

CHIPS: First in the country to introduce a jalapeño flavor

Continued from 1A he lives with his wife, Lori, in the historic M.L. Watts House on Fourth Street. Many know it as the Gingerbread House for its whimsical-looking roof. It's also the place where they can get chips instead of candy on Halloween.

Though Kennedy retired in 2005, he remains an ambassador for Tim's Chips and a local celebrity. He recently visited the Seattle Food and Wine Experience in February, signing bags of chips for fans who just had to ask, "Are you THE Tim?"

"I take it with good humor," Kennedy said. "I get asked a lot how did you get started with chips."

Before he was "THE Tim," Kennedy was an electrical engineer who worked in packaging plants for potato processors. He graduated from McEwen High School in 1966 and Blue Mountain College in 1968 before landing his first job doing electrical and maintenance work at Lamb Weston in Hermiston.

Years later, Kennedy moved to Tacoma, Washington, and got a job with a company called Mira-Pak, which at the time was installing state-of-the-art potato chip packaging equipment for Frito-Lay and other facilities along the West Coast. It was there he met Jay and Don Poore, who convinced Kennedy to partner up on a chip enterprise of their own.

They joined a man named Horace Groff, who had made potato chips in Pennsylvania and decided to branch out into Houston. Together, they launched Groff's of Texas in 1983 and began thinking of ways they could distinguish themselves from Frito-Lay.

"Here we came, just with blinders on, to start a potato plant and compete against the giant," Kennedy said.

For starters, Kennedy said they used peanut oil instead of lard, which gave their chips a better crunch. They were also the first in the country to introduce a jalapeño flavor, Kennedy said, which took off and gave them a 10 percent share of the market in Houston. Jalapeño remains the highest selling flavor of Tim's Chips to this day.

"They just went nuts for it," he said.

After three years, Kennedy decided to strike out on his own and return to the Seattle area, where he established Tim's Chips. As for the Poore Brothers, they launched their own successful chip brand in Arizona, which is still produced today by Inventure Foods.

Tim's Chips are kettle-cooked in relatively small 400-pound batches, made from potatoes grown in Oregon and Washington. The company marks it's 30th anniversary this month, and Kennedy took some time



Tim Kennedy and his wife Lori now own and operate the Don Carlo Vineyard in Milton-Freewater.

Thursday to reflect on the milestone. "There's not everybody who can start a business from scratch and have it last 30 years," Kennedy said. "It's a small business, but it's something to be proud of."

When Kennedy retired in 2005, he handed the reins over to his brother-in-law, Jeff Leichter, who was one of the first people he hired. The company has about 80 employees working out at the plant.

In 2007, Tim and Lori Kennedy moved back to Athena and transitioned from the chip business to the wine business. They own Don Carlo Vineyard — named after Lori's grandfather — which is part of the new Rocks District of Milton-Freewater American Viticultural Area. Of course, Tim's Chips are served with glasses of wine in the tasting room. Kennedy recommends jalapeño with the Chardonnay, and Parmesan and garlic with red wines.

Breaking into the wine business has been difficult, with competition from 120 other vineyards in the Walla Walla area alone. But, as with any other local business, it's all about putting yourself out there, he said.

"When we started Tim's Chips, we couldn't get into any of the major stores," he said. "It's all about having people taste it, and hearing your story."

Contact George Plaven at gplaven@eastoregonian.com or 541-966-0825.

Trump risks angering women with Cruz attacks

Associated Press

OSHKOSH, Wisconsin — Donald Trump's latest rude comments about Ted Cruz's wife are raising new alarms among Republicans about the party front-runner's ability to win over women, especially in a potential fall presidential match-up with Hillary Clinton.

Trump is under fire for jabs at Heidi Cruz, as the rivals engage in an increasingly bitter, personal battle for the GOP presidential nomination. Hostilities reached a new high Friday when Cruz accused Trump and "his henchmen" of stoking false rumors that he'd cheated on his wife.

"We don't want a president who traffics in sleaze and slime," the Texas senator told reporters in Wisconsin. "We don't want a president who seems to have a real issue with strong women."

