



THINK ORANGE VA
ORANGE COUNTY VA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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COOPER'S COOKIN AND CATERING, CELEBRATES 1ST ANNIVERSARY



Orange County, VA – Cooper's Cookin and Catering will celebrate their one (1) year anniversary on Saturday, September 24, 2022, from 1 p.m. – 6 p.m. at its restaurant location in Orange. The event will host a DJ and door prizes along with raffles and their famous southern cuisine and soul food.

Cooper's Cookin and Catering co-owners, Denise Thompson and her cousin Phillip Cooper, are direct descendants of several of the women from Gordonsville, VA tied to the "waiter carriers." "Waiter Carriers" were local women who sold fried chicken and other food items at the railroad stop in the late 1800s and 1900s, prior to the time that dining cars existed. These women were able to gain financial independence through their entrepreneurial skills. Because of this, Gordonsville became known as the "Fried Chicken Capital of the World." Although the need for the services decreased as dining cars were added to rail cars and government regulations increased, their recipes lived on through Mildred Cooper, Gladys Cooper, Pauline Johnson and other relatives who continued to sell locally until the late 1900s.

Rose Deal, Director of Economic Development noted, "We are thrilled to be able to celebrate this milestone with Cooper's Cookin and Catering and are proud that they continue the legacy of the waiter carriers today. It's significant that residents and visitors alike can taste the authentic, original recipes of the entrepreneurial women who earned Gordonsville the title of "Fried Chicken Capital of the World." We wish Denise and Phillip many more years of continued business success!"

Denise is Mildred Cooper's youngest daughter and uses the original family recipes at Cooper's Cookin and Catering. "This is where my vision came from. ... My aunts and my mom. I know that they are smiling down on us," says Denise Thompson. In addition to Phillip and Denise, Michael Cooper (one of Mildred's sons) the special family chicken cooker, adds his flair to the mix. He is the force behind many of the Gordonsville Fried Chicken Festival wins held by the Cooper family.

Cooper's Cookin and Catering is located at 131 Byrd Street, Orange, VA. They are open daily (except Wednesdays) for breakfast and catering, lunch. For more information call 540-308-7199.

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