. said. “We just scratch our heads and wonder where they all come from.”

The Trumbull Locker offers many meat package deals, including customized, at affordable prices. They will custom cut or grind meat to order.

Hours are 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday - Saturday; 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sunday. For more information call 440-474-4631.