

Wonder Whip adding 2nd location

Could be open this summer

BY KEITH LAWRENCE
MESSENGER-INQUIRER

After 70 years at what’s now 2434 Kentucky 144, Wonder Whip is adding a second location at 2600 Frederica, the former location of Bowen Tire.

Seth Woodward, who bought the historic drive-in a decade ago, said, “When we made the decision to resuscitate the restaurant almost 10 years ago on a wing and a prayer, we were simply hoping to keep the Wonder Whip legacy alive for future generations to enjoy. What ended up happening completely surpassed our wildest expectations. None of this would be possible without the incredible support of our community, which makes us so excited to see some new faces and make some new friends on Frederica.”

He said, “We are making a big investment in Owensboro. We are hoping to inject some vibrancy and new vitality into that area. We expect to hire approximately 50 people including management.”

People interested in working at the new restaurant can go to wonder-hip.com/apply.

Woodward said construction is underway.

All design and construction work is being performed by local compa-



Photo by Greg Eans, Messenger-Inquirer

A demolition crew works on March 12 to take down the former Bowen Tire building at 2600 Frederica Street, near Wesleyan Park Plaza, in Owensboro.

nies, he said.

Woodward said the new restaurant will be configured similar to the existing location with walk-up service, drive-thru service and a lot of outdoor seating.

The menu and pricing will also be the same.

But Woodward said “at least in the beginning, the menu at the new location may be streamlined a bit.”

The new location could open this summer, he said.

Woodward was on vacation in Wyoming in August

2015, when he heard that the Wonder Whip had closed after 60 years in business.

“I was shocked and genuinely sad that another piece of our history and culture could be permanently lost,” he said at the time.

“I ate a fair amount of food there when I was younger,” Woodward said. “I’m an East End guy who wanted to bring it back.”

So, he bought the iconic 840-square-foot restaurant and reopened it in

early 2016.

“This place is a landmark, a part of the community,” Woodward said earlier. “I couldn’t believe it when I saw that it had closed. If I was from out of town or even the other side of town, I might not have bought it. But it’s important to me. And it’s worked out well.”

A legal notice in the June 14, 1955, Messenger-Inquirer announced that Wyndall’s Wonder Whip had filed an application for a county permit to sell

ice cream, soft drinks and sandwiches.

On July 1, 1955, E.A. Nonweiller, D. Wyndall Smith and John T. Rutledge filed incorporation papers with the state.

The top seller on the menu is still the Wonderburger — a quarter-pound hamburger on a toasted five-inch bun with lettuce, tomato, onion, mayo and pickle cooked on an old-fashion flat top grill.

Shakes are in second place followed by ice cream.

Woodward didn’t start out planning to operate a restaurant.

Woodward got his degree in mechanical engineering and worked for a while at the Mitsubishi automotive plant in Normal, Illinois.

“But I decided I didn’t want to be a mechanical engineer,” he said. “So I came home and got into business.”

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LUKAS

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of American Promise, that his legs were tired.

“That’s fine, don’t worry about that,” Bellinger responded. “Just don’t lose your mind.”

Far from it, according to Hall of Fame jockey Gary Stevens. He and Lukas teamed to win the Derby in 1988 with filly Winning Colors.

“Wayne is known for how meticulous he is with everything that he does. That hasn’t changed and it won’t change,” Stevens said. “He still rides out every morning. He can still tell a good horse. He’s got a great eye. He picks all these horses out at the sales, their angles, their looks. He’s still got it at 89.”

That was evident at the auction where Lukas spotted American Promise. His old friend and rival Bob Baffert also had his

eye on the colt since he had trained the sire, Justify.

Noticing a contusion above one of the colt’s knees, Baffert figured he could get him for a steal at \$400,000.

Not so fast. A m e r i c a n Promise sold for \$750,000.

“I went to see who bought this horse,” Baffert said. “There he was — The Coach.”

While others were thinking the colt had a bad knee, Lukas’ gut told him otherwise.

“That was just a bump,” he said. “It went down in a week.”

One of Lukas’ few concessions to age is a desire to limit his stable to 40 horses, the same number of stalls he has at Churchill Downs in the spring and at Oaklawn Park in Arkansas in the winter.

“We’ve run the red light on that,” he said. “We’re

up to about 52 or 53 now.”

Lukas told his fifth wife, Laurie, that given his age the couple might want to buy a few horses of their own for fun and send them to someone else to train.

That plan also went awry.

