



TEAMMATES

Kentucky Rancher and Chef
Trade Places.



*by Laura Conaway
Certified Angus Beef LLC*

"It's like watching a basketball team," Charlie Boyd says over the crowd. "If you've played enough games together, you know how to read each other through the orders."

Satisfied with his analysis, the Kentucky rancher smiles and takes a step back in an attempt to stay out of the way.

"Bread! Hot bread coming through!"

As quick as the warning, the waiter has come and gone, and Boyd leans back into the chaos. It's organized, though, the line of Josh Moore's Volare Italian Ristorante in Louisville, and Boyd has floor seats.

"If I had my ball cap on, I'd turn it around, roll up my sleeves and get to work," he says, a cowboy hat atop his head.

Under the kitchen's evening lights he'd soon get his chance, but not before the chef's chance at daybreak.

At home on the range

"I feel like Mike Rowe on *Dirty Jobs*," Moore says, pulling a glove over the steer tattoo on his forearm.

The 37-year-old executive chef, executive pastry chef and partner at Volare doesn't hesitate. He may not know cattle the way Boyd does, but he knows hard work just the same.

"We want to keep semen at 98 degrees, just like your body temperature," Boyd says, showing what ranchers will do in cold weather to keep the tools of artificial insemination (AI) warm, "so stick that [AI gun] down your shirt." The two laugh about the "glamorous" life not always shown in the movies.

For Moore, this is an early morning experience, a change of pace, an opportunity to try on the other guy's boots for size.

For Boyd, this is the everyday.

"My great-grandfather, grandfather and father were all cattle guys," Boyd says of growing up in May's Lick, Ky. It's true his father, Big Chuck, loved a Hereford, but Charlie preferred Angus and raised his sons the same way. As fifth-generation cattlemen on the land, Blake and Logan help operate Boyd Beef Cattle with their dad.

In fact, it was Angus and the desire to raise and sell quality beef that brought this duo together.

"That's where *Certified Angus Beef*® (CAB®) is different than any other branded program, because it connects people like you and me," Boyd says. Producer to chef to consumer, "there's always room to grow and improve, and I think CAB will continue to expand on that."

"The most enjoyable part for me is seeing the passion you have for what you do," Moore says. "Even though it's a business, it's a family, and I can tell you have a lot of pride."



Kitchen playmakers

Boyd finds the same thing when he walks into Moore's kitchen.

A trailblazer in a tough industry, the chef does his own thing, and it works. As a

teenager, he left football to tackle two jobs in two separate kitchens to hone his craft. As an adult, he traded a formal culinary education for what he calls "the school of hard knocks" to learn on the line.

Pressure, expectations, little room for error — Moore thrives in that space and actually prefers it. That mutual understanding brings a natural camaraderie to the pair.

"The detail of the plating, it's amazing," Boyd says. He steps in to fill an order, watchful yet swift.

"There's an art to it. It's a dance," Moore says, one that requires him as head coach.

In both worlds, uniformity pays.

"I do the dining room chef thing," Moore says of common practice with popular chefs, "but I'm still on the line, running the wheel, plating, keeping everybody on their toes."

Boyd's basketball analogy rings true.

There are so many players, each with their own crucial part, swaying back and forth, reaching high and stretching across the tiniest of spaces to get a dish just right. They don't have to talk. The laughter from the front of the house and the sizzling of the grills carry enough volume.

For these culinary athletes, every evening's a performance and a practice just the same. They're professionals who make what Boyd does on one side of the fence worth it for those Moore serves at the table.

Continued on page 50

Ranchers and chefs: One group's days are usually ending when the other's are just getting started, but they share more than they sometimes realize — long hours, the unknown, generations of tradition and an appreciation for quality. They're on the same team.

"It's a trickle-down effect," Boyd says, "that starts with the producer, then the brand and then you. Everybody's tied together, and if somebody breaks the link, it's not good for anybody else. I truly believe that."

Moore does, too.

The Louisville chef spends six days a week at the helm of his fine-dining restaurant where he fields questions about how safe his beef is and where it was raised.

"From a chef and owner standpoint, having more knowledge for my guests, to have these experiences and stories, it's priceless," Moore says.

The trade

It had been an early rise for the duo that gathered at Boyd's Angus farm at sunrise, but it was evident from the start that they'd get along.

They always do.

"There's a gap between our segments, and we need to do a better job communicating our story," Boyd says.

So the two traded places.

Charlie cooked and served over requests like: "She wants the Pappardelle Boscaiola, but without the bacon," "Veal meatball walkin' in," and "I need to see Erin on the fly."

Josh tagged a newborn calf.

"That's all just good, preventative stuff," the chef suggests as the rancher follows up with a vaccination.

"Exactly," Boyd answers. "We don't want an infection setting in."

After reuniting cow and calf, the two step back into the barn.

"Ever AI a cow?" Boyd asks, knowing the answer full well. "You ready? Let's do it," he jokes.

That's how Moore ended up with the glove.

Soon they'd head west to the restaurant, but only after Moore would meet the Boyds' favorite cow, Abigale, and run the feed truck.

"It'd be hard to even put a value on how much customers will appreciate this," Moore says. "They love it, and it brings them back."

Hours later, back at the restaurant, a diner asks about the picture he saw of Moore on the farm.

"The rancher's actually here; that's him," Moore says as Boyd appears from the kitchen, orders in hand.

Attention pulls from all areas of the dining room as patrons watch rancher and chef work together.

It takes two, and they're certainly a better team because of it. 



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Chef Moore and Boyd inspect the tomahawk steaks for which the chef is known.