

A Family Comes Together

Brother and sister team up to open the new T. Wake's BBQ at Cardiff Circle Plaza

By MICHAEL HUBER
At The Shore

Tanya Dixon and Thurmond Wakefield are family. The sister and brother are also former casino workers who reinvented themselves in the form of T. Wake's Smoked BBQ and Shrimp Shack in the Cardiff Circle Plaza in Egg Harbor Township.

Their business will always be a family affair.

Although they are a year apart in age, they attended classes together because of their birth dates, Wakefield began school late and Dixon started school early.

"When we were in high school together, people called both of us 'T. Wakes,'" Dixon says.

So naming their new business venture that opened Aug. 23 was easy.

Dixon spent her career as either a banquet or food and beverage manager at various casinos including The Claridge Hotel and Trump Plaza Hotel and Casino. She has also run her own off-premise catering business called Tanya's Catering for 20 years.

Wakefield spent his casino time — 25 years — as a facilities manager.

"We combined our knowledge of hospitality," Dixon says. "And he's our facilities person here, too."

The concept at T. Wake's is a laid-back smoked BBQ spot. Dixon describes Wakefield as one of those "weekend warriors" who was always in the backyard perfecting his barbecue skills, smoked barbecue being Wakefield's specialty.

Good smoked barbecue requires several steps and plenty of cooking time, followed by a dry rub of their own recipe.

"Our rubs are all homemade and that's what makes us unique," Dixon says. "That's where we are killing it."

Different meats such as pork ribs, brisket or pork butts require different types of wood for smoking, such as Applewood or mesquite, which is used to give the half or whole chickens some sweetness.

After the smoking is finished, one of many delicious homemade sauces is applied.

Only opened for three weeks —



Staff photo by Edward Lea

T. Wake's Smoked BBQ and Shrimp Shack owners Tanya Dixon and Thurmond Wakefield show off signature dishes offered at the EHT restaurant including, clockwise from rear, a slow smoked brisket sandwich, french fries, chicken, beef rib and a shrimp platter.

and already busy — Dixon says they will roll out new things, too.

For now, they are happy with what they offer customers, such as two sides and choice of cornbread or roll with platters such as a variety of shrimp — large fried (\$13); large coconut (\$14); jumbo fried (\$17); or T. Wake's large spicy shrimp (\$14) — fish that includes tilapia, whiting or beer-battered fried cod (\$8.99 to \$9.99); chicken that's served in quarters, halves or whole (\$8, \$10, \$12); or ribs that can be ordered BBQ or with a dry rub, smoked pork rib (\$13.99), smoked beef short rib (\$11), pork ribs (\$23) or beef ribs (\$32).

But so far, the brisket — their signature dish — is by far their biggest selling platter.

Fresh greens, baked macaroni and cheese, potato salad, shrimp salad, string beans, fried cabbage, baked beans and cole slaw are available at T. Wake's, and all created with their homemade flair.

No BBQ menu would be complete without tea and desserts (\$3).

Pork, chicken and fish sandwiches, as well as hamburgers are also available. As are chicken wings (five for \$4) that can come with your choice of homemade sauces such as hot, BBQ, scampi, sweet

and sour, garlic parmesan, honey mustard or Cajun.

Dixon and Wakefield hope to someday trademark their unique rubs and sauces and sell them to customers. Until then, customers can bring in their own items to be rubbed and smoked for them.

It's all about family at T. Wake's

With only 39 seats, T. Wake's has a very family-friendly atmosphere, thanks to all the family that works there, including Brandon Dixon, right.

"Everybody who walks in the door knows us or somebody in their family knows us or the family is related to us," Tanya Dixon says.

Because the Wakefields grew up in this area everybody knows them.

"They are coming in because they know us and they know our food," Tanya Dixon says. "There is nobody that I really don't know."



