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## **For Immediate Release**

### **Sayler's Old Country Kitchen Celebrates 75 Years**

*The family-run restaurant is a Portland legend spanning three generations.*

**Portland, OR. August 20, 2021**— Step inside the bustling restaurant known as Sayler's Old Country Kitchen, and you'll experience a unique slice of Portland. Several generations rub elbows here—Baby Boomers, for sure, but you'll also find friendly faces from the Silent Generation, Gen-X, Gen-Z, and Millennials. What brings them to Sayler's? An incredible steak dinner for less than you'd find at any upscale Steakhouse.

#### **Family extends to Employees**

Employees tend to stick around Sayler's. It's part of the charm of coming back and seeing the same server you saw on your last visit. Even in the kitchen, there is stability—an anomaly in the restaurant business. Chef Brent Dahmen has been with the operation for over 30 years. "Instead of looking for employees with a lot of experience, we look for friendly, hard-working people that will fit in well with our team," said Bryan.

"Dad always taught us to treat our employees fairly and with respect," says David as he shoots a glance at his brother, Bryan. Their father, Gene Sayler, sadly died this past December. The brothers are the third generation of the family-run business.

#### **The Founding Brothers**

In 1946, Art and Dick Sayler came west from North Dakota to make their way in the world. They pooled their money and bought a small restaurant out in east Portland called the Old Country Kitchen. It was a small place serving steak, chicken, and the occasional rabbit dinner. Art and Dick had a vision. They knew that post-WWII America hungered for a quality steak dinner at prices that even the common person could afford. "Their innovation was introducing steaks by the ounce. They saw that when they offered only one size of say, a NY, some people were still hungry, and some couldn't finish it. So they offered steaks ranging in size from a 6-ouncer to 72 ounces, to accommodate everyone. That's when things took off," according to Bryan.

#### **The Next Generation and the Next**

Art's sons Jerry and Gene were brought into the business early on and guided the OCK through the 1970s, the '80s, and the '90s. Today, Gene's sons Bryan and David manage the restaurant. Three generations of the Sayler family have always been committed to great dinners, friendly service, and affordable prices.

### **The Saylor's Army**

Saylor's has a loyal following for their Steak Dinners with all the trimmings. It might be a lobster or seafood plate, but it always comes with a baked potato, soup or salad, a scoop of ice cream, and of course, the relish tray. "We would have a riot if we ever dropped the relish tray," states David Saylor. The love for Saylor's is evident in the engagement on social media. "When someone complains that we don't have happy hour, or whatever, other people argue with them on our behalf," laughs Bryan.

### **The NEW 75 oz. Steak Challenge**

Saylor's Old Country Kitchen has gained notoriety over the years for its 72 oz. Steak Challenge. If you can eat that steak and all the side dishes that come with it, you eat your meal for free—and you are forever recognized on their wall of champions. It's a shortlist. "We've had quite a few competitive eaters come through here," said Bryan, "and not all of them make it either." This year they are renaming their iconic challenge in honor of their 75th anniversary.

### **What's Next**

The Saylor brothers are optimistic even in these uncertain times. "Our goal is to make it to our 100th anniversary. The last 18 months have been the most challenging in our 75 year history. But we'll get through." said Bryan Saylor. David agrees.

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Saylor's began August 23rd, 1946

Art and Dick Saylor started the restaurant

Art's sons Jerry and Gene took over in the 70s

Gene's sons Bryan and David took over in the 2000s

Saylor's has national fame for its 72 ounce steak challenge, making it a whistle stop for professional eaters and wannabes. Now it's a 75 ounce Steak Challenge to honor

Saylor's has been featured on food tv shows many times, including in Japan

In the early days the restaurant was visited by touring celebrities like Lawrence Welk

There are a number of photos from the history of Saylor's OKC here:

[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1HuKq\\_JN9Ng4NOMeFrLCS8ed-LgR-kl2o](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1HuKq_JN9Ng4NOMeFrLCS8ed-LgR-kl2o)