

Plenty of apples



Carrie Stombaugh peels apples in preparation for the kick-off luncheon at the Apple Dumplin' Grandma's Way restaurant Friday at Mt. Vernon-Outland Airport. LEAH NICOLE WILLIAMS/REGISTER-NEWS

New airport restaurant previews its home cookin'

By LEAH NICOLE WILLIAMS

lnh.williams@register-news.com

MT. VERNON — Sometimes the best help comes from within the family.

"I called Mom and told her my noodles weren't coming out right," Randy Wingler said. "So she came and now they're perfect."

Approximately 50 community members got their first taste of Wingler's brand new Apple



Randy Wingler

The restaurant's servers and cooks dedicated their time to serve the free

Dumplin' Grandma's Way restaurant — days before it opens — as part of the kick-off luncheon Friday afternoon inside the Koziara Terminal at Mt. Vernon-Outland Airport.

event, which included food items from the restaurant's menu.

Grandma's Way opens to the general public at 7 a.m. Tuesday.

Bob and Rita Wingler opened the first Apple Dumplin' restaurant in Champaign-Urbana in July 1985. Randy Wingler decided to follow in his parents' footsteps after periodically helping out for more than 20

see RESTAURANT/Page 5A

RESTAURANT

continued from 1A

years.

He first moved to Mt. Vernon 16 years ago, relocated by the plumbing wholesaler he was working with at the time, and has come back to the King City.

"I just decided it was time to open my own," Wingler said.

Mt. Vernon is the perfect location, he said, because of its hometown feel.

"Everybody's family. Everybody knows everybody," he said.

Also helping out during Friday's luncheon were Wingler's daughter Kristin, 21, and son Rees, 8.

Wingler, who also served and cleaned up tables, said he wanted to get into the restaurant business because he enjoys interacting with the people.

"I want to share what my grandmother shared with my mom and what my mom shared with me," he said. "I want to have something for my kids to have."

According to a press release, an estimated 292,000 apple dumplings have been sold at the restaurant's Urbana location since it opened. Wingler said they had also hand-peeled 26 tons of potatoes at the first restaurant.

Wingler said the quality of the new Apple Dumplin' branch will have the same flavor as a home-cooked meal.

"This will be like going to grandma's house on Sunday afternoons for dinner," Wingler said. "It's that good. It's an art."

Airport Manager Chris Collins said the success of Grandma's Way may help draw other businesses to the east side of town.

"It's exciting for this end of

town," Collins said. "This has the potential to draw people back this way instead of always going west."

Airport Authority Chairman Alan Hale agreed, saying: "It's

generally a wholesome family business, and we are very fortunate to have that at the airport."

Both Bob and Rita Wingler attended their son's kick-off

luncheon Friday, and Randy said he couldn't describe how indebted he is to them.

"It wouldn't have been as successful today without them," he said.

4/28/07