T. Wake's Smoked BBQ and Shrimp Shack

WHERE: 6701 Black Horse Pike, Cardiff Circle Plaza, Egg Harbor Township

WHEN: Open 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Mondays to Saturdays; noon to 6 p.m. Sundays

HOW MUCH: Rib platters \$11 to \$13.99; shrimp and fish platters \$8.99 to \$17; chicken platters \$8 to \$12; sandwiches \$7.50; fish \$3 to \$6; chicken wings \$4 to \$24; salads \$6; sides \$1.50 to \$4

SERVICES: Most major credit cards accepted. No liquor license. BYO. Disabled access through front door. Eat in. Takeout. Private parties. Catering. Kid appropriate items. No smoking.

MORE INFO: Call 609-377-8542 or Facebook

BETWEEN YOU AND ME: Because of the owners' vast amount of experience, T. Wake's is comfortable catering large parties of hungry guests. Whole pigs are available along with all the accoutrements needed to cater a successful smoked BBQ party for your family.

Get a taste of Middle Township during Restaurant Week

By PAMELA DOLLAH
At The Shore

Get "a taste" of Middle Township during their inaugural Restaurant Week, taking place Monday, Sept. 22 through Saturday, Sept. 27.

Restaurant Weeks, often found in larger cities such as Philadelphia or Atlantic City, are a great way to discover and try something new. And this one shows off the different eateries in Middle Township — an area

mostly known for its attractions such as the Cape May County Zoo or the Performing Arts Center.

"We're hoping this will bring awareness to all the eating establishments in Middle Township," says Carol Struett, chair of Middle Township Economic Development, the event's sponsor. "People visit to go to the Zoo, the PAC or our museums — we're hoping this will make them stay to dine in our restaurants."

MTED specifically

hatched the idea to have Middle Township Restaurant Week during the shoulder season, when they could still entice a good amount of tourists, as well as the year-rounders, and show them what the township has to offer when it comes to dining.

"This promotion will give residents and visitors an opportunity to try a restaurant they maybe haven't visited in Middle Township," Struett says. "We're hoping that because it's in September, that plenty of people who are still around will take advantage."

This week-long promotion comprises both the lunch and dinner meals. The lunch deal is \$15 for three courses and dinner is four courses for \$25.

Because it's only in its first year, the number of participating restaurants is on the smaller side, with only nine presently partaking in the event. But each is a family-friendly establishment and most offer a good array of menu items to suit any appetite.

Menu examples include a petit filet with butternut squash soup, salad and dessert at Rio Station, or a main course of crab cakes with an appetizer, soup or salad and dessert at Bellevue Tavern. Feel like a little Italian? Head to Nino's for eggplant margarita and fried calamari with soup or salad and dessert. Or if you're looking for lunch, check out Hugi's where you



Photo provided by Rio Station
Rio Station in Rio Grande is one of nine restaurants participating in Middle Township Restaurant Week beginning Monday, Sept. 22.

(Continued on 24)

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DINING

Restaurant Week

(Continued from 23)

can get a choice of a sandwich, a 1/2 pound of potato salad and dessert. Bonus: They're even

throwing in a soft drink. As for what Struett's aspirations are for this event?

"Restaurant Week will help create awareness of the wide variety of eating establishments we have.

And we're looking forward to a successful inaugural event."

For more information, go to DoTheShore.com/MTRestaurantWeek2014.

Participating Restaurants:

Atkinson's Tavern, 1010 Rte. 9, Cape May Court House, 609-465-5641

Avalon Links, 1510 U.S. 9, Cape May Court House, 609-465-8086

Bellevue Tavern, 9 S. Main St., Cape May Court House 609-463-1738

Country Club Tavern, 1512 N. Rte. 9, Cape May Court House, 609-465-1515

Hugit's Steaks and Things, 7 Mechanic St., Cape May Court House, 609-465-2323

Nino's Family Restaurant, 16 S. Main St., Cape May Court House, 609-465-6300

Rio Grande Diner, 1305 New Jersey 47, Rio Grande, 609-886-7376

Rio Station, 3505 Rte. 9, Rio Grande, 609-889-2000

Steve's Cafe 47, 189 New Jersey 47, Cape May Court House, 609-465-3300

Dining Capsules

Area restaurants

Price guide for a meal for two:

Under \$35 ... Affordable
\$35 to \$65 ... Standard
Above \$65 ... Pricey

Eating in Atlantic City:

Access the most complete listing of Atlantic City restaurants and their menus anywhere at AtTheShoreOnline.com. More than 300 eating places in Atlantic City's borders. Other area restaurants also listed.

