

BARBECUE: THE BUSINESS

Familiar face uses social media to land deal

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Back in the early 2000's no competition team was any hotter than Paradise Ridge out of Nashville, TN. They racked up 18 different State Championships and two World Championships between 2000-2005. In 2002 the *National Barbecue News* even named the Caterer of the Year as they vended almost every event they competed in. In 2005 they backed away from the competition world to open a restaurant in Nashville.



PHOTO BY KELL PHELPS

Paradise Ridge rub.

I had not heard much from the Paradise Ridge crew until I decided to help Tommy Houston and his Checkered Pig crew at the Best of the West Ribfest in 2012. There I got the opportunity to see Charlie Babb, who was the main pit boss of the Paradise Ridge team, as he was there helping Tommy as well. Funny how Charlie had not changed much and was wide open as usual. It was great to catch up with him and hear everything that he had been doing since their competition run.

A few weeks ago I was talking with Charlie and he was telling about a new deal they had landed with Camping World. Turns out they are now selling their World Championship BBQ Rub in every location from coast to coast. As Charlie told me more details about how this deal got started I felt it was a story that needed to be shared.

Most of us all understand that the social media revolution is a very valuable resource if used correctly to promote just about anything that is sold. The problem for me is learning how to balance so many different opportunities that exist and still get my daily chores done. Seems as though I am not the only person who struggles with this situation.

Charlie explained to me that he only uses three social media sites and uses his down time in the evenings to keep a consistent presence on all of them. I have to agree with this approach simply because I have tried most sites, but seem to run out of time to keep a steady presence on all of them. At one time I was trying to market this publication on 10 different sites and did a very poor job of keeping up with any comments or interaction that came from them. Since then I have turned my focus to keeping two major sites up to date and checking in on them daily. Charlie said "these networking opportunities are priceless" and we totally agree with him. He also told us that if he had been trying to keep up with too many social media sites he would have no doubt missed this awesome opportunity.

If you are trying to promote using these very powerful tools I would suggest the same exact pattern unless you have enough time to devote to all of



PHOTO SUBMITTED BY CHARLIE BABB
Charlie Babb continues to serve up great barbecue in Nashville and is once again pushing his award winning Paradise Ridge BBQ Rub.

them. Charlie's story is proof that most opportunities happen because of who you know and not what you know. The fact that any of the social media sites can help you promote any product or service is fact, but the trick is finding which one fits you the best and working on it every single day because you never know who is looking or what they are looking for.

For those who have used the Paradise Ridge products in the past can now find them in several places including Amazon.com and on their website at www.paradiseridgecatering.com. The label has changed, but Charlie sent us a sample and I will attest that it is the same great rub that it has always been.

Pig Boards prove to be handmade works of art

By National Barbecue News Cooking Crew

A few weeks ago, we received a few cutting boards from our friends at www.pigcuttingboards.com as they wanted us to review them and give our thoughts about their products. Upon arrival of the heavy package, we knew right away these were not your average cutting boards as the package of three boards was very heavy which proved to us they were solid. After opening them up, we were all impressed by their simple beauty.

We have always been a fan of creative projects that coincide with our barbecue habit, but these very useful tools are no doubt works of art, too! The three boards we got to try out were all different sizes, with the biggest (Poppa) board being 1-3/4" thick by 12" high. The middle sized board (Momma) was 1-3/8" thick by 8-1/2" high. The smallest board (baby) measured up at 1" thick by 5" high.



The Original Pig Cutting Board family started in 1981. While living on Toland Farm in Wynnwood, PA, Tom Gallagher started making these hard maple pig cutting boards for friends and family. The first pigs came from a large sugar maple tree he cut down on the McFarland estate in Wynnwood just before the property was developed. Now over 30 years later, they are a husband-wife team making these same pigs. Tom hand selects every piece of lumber that goes into making these pigs from the finest hardwood available. Each pig is hand cut, hand sanded and hand filed, and then a coat of mineral oil is applied by hand. All of their pigs are made with love and care - one by one.

We had a hard time breaking these boards in as we used them simply because they are so well crafted and look so good. At one point, we found ourselves being gentle with the knife so we wouldn't scratch them, but we quickly realized while cutting up ribs just how hard the wood actually is as no scratches were found at all after our test slab was cut. We also liked the idea of having several different sizes as we are always cutting different items, and the choice of sizes really saves on counter space when working with smaller items. There is no doubt that we will be using these beautiful boards for many years to come.

You can find more info about these amazing works of useful art at www.pig-cuttingboards.com.

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