



# TRUE 'CUE NEWS

## From the Campaign for Real Barbecue

April 2017

No. 7

**Please forward this newsletter to anyone you know who might be interested.**

Earlier issues of *True 'Cue News* can be found on-line [here](#).

You can also follow us on [Facebook](#).

If you have anything of interest to supporters of Real Barbecue—old places closing or turning to gas, new places opening, obituaries of barbecue legends, whatever—please send it along to [TrueCue@gmail.com](mailto:TrueCue@gmail.com).

### **The True 'Cue Challenge – Three Years and Counting**

April 23 marked three years since we took to the pages of the *Raleigh News & Observer* to offer a prize to anyone who could identify (1) any statute or regulation that forbids any barbecue restaurant in North Carolina to cook with wood or charcoal, or (2) any official – federal state, county, or municipal – who has made a North Carolina restaurant stop cooking with wood or charcoal, or who has forbidden one to start. The challenge still stands. The prize was originally a “No Faux ‘Cue” apron. Last year we threw in a ball cap. Now we’ll add a barbecue sandwich at Allen & Son, in Chapel Hill.

### **Three New Patrons**

Three recent additions to the Campaign’s distinguished company of [patrons](#) extend our geographic reach into the Southern mountains and the Old Dominion.

Grant Goggins has visited and reviewed over three hundred barbecue restaurants in Georgia, Tennessee, and other southeastern states for his award-winning and often amusing blog [Marie Let's Eat!](#) He and Marie have recently relocated from Atlanta to Chattanooga.

Joe Haynes is the author of [Virginia Barbecue: A History](#), an award-winning barbecue cook and certified master barbecue judge, and a lecturer and consultant on Virginia's barbecue heritage. He wrote the Virginia Barbecue Proclamation, which passed as a House Joint Resolution in 2016, where it was resolved that May through October of each year is Virginia's official barbecue season. Joe blogs at [Obsessive Compulsive Barbecue](#).

Fred Sauceman is senior writer and associate professor of Appalachian studies at East Tennessee State University and has written innumerable articles and [several books](#) on the food of his native Appalachia. His book *The Proffitts of Ridgewood: An Appalachian Family's Life in Barbecue* will be published later this year by the Mercer University Press.

We welcome these gentlemen and thank them for their support.

### Mapping Real Barbecue

An [interactive map](#) of restaurants certified as 100% wood-cookers by the Campaign for Real Barbecue is now on-line at Patron Robert Moss's new website, the BBQ Hub, which Robert intends to be "your source for all things barbecue." Thanks for Robert for providing this valuable resource for barbecue pilgrims and other travelers.

### BBQ News Sources

[BBQ Hub](#) joins the [Barbecue Bros](#) site as a "must read" source for a comprehensive and timely round-up of general barbecue news. Given the availability (and superiority) of these sites, from now on *True 'Cue News* will ordinarily report only news pertaining to the Campaign for Real Barbecue or reflecting well on our Patrons.



**Young campaigner  
protests Faux 'Cue.**

TrueCue.org

## “Big City Barbecue”

On his *Texas Monthly* barbecue site, Patron Daniel Vaughn has a provocative [essay](#) on what has been called, among other things, “craft barbecue,” “elevated barbecue,” and “artisanal barbecue.” Vaughn observes that these labels are inaccurate or otherwise unsatisfactory, but that they do point to something that is genuinely new. Vaughn proposes that we call it “big city barbecue,” because that’s where it’s usually found, and he argues ingeniously that it can be seen as a new “regional” barbecue style:

The new region is the internet where ideas are shared internationally without delay. Online videos broadcast Texas barbecue techniques to Australia or Sweden or France, and the resulting barbecue creates a style of barbecue that crosses the traditional boundaries. It permeates big cities all over the world. We’ll always have our regional barbecue in the American barbecue capitals, but this new style is likely the future of barbecue in the places where smoked meats are just now taking hold.

That provides a context for seems to be going on in Atlanta, as described by Todd Brock in an article, [“Is There an Atlanta Barbecue?”](#) Brock concludes:

Not really. But perhaps *not* having a particular barbecue style *is* our style. . . . Atlanta’s barbecue scene is a mishmash, a hodgepodge of random flavors and diverse influences. Yes, we have plenty of classic pulled pork and lots of traditional ribs. But we also have new ‘cue concoctions being dreamed up all the time, introducing new techniques and tastes to the party. . . . It’s a diverse blend of old, new, near, and far — always evolving and constantly being reinvented.

In big cities and other places with a lot of newcomers, the commercial pressure to go this route is well nigh irresistible. After all, when people show up with their own ideas about what barbecue should be, it’s hard for someone trying to make a living to tell them they’re wrong. In Durham, for example, [Picnic](#) opened not long ago as a neo-traditionalist whole-hog establishment, but their menu now includes brisket and ribs (labeled, to be sure, “Non-Native Barbecue”).

## Whole Hog Revival?

Speaking of “neo-traditionalist whole-hog cooking,” you may have noticed that Picnic is just one of many new places dedicated to that pursuit. In Asheville, to the west, for instance, is [Buxton Hall](#), recently named the country’s ninth best new restaurant by [Bon Appetit](#). To the east, outside Greenville, [Sam Jones](#) has opened an upscale place that cooks the same way his family perfected at the celebrated Skylight Inn. To the South, [Rodney Scott](#) – another scion of a great barbecue family – is now cooking whole hogs in Charleston.