Mays Landing Area

Best Food in Town, 800 Route 50, 609-625-8818. Chinese the way you like it. Additional locations in Northfield, Hammonton, Vineland, Somers Point, Egg Harbor Township and Brigantine. *Affordable.*

Upstairs @ Brownies Squared, 3619 Main St., 609-625-0711. A great full-service bakery on the first floor with a nice lunch and dinner menu available upstairs with great choices sure to please anyone in your party. *Affordable.*

Careme's Gourmet Restaurant, 5100 Black Horse Pike, Atlantic Cape Community College, Academy of Culinary Arts, 609-343-4940. Student-operated restaurant offers interesting food. *Standard.*

Cavallino Nero, 4760 Black Horse Pike, 609-625-0144. Great food. *Standard.*

Crabby's, 1413 Route 50, 609-625-2722. Fun atmosphere, and all-you-can-eat crab nights can't be beat. *Standard.*

Hibachi Grill and Buffet, 4450 Black Horse Pike, 609-625-0888. A huge variety, one of the area's best buffets. *Standard.*

Inn At Sugar Hill, Routes 40 and 559, on the waterfront, 609-625-2226. Sit on the porch for river views. *Standard.*

Jo Ann's Pizza and Restaurant II, 913 Route 50, 609-625-4114. Italian food served with a flair for deliciousness along with some amazing Saturday night specials. *Standard.*

Maplewood II, 6126 Black Horse Pike, 609-625-1181. Outstanding Italian food served right off the Black Horse Pike. *Standard.*

Maurizio's Pizzeria and Italian Grill, 4215 Black Horse Pike, 609-645-0028. A broad selection of pizzas, appetizers and Italian dishes. *Affordable.*

Mays Landing Diner, 6177 Harding Highway (Route 40), 609-625-5051. Delicious homemade breakfast, lunch and dinner. *Affordable.*

Nino's Pizza Festival, in the Festival at Hamilton Shopping Center, 609-625-0701. Subs, Italian, salads, burgers and more. *Affordable.*

Shiro Japanese Hibachi Restaurant, 3990 Black Horse Pike, 609-625-8206. Wonderful sushi beautifully prepared. *Standard.*

Testa's Good Guys Pub, 5698 Somers Point/Mays Landing Road, 609-625-1926. With large menu and daily specials, Testa's offers everything. *Affordable.*

Tokyo, 2300 Wangleboro Road (Consumer Square Shopping Center), 609-484-8881. Sushi buffet, hibachi and bar. *Affordable.*

Watering Hole Cafe, 6494 Weymouth Road (Route 559), 609-625-9300. Famous wings, steak, cozy atmosphere. *Affordable.*

(Continued on 25)

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DINING

September 18, 2014
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Dining Capsules

(Continued from 24)

Ye Old Mill Street Pub, 201 W Main Street, 609-625-2466. Great food, great bar. A Mays Landing institution. *Affordable*. \$

Middle Township

Atkinson's Restaurant and Tavern, 1010 Route 9 South, Cape May Court House, 609-465-5641. Great food and an exciting bar scene. *Standard*. \$\$

Avalon Links Restaurant, 1510 N. Route 9, Cape May Courthouse, 800-643-4766. An extensive menu of full-course entrees, with a fine selection of meats and seafood. *Pricey*. \$\$\$

Bellevue Tavern, 7 S. Main St., Cape May Court House, 609-463-1738. Great lunches are served. *Affordable*. \$

Clary's County Corner Restaurant, 2 W. Hereford Ave., Cape May Courthouse, 609-465-4361. Awesome steak and eggs and home-fired potatoes. Best breakfast around. *Affordable*. \$

