

All the ingredients for SUCCESS

The Roanoker Restaurant combines all the ingredients needed to satisfy customers for more than 60 years.

BY CLAUDIA NEWCORN

SURVIVAL IN THE RESTAURANT business depends on three critical factors: customer service, an appealing menu and delicious food. For more than 60 years, the Roanoker Restaurant has been doing all of that and more.

Opened by owner EC Warren's father in 1941, the Roanoker has been serving generation after generation with home-cooked meals made from the best quality ingredients. "We're serving seniors who first came to our restaurant in their 20s," says Warren, who has been involved with the restaurant all his life. "Part of our appeal is we're always updating our menu to reflect current taste preferences — without giving up the popular items that people grew up with."

The restaurant has grown in size over the decades and moved three times to its current location at the Tower Shopping Center. Catering to all ages, families and groups, as well as offering take-out, the Roanoker features multiple dining rooms and banquet facilities that seat up to 80 people. "People come here to celebrate birthdays, weddings, board meetings — we're a bit of an institution," Warren explains.

A small retail area nestles in the bay windows near the entry, and showcases some of the restaurant's take-home products. The lounge features a solid mahogany bar, and

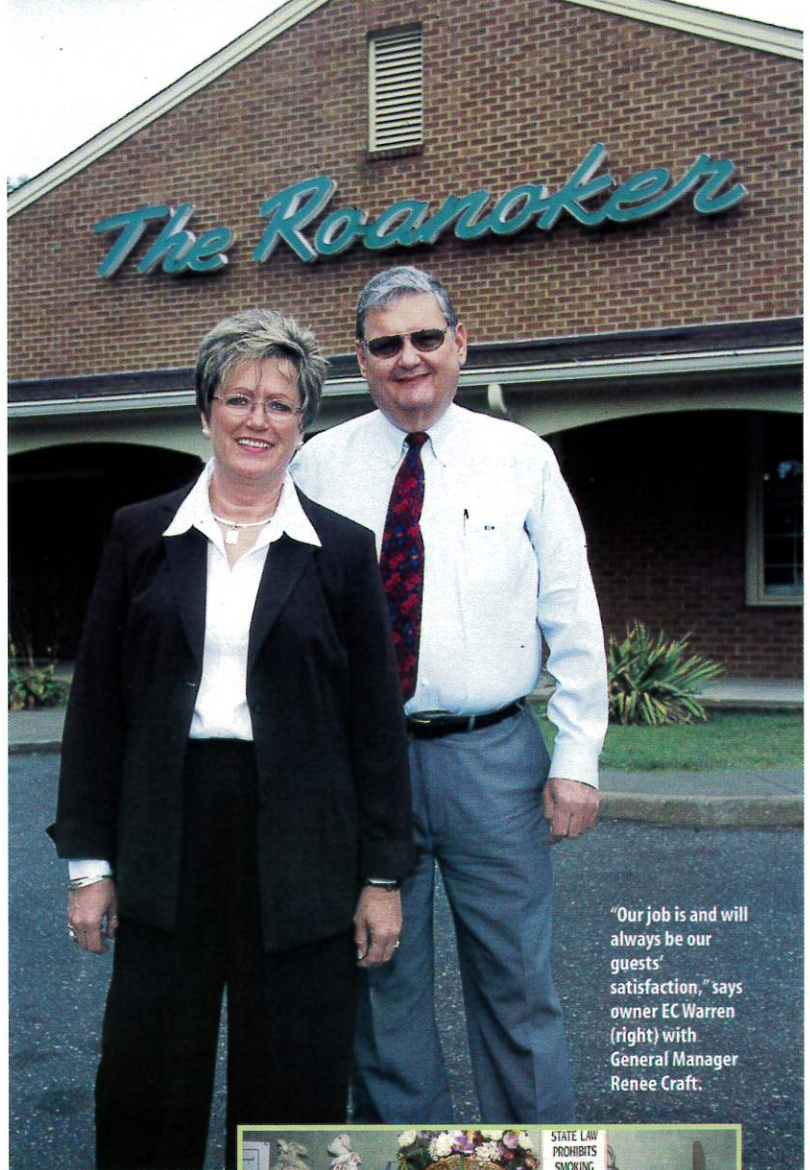
according to Warren, "Dad saw one in St. Louis, and he liked it so well he had one made by a local lumber company."

For many regular customers, coming to the Roanoker is like being with family. Several of the staff have been with the establishment more than 20 years, and have watched couples date, get married, and then bring their children. "Some people jokingly call us the poor man's country club," Warren says. "We're a real social center. We have people working for us who are the children of people who worked for us 20 years ago."

Warren credits the Roanoker's enduring success to the quality of both his staff and the food — and customers agree. "We patronize the restaurant at least once a week," says customer Peggy Adams, "and think the waitresses are super. They are very attentive to our needs without being intrusive."

Vice President and Manager of Starr Tours Shane Lauler writes, "I wanted to thank you so much for your wonderful hospitality on our recent trip to Virginia. Thank you for a job well done."

Warren knows that to appeal to all ages, it's important to stay up with eating trends. Low-carb and heart-healthy items were added



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to the menu in response to customer requests. New menu items are tested on willing guests to determine taste and appeal. Seasonal favorites are added throughout the year, taking advantage of fresh local produce. Daily specials tantalize expectant taste buds.

"We greatly appreciate the Valley and all the people who come here," Warren says. "Our job is and will always be our guests' satisfaction. We try to treat them like family, listen to their ideas for recipes and other suggestions, and make sure our food is always of the best quality. It's why we've been around for more than 60 years." ♦

For more info

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