“I bought four or five and we now have 11 racehorses,” he said. “We got some really nice colts.”

In other words, don’t expect Lukas to ride off into retirement anytime soon.

“I always thought he would have been a great commissioner of racing, a great spokesperson, because he’s so smart, speaks well,” Baffert said. “He knows the ins and outs and he still plays at that high level.”

Lukas and Baffert — who owns a record-tying six — have the most victories of any trainer in this year’s race. Nine of the trainers are in the Derby

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Charlie Riedel — AP

A horse comes off the track after a workout at Churchill Downs Monday in Louisville, Ky.

PLAY

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County High School.

Rice tossed three strong innings, giving up just one unearned run, while Lee opened the game with two innings of work and three strikeouts.

Overall, McLean hammered out 14 hits, with multiple players — including Rice, Corbin Martin and Bozarth — notching multi-hit games.

GROVES DOMINATES IN WIN OVER WEBSTER COUNTY

One day later, the Cougars kept the momentum rolling, defeating Webster County 6-2 behind a complete-game performance from Jaelin Groves.

Groves was masterful, allowing just four hits and two runs while striking out six. He did not allow a walk until the final frame, controlling the game from start to finish.

At the plate, Layden Bozarth continued his hot streak, going 2-for-4 with three RBIs and two stolen bases. Houston Whitaker also had a pair of hits and drove in two runs as

part of a balanced McLean attack that took advantage of Webster’s defensive miscues.

The victory pushed McLean’s record to 2-0 since returning to action.

COUGARS OUTLAST PERRY CENTRAL WITH BIG SEVENTH INNING

Saturday morning saw McLean County travel across state lines to Leopold, Indiana, where they faced Perry Central in a back-and-forth contest that was ultimately decided by a huge seventh inning.

Trailing 3-2 entering the final frame, McLean erupted for seven runs, highlighted by a three-RBI double from Hayden Hudson and an RBI single from Bozarth. Houston Whitaker and Corbin Martin also drove in runs during the inning.

Connor Mitchuson picked up the win out of the bullpen, striking out six over three innings of work. Jax Lee started the game, tossing four innings and allowing just two earned runs while striking out six.

The Cougars collected nine hits with Mitchuson, Bozarth and Lee each recording multi-hit games.

The win improved McLean to 5-0 on the season when playing outside the state of Kentucky.

COUGARS SWEEP DOUBLEHEADER WITH WIN OVER WARREN EAST

Just a few hours after the victory in Indiana, the Cougars returned home to face Warren East — and showed no signs of fatigue.

After falling behind 1-0 in the first inning, the Cougars took control in the fourth on a double from Martin and a walk from Rice that each plated runs.

McLean blew the game open in the fifth, scoring five runs on just three hits, including an RBI single from Whitaker and a two-RBI single from Hudson. Brooks Lynam drew a bases-loaded walk to cap the inning.

Corbin Martin earned the win on the mound, pitching four and one-third innings and allowing just one run. Bozarth came on in relief and slammed the door, throwing two and two-thirds innings of no-hit baseball while striking out four.

Jaelin Groves led the team at the plate with two

hits, while Hudson paced the team with two RBIs.

The sweep of the day’s doubleheader meant the Cougars won two games in two states on the same day.

LOOKING AHEAD

After the 4-0 week, McLean County now stands at 12-4 on the season and appears to have regained the form that made them a preseason favorite in the Third Region.


The Cougars have won nine straight games — their longest winning streak since 2023 — and are surging with confidence heading into a critical stretch of the schedule.

They are scheduled to host Henderson County on Monday before back-to-back district matchups with Ohio County on Tuesday and Thursday.

While floodwaters may have isolated the county for weeks, McLean County’s baseball team is doing its part to lift spirits — winning on the road, winning at home and winning for a community eager for normalcy.

And if the past week is any indication, the Cougars are just getting started.

DID YOU KNOW?



By Duke Brubaker

Twenty six years ago, Fernando Tatis hit 2 grand slams in the same inning. He’s still the only player in MLB history to accomplish this.

Arizona Diamondback Eugenio Suarez went 4 for 4 with 4 Home Runs recently. He’s the 19th player in MLB history with 4 HR in a game, yet his team still lost 8-7.

Lenny Dykstra would throw away his batting glove and get a new pair every time he struck out.

Wade Boggs would always take batting practice at exactly 5:17, he also fielded exactly 150 balls at practice and would run sprints at 7:17.

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