Doctor's Inn, 2 N. Main St., Cape May Court House, 609-463-9330. A 19th-century mansion turned into a cozy B&B. *Pricey*. \$\$\$

Main Street Cafe, 104 N. Main St., Cape May Court House, 609-536-8072. Intimate cafe setting offering specialties such as the fresh Sicilian shrimp sandwich and salads. Open for dinner on Fridays and Saturdays with chef specials including catch of the day, chef filet and seafood cioppino. Try the Coquilles St. Jacques. *Affordable*. \$

Murasaki, 13 Dennisville S Road, Cape May Court House, 609-465-8888. Japanese hibachi and sushi bar. Also serves thai cuisine. *Standard*. \$\$

Millville

Billy D's Hamburgers, 432 N. High St., 856-506-8499. Hot dogs, hamburgers, cheeseburgers and shakes in '50s diner-style setting. *Affordable*. \$

Next Oar, 127 N. High St., 856-293-1360. Intimate restaurant with plenty of atmosphere. *Standard*. \$\$

Oliver's Twist, 66 Sassafra St., 856-327-4288. Simple-yet-fun menu and clever decorations. *Affordable*. \$

Old Oar House Irish Pub, 123 N. High St., 856-293-1200. A first-class establishment. Outside beer garden and seating area. *Affordable*. \$

Port of Call, routes 47 and 55, 856-327-5547. Contemporary American cuisine with something for everyone. *Standard*. \$\$

Winfield's Restaurant, 106 N. High St., 856-327-0909. Fabulous upscale restaurant with a Manhattan feel. *Standard*. \$\$

Mizpah

Uncle Dewey's Outdoor BBQ, 6931 U.S. Route 40, 609-476-4040. Authentic barbecue ribs and chicken, kettle fried fish and home-made sides. *Affordable*. \$

Newport

Bayshore Crabhouse, 100 Back Road, Newport. 856-447-4535. Specializes in seafood and has a simple menu. *Affordable*. \$

Northfield

Antonino's Jo-Jo's, 2405 New Road, 609-646-7565. Amazing Italian dishes. *Affordable*. \$

Atlantic City Country Club, 1 Leo Fraser Drive, 609-641-7575. Gourmet cuisine. *Standard*. \$\$

Atlantic City Sub Shops, 6825 Tilton Road, 609-646-7799. Variety of creative sub options, including low carb. *Affordable*. \$

Bloom Coffee & Tea, 1600 New Road, 609-241-1775. A wide selection of coffees with breakfast and lunch options. *Affordable*. \$

Capri Pizza, 900 Tilton Road, 609-646-2381. Amazing Italian with fantastic pizza choices. *Affordable*. \$

Carluccio's Coal Fired Pizza, 1200 New Road, 609-641-4011. Carluccio's prepares its signature coal-fired pizzas in a variety of tempting styles from Sicilian to New York style. *Standard*. \$\$

(Continued on 26)

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DINING

Dining Capsules

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Chido Burrito, 807 Tilton Road, 609-484-1480. So-Cal style Mexican eatery serving monster-sized "Mission style" burritos. *Affordable.* \$

Giovanni's Best of Italy, 801 Tilton Road, 609-383-1155. Family owned and operated. *Standard.* \$\$

LP Steak Steakhouse & Seafood, 1333 New Road, 609-646-8189. Great steak and seafood choices. *Standard.* \$\$

Northfield Diner, 1515 New Road, 609-641-5725. Serving diner classics and Greek specialties. *Affordable.* \$

Rose's Garden Grill, 2605 New Road, 609-646-1763. Tasty sandwiches, soups and salads. Try it all because everything is delicious! *Affordable.* \$

Roberta's by Joe Muldoon, 1205 Tilton Road, 609-677-0470. Awesome fusion cuisine. *Standard.* \$\$

Ventura's Offshore Cafe, 2015 Shore Road, 609-641-5158. Best bar food in the area. Everything is above average. *Affordable.* \$

