



Bill Gordon serves barbecued brisket, pulled pork, turkey and Italian sausages with all the fixings.

EMILY MENTZER/Itemizer-Observer

Bar-B-Que melts in your mouth

By Emily Mentzer
The Itemizer-Observer

MONMOUTH — Stepping into BG's Bar-B-Que can be dangerous to your stomach, causing cravings for smoked goodness served with home-made sides from cheesy taters to coleslaw.

Bill Gordon, owner and chef, makes food from high-quality cuts of meat — beef, turkey, pork and locally sourced Italian sausages.

The menu is simple, with plates, sandwiches and platter options. Platters serve two or three hungry diners.

"I have a fairly sharply focused menu," Gordon said. "I do a few things, and do them well."

He arrives three hours early to get his slow-smoked brisket and pulled pork cooked to perfection.

"With barbecue, you have to prepare it first and have it ready as quick food — not fast food, but quick food," Gordon said. "So people can pop in, grab something and take it back home, take it to

Give it a try

What: BG's Bar-B-Que.
Where: 189 Pacific Highway S. (99W), Monmouth.
When: Tuesday through Saturday, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 4:30 to 8 p.m. for dinner.
Of note: Gordon also offers catering services for small or large parties, as well as specials in his restaurant. His sister Marge Bauer is Gordon's business partner.

the office and eat it there, or, if they're inclined to sit here — even though we don't have much seating — and enjoy a meal. It's comfort food, basically."

Gordon prepares all his meats with a rub, which he says is essential to bringing out the flavor.

"You can flavor meat with a rub, slow cook it and let that rub soak in, and that's basically all you need," he said. "You don't need any sauce when you're ready to eat this. Now if you want to add some sauce, that's fine, but what I'm going to do is serve it to you basically naked."

Gordon won't be offended if diners smother their dishes

in sauce — everyone has different palates — but believes sauce can mask the taste of the meats.

While barbecue isn't something necessarily considered a regular part of a healthy diet, Gordon's variety isn't too bad, he said, in part because he uses high-quality meats and rubs, avoiding the sugars in barbecue sauce.

"It's all muscle meat, nothing processed," he said. "Even with my sausages. They're made in Oregon. They're nitrate free; they're gluten free. I like to eat quality food, and that's what I'm going to serve, too."

Gordon didn't expect to get into the restaurant business. His first career was as an insurance agent.

"I did it for 20 years," he said. "I was fairly good at it, but the industry changed a bit. My dad was always in the restaurant business, so we grew up in it and around it, so we knew enough to stay away from it."

And yet, here he is, opening his own restaurant.

"I do love to cook," Gordon said. "I do love pleasing people with my food. I have a passion for doing this."

His first foray into barbecue came from a recipe for country ribs.

"Country ribs are not well-known around here," Gordon said, originally from Kansas. "When we say ribs, they're thinking bone-in ribs. The country ribs are pork loin ribs, just all meat — and they're real good cuts of meat."

He began using high-quality Dutch ovens with his rubs and perfected his country ribs, which are on the menu at BG's Bar-B-Que.

Monmouth was the perfect home for his business, where he could fill the desires for barbecue in a smaller market.

Minet: Debt not in vision statement

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In the last year, the cities of Monmouth and Independence have been asked to cover debt payments on behalf of Minet of about \$800,000.

"We've never had the most robust sales and marketing," McClure said. "But now we're going to a whole new market. Do you need a Jefferson specialist? Knocking on doors in Jefferson, that's their job? Or do we need to be taking ads out in their local newspaper? What do we need to do to go into a new market?"

Patten said the finance committee has vetted the plan to provide services to Jefferson.

McClure said that, while he appreciates that the finance committee is there to go over plans, the board needs to see a plan and be comfortable with the decision.

Also at Thursday's meeting, corporate finance officer Mark Thoenes and finance committee member Gary Van Horn presented the final draft of Minet's mission and value statements.

Board member Jon Carey said he appreciated the sense of ownership Minet employees have taken with the company, but noted that the debt service was not specifically mentioned in the statement.

"The biggest heartburn people have about Minet is it doesn't meet the debt service, and the impact on city budgets both in Independence and Monmouth," he said. "I don't see that addressed."

Thoenes said a goal mentions debt service improvement.

John Cooper, Minet employee, said the debt service is a sore subject and shouldn't be brought into a core values statement.

"You want to say you're making strides to improve the situation without saying what the situation is in its entirety," he said.

McClure disagreed, requesting that speaking specifically about the debt could be done in a nice and professional way — not negatively — but it needs to be put in somewhere.

"I appreciate what you're saying," Thoenes said. "That's not the vision or the mission of the company. That's not why the company was put into existence. The company didn't take the debt; someone else put the debt on the company. The company is here to go out and increase its value to its maximum. Then, once we have a plan for that, hopefully it will be sufficient to service the debt. I don't think becoming debt solvent is a vision or mission of the company."

"It's not, but it ought to be part and parcel of the strategic plan," Carey said.

McClure agreed.

"They don't want Minet to become a great company and the cities are still stuck with the debt," he said.

In the future, the Minet board of directors will use more executive sessions to discuss details about expansion plans, board member Greg Ellis said.

He suggested they use the public records law relating to trade secrets.

McClure agreed saying, "It's the interesting thing as a public entity. You have to do certain things quietly, but the public doesn't appreciate that."

The next scheduled Minet board meeting is for 7:30 a.m. on Sept. 22 at the Henry Hill Educational Support Center, 750 S. Fifth St.

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