

## Building on a passion for BBQ Sisters man set to speak at national convention

By Sheila G. Miller / *The Bulletin*

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Talk of barbecue, be it ribs or brisket or pulled pork, tends to evoke homey images of hole-in-the-wall restaurants in the South.

But next week, a Sisters man will give the opening presentation at the National Barbecue Association's annual meeting.

Roy Slicker, who owns a Sisters barbecue joint called Slick's Que Co., started cooking barbecue seriously about six years ago, and he's got a message for the masses who will gather at the meeting, which runs Feb. 2-6 and takes place in Memphis, Tenn.

"I'm there to set the tone," he said. "The message I'm utilizing (is that) if you do what you absolutely love at a deep level, and you do it passionately, and you do it with people who are doing the same thing, it's an amazing experience."

Slicker recognizes that Sisters isn't traditionally known for its top barbecue. But he said he's spent a great deal of time learning from the best and traveling to various barbecue restaurants to find the best food. Last year for spring break, he took his three daughters, wife, and a mannequin named Charlie from the restaurant on a road trip to Texas, fitting in 17 barbecue joints in five days. They ate at each one.

"Barbecue is just one of those things that brings people together like no other food," he said.

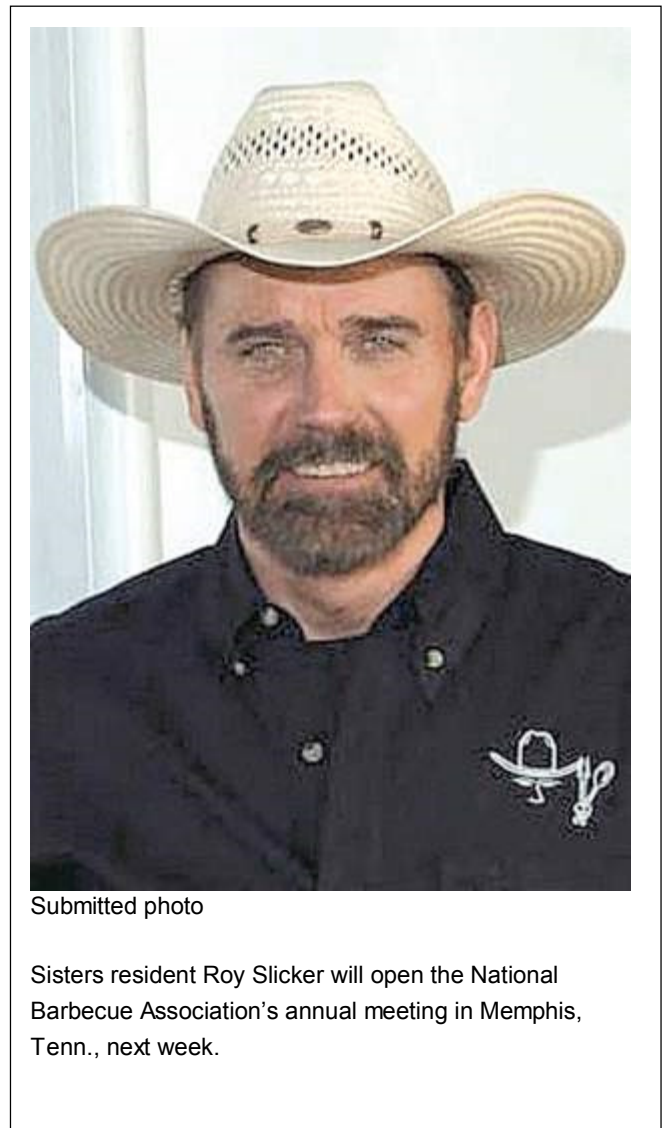
"It's the social aspect. You go to one of these barbecue restaurants and I've gotten to know so many people on this simple, family level that's really moving," he said.

Slicker said when he attended the meeting last year, he hadn't yet considered starting his restaurant. But getting to know legendary barbecue chefs like Mike Mills, who owns four restaurants in Illinois and is known as "The Legend" in the barbecue world, helped Slicker take the next step.

"If you want to accomplish something, hang out with the people who are the leaders in it," Slicker said. "It's amazing what you can learn."

He opened the restaurant over Memorial Day weekend last year, and has averaged about 450 visitors a day.

Slick's Que Co. is closed for January and February, but Slicker said it will reopen early in March. The restaurant also provides



Submitted photo

Sisters resident Roy Slicker will open the National Barbecue Association's annual meeting in Memphis, Tenn., next week.

catering services and sells its products in grocery stores.

When it reopens in March, the restaurant will serve food Wednesdays for lunch, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., and Thursday through Sunday, 11 a.m. to 8 p.m., or whenever it runs out of barbecue for the day.

And yes, that does happen.

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