Ocean City

701 Mosaic Bistro-Cafe-Catering, 701 Fourth St., 609-398-2700. Ocean City can now dine in Mediterranean style thanks to this chic cafe. *Standard.* \$\$

All Natural Award Winning Pizza, 1136 Asbury Ave., 609-391-2212. All-natural sauce took Best Gourmet Sauce at the 2009 Atlantic City Food and Wine Festival. *Affordable.* \$

Arlene's On Asbury, 624 Asbury Ave., 609-399-3639. Cozy, family-run breakfast and lunch spot. *Affordable.* \$

Augie's Omelette & Waffle, 709 E. 9th Street, 609-391-0222. Serving up breakfast featuring oversized omelettes stuffed with an array of delicious goodies. *Affordable.* \$

Bashful Banana Bakery & Cafe, 944 Boardwalk, 609-398-9677. A novel concept — fresh, healthy food on the Boardwalk. *Affordable.* \$

Beach House Grille, 910 Ocean Ave., 609-399-4059. Omelettes and pancakes cooked to perfection. *Affordable.* \$

Bloom 'n Tulip, 10th Street, between Ocean Avenue and the Boardwalk, 609-399-4953. Wide variety of breakfast foods. *Standard.* \$\$

Brown's Restaurant, Boardwalk and St. Charles Place, 609-391-0677. Known for their famous homemade doughnuts (which are served hot). *Affordable.* \$

Captain Bob's Family Restaurant, 55th Street and Simpson Ave., 609-391-9292. A classic Jersey Shore seafood restaurant. Family friendly. *Standard.* \$\$

Casa del Dolce By The Sea, 949 Asbury Ave., 609-398-9300. Traditional family-owned Italian bakery, deli and restaurant. *Standard.* \$\$

Cafe Beach Club, 1282 Boardwalk, 609-398-7700. An incredible breakfast spot that also does a great lunch and dinner. *Affordable.* \$

Chatterbox, 500 Ninth St., 609-399-0113. An Ocean City institution for more than 70 years. *Affordable.* \$

Cinco de Mayo, 1039 West Ave., 609-399-0199. For a taste of Mexico. *Affordable.* \$

Clancy's By The Sea, 1244 Boardwalk, 609-398-3344. Just like Mom makes. *Standard.* \$\$

Emily's Ocean Room Cafe, inside the Historic Flanders Hotel, 719 E. 11 St., 609-398-5700. American cuisine, homemade soups and desserts made from scratch. \$

Express Pizza & Subs, 719 Battersea Road, 609-398-3322. Try the thin-crust specialty pizza. *Affordable.* \$

Fire on the Beach, 949 Asbury Ave., 609-840-6822. A restaurant for foodies. *Standard.* \$\$

Happy Days Cafe, 960 Asbury Ave., 609-399-0108. '50s-style cafe serving the classics. *Affordable.* \$

Hula Restaurant and Sauce Company, 940 Boardwalk, 609-399-2400. Serving lunches with a Polynesian flair. *Standard.* \$\$

Island Grill, 100 Atlantic Ave., 609-391-9616. An assortment of scrumptious dishes from both land and sea. *Standard.* \$\$

Jay's Crabshack, 737B Asbury Ave., 609-399-4022. Small yet charming seafood hut serving everything from clam strips to crabcakes. *Standard.* \$\$

Jon and Patty's Coffee Bar and Bistro, 637 Asbury Ave., 609-399-3377. Crafty sandwiches and wraps both of which are some of the best in the area. *Affordable.* \$

Katina's Gyro Restaurant, Ninth and Central avenues, 609-399-5525. Greek restaurant with an American kids' menu to satisfy picky small fries. *Affordable.* \$

(Continued on 27)

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Dining Capsules

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La Buena Vita, 755 Asbury Ave., 609-391-8600. Italian favorites from pasta to veal. *Standard*. \$\$

Luigi's, Ninth Street and West Avenue, 609-399-4937. Simple, wholesome Italian fare. *Affordable*. \$