Trump's history of sexist comments, from his "Apprentice" television program to racy interviews with radio host Howard Stern, have long been seen by Republicans as a potential vulnerability, especially in a general election match-up with Clinton, who would be the country's first female president.

The issue took off in the first GOP debate when Fox News' Megyn Kelly asked Trump about calling women "fat pig," "dog" and other names. Her question sparked a continuing quarrel between Trump and the network.

Trump also faced a backlash after he was quoted in a "Rolling Stone" profile insulting businesswoman Carly Fiorina, who endorsed Cruz after she dropped out of the 2016 Republican race.

"Look at that face!" Trump was quoted saying. "Would anyone vote for



In this Feb. 1 file photo, Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump, accompanied by his wife Melania Trump, speaks during a campaign event in Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

that? Can you imagine that, the face of our next president?!"

The issue reignited Wednesday after an anti-Trump super PAC released an ad featuring a risqué photo of his wife, Melania, a former model, taken in a GQ photo shoot.

"Meet Melania Trump. Your Next First Lady. Or, you could support Ted Cruz on Tuesday," it read. Trump responded by falsely accusing Cruz of running the ad and warning, "Be careful, Lyin' Ted, or I will spill the beans on your wife!" Cruz's wife is a former Goldman Sachs investment manager and White House aide, who served as economic policy adviser to President George W. Bush.

On Wednesday night, Trump escalated things when he re-tweeted side-by-side images of Cruz's wife, with an unflattering grimace, and Melania in a gauzy, glamorous pose. "No need to 'spill the beans'" read the caption. "The images are worth a thousand words."

At an event Thursday in Wisconsin, Cruz responded by calling Trump "a sniveling coward" who has a problem with women — particularly "strong

women."

Cruz continued to dig in Friday, painting Trump's comments as part of a larger pattern of misogyny.

"He's directed these attacks at Megyn Kelly. He's directed these attacks at Carly Fiorina. He's directed these attacks at Columba Bush, Jeb Bush's wife," he said.

Though Trump continues to outdistance Cruz in the delegates that will decide the GOP nomination, recent polls have shown the billionaire's favorability on the decline, particularly among women.

In a recent NBC/Wall Street Journal poll, 70 percent of women had a negative opinion of Trump. Nearly three quarters of women overall, and 39 percent of Republican women, had an unfavorable view of him in a recent CNN poll.

"He already had a gender gap prior to all this," said Republican pollster David Winston. "The potential for that to be bigger now looms on the horizon."

Katie Packer, a former top aide to 2012 GOP nominee Mitt Romney, and the founder of the anti-Trump Our Principles PAC, said all this spells trouble for the general election.

U.S. moving to increase troops in Iraq; IS leader killed

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Pentagon said Friday it was moving to increase the number of American troops in Iraq amid new strikes this week that killed the Islamic State's finance minister and other senior leaders. Still, top U.S. defense officials say the deaths won't "break the back" of the extremist group, which is in a fierce fight for an ancient city in Syria and claimed responsibility for bombing a soccer stadium in Iraq.

Defense Secretary Ash Carter said the U.S. progress in eliminating members of the IS "cabinet" was hampering its ability to

conduct and inspire attacks against the West. The announcement came as the battle to retake the Syrian city of Palmyra entered its third day and Iraqi forces continued their march to recapture Mosul. A suicide bombing in a soccer stadium south of Baghdad, killing nearly 30 people, underscored the difficult fight ahead.

Gen. Joseph Dunford, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told Pentagon reporters that recommendations on ways to increase U.S. support for Iraq's ground fight against IS will be discussed with President

Barack Obama soon.

"The secretary and I both believe that there will be an increase in U.S. forces in Iraq in coming weeks, but that decision hasn't been made," Dunford said. He did not say how big that increase might be.

He and Carter said accelerating the campaign against the Islamic State will include more assistance like the artillery fire and targeting help that U.S. Marines provided earlier this week to Iraqi forces advancing on Mosul. But they said American forces remain well behind the front lines.



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