



PRESS RELEASE



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Woody's Bar-B-Q® Announces Plans to Open First New York Franchise

Florida-based Chain Places the Next Phase of its Southern Barbecue Empire in the Empire State's Middletown



Jacksonville, Florida, May 11, 2016 – With the bulk of its restaurants radiating out from its Jacksonville headquarters, the majority of Woody's Bar-B-Q locations have always been situated in the Sunshine State. However, a renewed focus on the 35-year-old company's growth combined with the desire to expand beyond Florida's borders have become the orders of the day for the authentic Southern barbecue chain in 2016 and beyond. Now boasting a satellite location in Huntington, Pennsylvania, a newly opened franchise in Augusta, Georgia, and more than a dozen restaurants situated throughout Canada, Woody's Bar-B-Q is proud to add Middletown, New York to its growing list of franchises. At the helm of the newest location are local residents from the neighboring town of Slate Hill, Diane and Michael Burns.

Diane cannot recall a time before her love affair with barbecue first began, while husband Michael, a former caterer, has always enjoyed open pit backyard barbecue events the most. He claims that even before Woody's came into his life, pulled pork and a variety of chicken dishes have always been his specialty. Diane, a 16-year veteran of the financial industry, has always wanted the couple to own their own business. With Michael's background in catering and dreams of running his own restaurant, a proven franchise concept seemed like the ideal choice.

"After we decided we wanted to open a restaurant, I started looking into franchises," recalled Diane. "There are very few barbecue restaurants in Orange County – one of the fastest growing counties in the state. As I was doing research, I was compelled by the fact that the company's founders – Yolanda and Woody – are still involved in the day-to-day operations of Woody's Bar-B-Q. Once I met them, I was delighted to learn that we share many of the same values. Another favorite element of my research was when we made the four and a half hour trip to the closest location in Huntington, Pennsylvania to try the food. We liked it so much that we made a second trip to pick up food to serve at a party. I'm a big fan of the corn nuggets and pulled pork in Woody's Hot Sauce, while Michael's favorite is the beef brisket."

Middletown is a scenic city near the Wallkill River and the foothills of the Shawangunk Mountains in New York's Hudson Valley region. Well-known for its family-friendly vibe, it will prove an excellent fit for a family-focused concept like Woody's Bar-B-Q. Both Michael and Diane grew up in local communities, and are now proud to have been part of the Slate Hill community for the last 18 years. Diane is a regular volunteer at the couple's church, and she is President of the PTO at school. She has served as a Girl Scout leader for five years. Michael is Assistant Principle at Minisink Valley High School, a trustee of their Catholic parish, and he serves as the Charter Representative for a local Boy Scout troop. When not hard at work, the Burns Family loves to entertain friends, go on hikes, and relax poolside. The couple is optimistic about their new venture, thanks to Diane's experience in the financial industry. She was at the center of a team devoted to the happiness of their clients, where she had to make the hard quick decisions, daily. Michael will lend his wealth of experience in foodservice, dating all the way back to high school and college, to their restaurant's success.

Located next to Shop Rite at 125 Dolson Avenue in the Campbell Plaza Shopping Center, Woody's Bar-B-Q of Middletown is projected to open Summer 2016. Upon completion, it will feature a full bar, warm and welcoming atmosphere, and an extensive menu of Woody's signature brand of smoked meats and comfort food sides. Additional restaurant locations on the horizon for Woody's Bar-B-Q are Valdosta, Ga., Colorado Springs, Co., Dallas, Tx. and Port Huron, Mi., among others. To learn more about Woody's Bar-B-Q, prospective franchisees and barbecue fans alike are invited to visit www.woodys.com.

About Woody's Bar-B-Q®: After opening their first Woody's Bar-B-Q in 1980, partners Woody Mills and Yolanda Mills-Mawman have spent the past three and a half decades setting the "bar" higher for great Southern Bar-B-Q. From the humble beginnings of just one location in Jacksonville, Florida, a shared passion for Bar-B-Q, and a dog-eared collection of recipes, Mills and Mawman have grown the Woody's Bar-B-Q brand to locations reaching from the Deep South where Bar-B-Q is king to the Northeast and Western fronts. Perhaps best known for their legendary melt-in-your-mouth slow-smoked Signature Baby Back Ribs, Woody's has also built quite a following among patrons with their secret recipe Bar-B-Q sauces and meats, as well as their freshly prepared comfort food-inspired side dishes. Individuals who wish to learn more about becoming a Woody's Bar-B-Q franchisee are encouraged to visit <http://www.woodys.com/franchise/>.

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Images: *Diane and Michael Burns of Slate Hill, NY – Woody's Bar-B-Q's Newest Franchisees*

Image Credit: *Woody's Bar-B-Q*