Ma France Creperie, 596 Ninth St., 609-399-9955. Offers buckwheat and dessert crepes for breakfast, lunch and dinner, plus homemade soups, salads, quiche, organic coffee, espresso, lattes and cappuccino. *Standard*. \$\$

Manco and Manco Pizza, 920 Boardwalk, 609-399-2548. Going strong since 1956. Seasonal locations on Eighth and 12th streets. *Affordable*. \$

Mario's Pizzeria, 1510 Bay Ave., 609-398-0490. Simple Italian favorites with delicious pizza. *Affordable*. \$

McGlades, 2nd Ave. and Bay, 609-399-5588. Enjoy well-prepared mahi-mahi, shrimp, crabcakes and other seafood delights. *Standard*. \$\$

Mike's Seafood, 55th Street and West Avenue, 609-399-3474. Dig into fried or steamed seafood platters on your back deck or Mike's. *Affordable*. \$\$

Nonna's Trattoria and Pizzeria, 755 Asbury Ave., 609-840-6440. A bounty of Italian dishes to please everyone in your party. *Standard*. \$\$

OC Surf Cafe, 715 E 8th Street, 609-391-9555. Amazing breakfast. *Affordable*. \$

Oishii Sushi & Tea, 507 Ninth St., 609-391-8900. Sushi, smoothies and bubble tea. *Affordable*. \$

Periwinkles, Ninth Street and Atlantic Avenue, 609-814-9500. Seashore casual atmosphere, very family friendly with an extensive kid's menu. Crab & lobster bisque is a must try. Excellent service, famous early bird special. *Affordable*. \$

Piccini Wood Fired Brick Oven Pizza, 13th Street and West Avenue, 609-525-0767. Wood-fired pizzas, Italian dinners and seafood. *Affordable*. \$

Positively Fourth Street Coffee Bar & Cafe, Fourth Street and Atlantic Avenue, 609-399-8400. Friendly, eclectic little cafe inside Inn at Laurel Bay. *Affordable*. \$

Pure Tacos, 1138 Boardwalk, 609-736-8028. Offering fresh, gluten-free ingredients. Takeout only. *Affordable*. \$

Randazzo Pizzeria & Family Restaurant, 34th Street and Asbury Avenue, 609-814-1600. Family-owned Italian place serves breakfast, lunch and dinner. *Standard*. \$\$

Red's Jersey Mex Café, 11th Street and Haven Avenue, 609-399-2272. Generously portioned burritos, tacos and quesadillas. available. *Affordable*. \$

R.I. Cafe, 403 E. 14th St., 609-391-7780. Asian cuisine offering Mandarin, Cantonese, Hunan and Szechuan food. *Affordable*. \$

Rojo's Tacos, 601 Ocean Ave., 609-391-0970. All of your favorite Mexican treats. *Affordable*. \$

Spadafora's, Ninth Street and Atlantic Avenue, 609-398-6154. More than 25 years old and never out of style. *Standard*. \$\$

Szechwan Garden, 503 E. Ninth St., 609-398-5456. Low-key Chinese. *Affordable*. \$

Tuscanello's Italian Dining, 807 E. 8th St., 609-840-6509. Amazing Italian dishes sure to please any appetite. *Standard*. \$\$

Uncle Bill's Pancake House, 2112 Asbury Ave., 609-398-7393. Serving some of the best pancakes in the area. *Affordable*. \$

Varsity Inn, 605 Eighth St., 609-399-1500. Try the Baked Jersey Tomato soup at this breakfast and lunch stop. *Affordable*. \$

Voltaco's Italian Foods, 957 West Ave., 609-399-0753. Italian classics to take out. Cash only. *Affordable*. \$

Who's on First?, 100 Asbury Ave., 609-399-0764. Coffee, tea, mochas, muffins and lunch. *Affordable*. \$

Yianni's Cafe, 814 Asbury Ave., 609-391-1113. Specialty Greek food and American sub shop favorites. Try the bagels. *Affordable*. \$

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Allen's Clam Bar, 5650 Route 9, New Gretna, 609-296-4106. Famous for oyster stew and clam chowder. *Affordable*. \$

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