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NEWS, 6A

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‘WE WOULD LOVE TO SEE YOU’



Owner Derek Johnson cuts meat at the SmokeOut BBQ restaurant in Pickerington on Nov 13.
PHOTOS BY DORAL CHENOWETH/COLUMBUS DISPATCH

SmokeOut BBQ restaurant owner’s heartfelt plea for customers fuels resurgence

Nathan Hart Columbus Dispatch | USA TODAY NETWORK

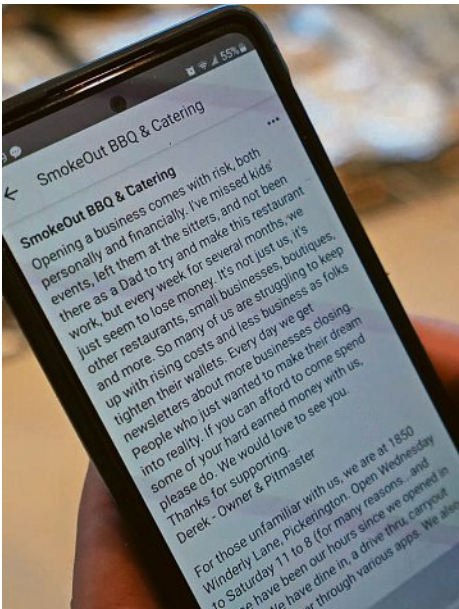
A Pickerington barbecue restaurant has seen a dramatic resurgence in business due to a heartfelt social media post its owner made in late October. • Business at SmokeOut BBQ, 1850 Winderly Lane, had been flat or in the negative for six weeks. Wedding catering opportunities, which normally pick up in the fall, were sparse. Owner Derek Johnson was having to dip into his line of credit. • And so, he turned to social media, posting Oct. 26 on Facebook and Instagram, outlining his business’ recent trouble.

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“Every day we get newsletters about more businesses closing. People who just wanted to make their dream into reality. If you can afford to come spend some of your hard earned money with us, please do.

We would love to see you.”

Derek Johnson Owner of SmokeOut BBQ



Owner Derek Johnson shows his Instagram post asking for more customers at his SmokeOut BBQ restaurant in Pickerington on Nov 13. The post worked; Johnson said the business is thriving again.

Ohio House and Senate members vote for release of Epstein files

Anthony Shoemaker and Haley BeMiller

State Bureau

USA TODAY NETWORK

Nearly all of Ohio’s members of Congress voted to release the Jeffrey Epstein files on Nov. 18.

The Epstein Files Transparency Act would require the federal government to publicly release as much information as possible about the late accused sex trafficker.

The final House vote was 427-1. The lone no vote came from Republican Louisiana Rep. Clay Higgins. Ohio Rep. Michael Rulli, R-Salem, was one of five members who did not cast a vote.

“Today, I voted to support the full release of the Epstein files because the American people deserve transparency, and the victims deserve justice,” said Rep. Troy Balderson, R-Zanesville.

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Ohio bill would boost penalties for motorists under these conditions

Nancy Molnar

Canton Repository

USA TODAY NETWORK

Motorists can face a fine if they refuse to identify themselves to police during traffic stops in Ohio.

Now, two state lawmakers want to bump up the penalty to include potential jail time for not cooperating.

Reps. Sharon Ray, R-Wadsworth, and Cindy Abrams, R-Harrison, have introduced House Bill 492, which would modify the current law to require motorists to disclose their name, address, and date of birth to a police officer on request.

If motorists refuse, they would risk being charged with a fourth-degree misdemeanor, which carries the possibility of up to 30 days in jail and gives jails the authority to fingerprint and identify the person before they are

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