Considering these and more than a score of other new places, Robert Moss has [asked](#) in a thoughtful article if we are “on the verge of a whole-hog revival.” It would be great if that were so. Patron Rien Fertel may exaggerate a bit when he calls whole-hog “the one true barbecue” (the title of his recent [book](#)), but, as Patron Jim Auchmutey has observed, it’s “where the Southern train left the station” and the mystique of the pit master was born.



## R.I.P. Lamar Lounge

It's not all coming up roses on the whole-hog front, however. John Currence's Lamar Lounge, cooking whole hogs over wood in Oxford, was the only Mississippi restaurant to be certified by the Campaign before the untimely death of Tom Freeland, our Mid-South representative (see *True 'Cue News* for May 2015). Chef Currence says he'd thought that selling excellent pit-cooked barbecue in a Southern was "a no-brainer," but he was "crushed" when hamburgers outsold the barbecue by 4 to 1. After three years of effort, he finally [threw in the towel](#). The restaurant is now "Fat Eddie's Lamar Lounge," specializing in "old school Italian favorites."

## Best Barbecue, State by State

Incidentally, two of our Patrons, Texan Robert Vaughn and South Carolinian Robert Moss, have collaborated to produce a list of the best [barbecue from every state](#). We've consistently made fun of "best barbecue" lists, but that's because they usually don't know what they're talking about. This is obviously an exception.

## Shout-Out to the Campaign

*Houston Chronicle* barbecue editor J. C. Reid gave our Campaign a [shout-out](#) in his column recently. Reid has many other interesting columns that you can check out [here](#).



At the Women's March on Washington, January 21, 2017

## South Carolina Activity

Thanks to Jim Mintz and John Bearden, at least nine new restaurants have been certified by True 'Cue South Carolina so far in 2017. Here are some photos:



There are some great establishments on this list, ranging from Rodney Scott's fancy new place in Charleston (see above) to old-school Riverside Bar-B-Que in Georgetown, owned by Erven and Linda Jones. John Bearden writes about the latter:

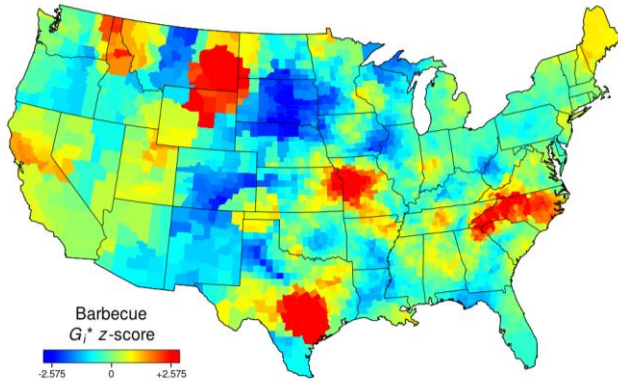
Erven is from Hemingway and has been cooking BBQ since he was 13 years old. He started cooking in a pit in the ground with his relatives (the Scotts) in Hemingway. He only cooks whole hogs. Their restaurant does not have indoor seating but picnic tables located outside under majestic oaks in view of the Black River. I was impressed with the cleanliness of the indoor serving area and his stainless steel pits. He cooks with red oak that he cuts on his property. They are open on Fridays and Saturdays 12 noon until 11:00pm or until they run out of BBQ. If you close your eyes, relax, and allow your imagination to work you could be in another time. The sign above his door is his only advertising.

A complete list of certified restaurants in South Carolina is on our [website](#).

## Fun and Games with Barbecue Words

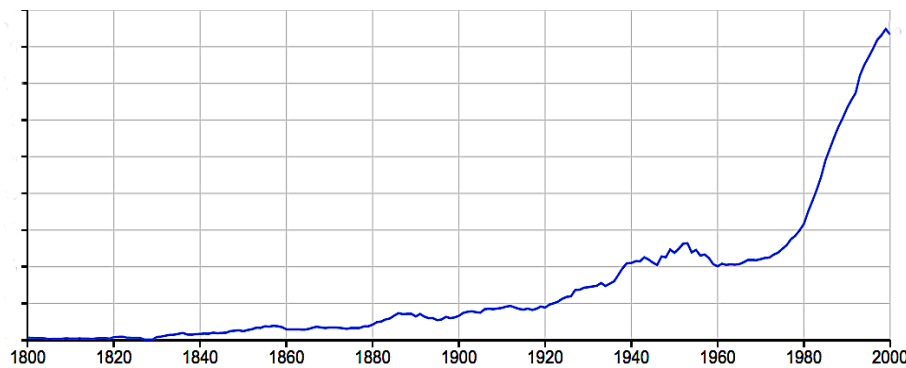
Check out [Word Mapper](#), which lets you play around with the frequency of words used in 890 million geotagged tweets. (Most words are used more often in New York than in Podunk just because there are more people in New York, so the "hotspots" option corrects for population size.)

Here's the map for *barbecue*, to get you started:



(The Wyoming-Montana hotspot is probably an artifact of a very small sample.) If you enjoy this sort of thing, take a look at *BBQ* and muse about the differences. *Grits* is a good one, too.

You can also have fun with Google's [Ngram Viewer](#), which charts the relative frequency of words and phrases in a huge database of books printed since 1800. Here's what it shows for *barbecue*:



Try *barbeque*, *bbq*, *pulled pork*, *hushpuppies*, *peach cobbler*. . . You get the idea.