

RIBS

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weekend's Ribs, Rods 'n Roll had a unique quality that was obviously popular among hungry visitors to downtown Vermillion Saturday. They didn't mind standing in line to wait for a serving hot off the grill.

The flavors brought to the meat by the Wham Seasoning and the slow smoking process were savory and unlike typical examples of barbecue in the Midwest.

"I teach a lot of barbecue classes, having learned a lot from my uncle, and basically, the reason you have a lot of different flavor profiles throughout the barbecue belt in the country goes back 200 years ago to what grew in the fields," Jon said, "and what types of trees they cut down."

"If you go out to North Carolina, you're going to taste a little vinegar, and you're going to taste a sweeter smoke from the apple," he said. "If you go down into South Carolina, there's a mustard-based sauce. If you go to Kansas City, you're going to taste more of a sweet sauce, because way back, the reason they were driving cattle into Kansas City to hop on those trains was because there was a plethora of sorghum in the fields. Sorghum is the base ingredient for molasses. There's a reason for everything."

Jon grew up in Memphis, and said barbecue is "in his blood," as he surrounded by great cooks and great food.

"I grew up with my uncle's cooking and my mom's a great cook," he said.

Ribs, Rods and Rock 'n Roll kicked off Friday, Sept. 9 in downtown Vermillion with live music, food and beer. Also getting the festivities off to a grand start Friday at 5 p.m. were performances by the Old Funk Riot Band, followed by music by the Autumn Road Band and Main Avenue Warehouse, an eight-piece band with horns.

Saturday's activities began



Lead singer Kory Van Sickle connects with the audience Saturday night as the performance by Sioux Falls-based band Kory and the Fireflies closed out another successful two-day Ribs, Rods & Rock 'n Roll festival in Vermillion. Ribs, Rods & Rock 'n Roll is a Kansas City BBQ Society (KCBS)-sanctioned event that has been held annually in the community for seven years.

(Photo by David Lias)

with the Eagle Rider Charity Poker Run breakfast at 9:30 a.m.

Judging of the South Dakota BBQ championship will be held from noon to 2 p.m., and the Dakota Classic Cruisers Car and Cycle Show and Shine was held in downtown Vermillion from noon to 4 p.m.

The 2011 Ribs, Rods & Rock 'n Roll concluded Saturday night with a concert performance by Kory and the Fireflies.

Jon began learning more and more about what it takes to be successful in the

barbecue business when he began helping his uncle operate Willingham's World Championship BBQ in 1992.

"He's one of five men who are living today that are inducted into the Barbecue Hall of Fame," Jon said.

He turned his attention, once again, to the Wham Turbo Cooker, as he still had many hungry people to feed.

"I have 100 slabs of pork ribs in here, and those were cooked with hickory wood," Jon said. "The first step was to put on the Wham Seasoning, our dry rub, on the fresh meat, and we let that sit, and

then we rubbed it into the meat and let it marinate overnight. That flavored and tenderized the meat."

He then put the slabs of ribs into the turbo cooker at about 2 p.m. Saturday. "And it's almost 9 p.m., so they're ready to hit the grill."

He was happy to see people waiting, even as late as 9 p.m., to sample some Willingham's barbecue.

"Our mission is to share some really great barbecue with as many people as we can," Jon said. "We travel the country. I just came 1,900 miles from Reno, NV last

weekend, and tomorrow I'm heading to Tulsa."

Willingham's also abides by a unique calling that is just as and perhaps even more important than the corporate one he cited above.

"Our personal mission is to bring a little joy and fellowship into people's lives," Jon said. "Barbecue is just the mechanism."

Willingham's didn't make it to last year's Ribs, Rods and Rock 'n Roll after participating two years ago.

"We're glad to be back. We love Vermillion. The people here are just great," Jon said.

As he talked, a live band played nearby under the Hy-Vee Entertainment Tent. The night was pleasantly warm and still, with stars and a bright moon shining down on streets filled with people enjoying the entertainment, the food and each other's company.

"What a beautiful evening in South Dakota," Jon said. "You couldn't ask for anything better. There's great music and a lot of fun people."

"The stars are aligned tonight," he said. "We're so glad to be here."

Junior Achievement of Vermillion announces 2011-12 board members

Junior Achievement of Vermillion is proud to announce that Ric Rasmussen, Rasmussen Motors is serving as the board chair for 2011-2012.

Kevin Haselhorst, First Dakota National Bank was recently elected to the JA Vermillion Board.

Other members serving on the board include: Shannon Fairholm, Vermillion School Board; Dr. Mark Froke, Vermillion School District; Will Kennedy, Clay County Extension Office; Scott Munger, PrintSource; Cinda Passick, Jolley Elementary; Paul Preister, Bank of the West; John Prescott, City of Vermillion; Lynne Roach, University of South Dakota; Layne Stewart, Clay County Emergency Management; Craig Thompson, Thompson Law; Alexis Tracy,

Union County State Attorney's Office and Dr. Mel Ustad, Governor's Office of Economic Development. The Junior Achievement of Vermillion Board was established in 2004.

Over 25 JA volunteers from the Vermillion business community entered 14 classrooms in the Vermillion

School Districts during the 2010-11 school year. These classroom volunteers served as role models and taught nearly 300 students about personal finance, entrepreneurship, and work readiness using hands-on activities to supplement standard classroom curricula.

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