

'Triple D' films at Weeping Radish

By Cindy Beamon
The Daily Advance
Monday, July 23, 2012

JARVISBURG — Brats and homemade sauerkraut at the Weeping Radish Farm Brewery and Restaurant will soon be spotlighted on the popular Food Network show, "Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives."

A television crew from the network was wrapping up three days of filming Monday at the Currituck eatery for an episode on the popular show hosted by Guy Fieri. The segment on the Weeping Radish is scheduled to air sometime this fall or early winter.

Fieri arrived at the restaurant in his signature 1968 red Camaro convertible — only he had the top up because of Saturday's downpour. To keep out of the torrential rain, Fieri drove into the middle of the restaurant's brewery.

A search committee for the show selected the Weeping Radish, along with several Outer Banks restaurants for the filming. The show usually scans social media to find out what restaurants are popular with the locals, said Currituck's Tourism Director Diane Nordstrom, who attended Saturday's filming.

A spokesman from the show could not be reached Monday for comment.

Restaurant owner Uli Bennewitz said the Weeping Radish's fresh meats, prepared at its on-site butchery, may be one reason his restaurant was chosen for Fieri's show.

"They never had seen anything like this before," even after shooting more than 150 episodes of "Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives," said Bennewitz.

Not many restaurants have their own walk-in smokehouse, he noted.

The butchery is just part of the restaurant's "fork to farm" approach. Menu items are made from scratch, using the free-range meats (no antibiotics or hormones), homegrown herbs, fresh baked breads, locally supplied produce, and the restaurant's own brewed beer.

Saturday's sauerkraut was made from cabbages freshly plucked from Bright Farms in Pasquotank County. The cabbages were shredded and fermented in wine barrels from Sanctuary Vineyards for three or four weeks. The cabbage was then put in a cooking kettle with spices, white wine and bits of pastrami and bacon leftover from the slicing machine.

The sauerkraut was served on a Reuben sandwich with fresh-cut pastrami and homemade bread for the show.

Weeping Radish closed for five days to accommodate the film crews for "Diners, Drive-In and Dives," also known as the "Triple D." For Saturday's shoot Bennewitz invited about 12 friends and faithful customers to be his "rent-a-crowd." The "Triple D" often features Fieri's funny conversations with customers as they describe what they like about the food.

Saturday's menu at the Weeping Radish included brats, Reuben sandwiches, potato soup — and even liver pate.

Bennewitz took a risk on the liver pate. He was told Fieri hates liver, but Fieri had a taste of it anyway, Bennewitz said Monday in a phone interview.

One member of the "rent-a-crowd" was Nordstrom and husband Frank, who traded banter with Fieri during the segment.

"On camera, he's got this really casual, joking manner," said Nordstrom.

She was asked about the potato soup.

"This is true comfort food," Nordstrom said she told Fieri while spooning a bite dripping with melted cheese.

Nordstrom said the show will be a big boost to both the Weeping Radish and Currituck.

"It's exciting to know one of our restaurants will be featured on the popular show," she said.

Nordstrom said he felt lucky to snap a photograph of Bennewitz and Fieri at the end of a tiring day. An assistant, raising an uncertain eyebrow, said she would have to ask Fieri himself for permission. Nordstrom was granted a quick photo-op as Fieri was walking out the door.

Fieri left behind his own memento as well.

On the wall next to the bar, Fieri left his signature, along with his stenciled image.

"You can't miss it when you come in," said Bennewitz.

Bennewitz said spending the afternoon with Fieri and the film crew was fascinating.

"Guy makes it fun," he said.