

# BARBECUE

## HALL OF FAME



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**Contact:**

Julie Warner  
AdFarm  
2101 Broadway Blvd  
Kansas City, MO 64108  
[julie.warner@adfarm.com](mailto:julie.warner@adfarm.com)

**American Royal reveals stellar lineup of 2023 Barbecue Hall of Fame inductees**

Honorees acknowledged for their outstanding contributions to the barbecue community

**KANSAS CITY, Mo. (May 24, 2023)** — As part of its mission to recognize, document and preserve barbecue heritage, the [American Royal Barbecue Hall of Fame](#) has announced the inductees into its 2023 Hall of Fame class. Four inductees and three legacy inductees are among this year's honorees.

In recognition of their significant contributions to the barbecue cuisine, Byron Chism, Freeport, Florida; Flora Payne, Memphis, Tennessee; Dave Raymond, Wooddale, Illinois; and Darren Warth, Des Moines, Iowa are being inducted Barbecue Hall of Fame. Bill Arnold, Memphis, Tennessee; Columbus B. Hill, Denver, Colorado; and Rick Schmidt, Lockhart, Texas have also been named as legacy members.

**2023 Inductees**

- **Byron Chism** is best known for his legendary Butt Rub, which launched him into a long and exciting 25-year career in the barbecue industry. He started cooking barbecue in college and later attended the Culinary Institute of America. Among his many honors, Chism was named one of the top ten Kansas City Barbeque Society (KCBS) cooks for seven consecutive years (2000-2007).
- **Flora Payne** has been running Payne's Barbecue in Memphis, alongside her children, since her husband's death in 1984. Over the past 37 years, Payne and her children have gained national acclaim as one of the great American barbecue restaurants, with their staple menu item, chopped pork barbecue sandwiches.
- **Dave Raymond**, aka Sweet Baby Ray, is a lifelong Chicago resident with over 29 years of experience in the barbecue industry. In 1982, Dave and his lifelong friend Mike O'Brien built Sweet Baby Ray's, which is now the best-selling barbecue sauce in the country. Now a multifaceted business operation, Sweet Baby Ray's boasts two restaurants and two premier catering companies. Dave is also a member of the competition team, Duce's Wild, which has won over 40 awards since it began competing.

- **Darren Warth** has become one of the circuit's most decorated pitmasters since his barbecue competition debut in 2003. In 2006, Warth and his wife, Sherry, founded Smokey D's BBQ catering company. Warth has received over 90 State BBQ Championships, over 1,000 local, regional and national barbecue awards with multiple notable victories, and has centered his success around consistency, quality and affordability, making them central Iowa's destination for championship barbecue.

### 2023 Legacy Inductees

- **Bill Arnold**, the man behind Blues Hog Barbecue Sauce, discovered his passion for cooking at an early age while watching locals make "squirrel stew" near his grandmother's home in Memphis, Tennessee. Arnold's journey in barbecue was full of memorable moments, from late-night hog cookouts to impromptu fiddle music sessions. Despite his passing in 2021, Bill's legacy lives on as the sauce created in his garage continues to delight barbecue enthusiasts worldwide.
- **Columbus B. Hill** was a well-known barbecue man in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when he supervised some of the largest barbecues in Colorado history. Hill was recognized for his barbecue skills and officiated at numerous barbecues. Despite limited recognition beyond his immediate colored community, Hill and other African American pitmasters served as barbecue ambassadors, maintaining barbecue culture in the South and spreading it to other parts of the country.
- **Rick Schmidt** served as owner of Kreuz Market, a barbecue establishment in Texas, passed to him as a family tradition. Known for his commitment to quality, Schmidt popularized Kreuz Market with their signature beef sausage, pork chops, beef shoulder clod and ubiquitous brisket. In 2017, he passed the business to his son, who made some additions while honoring his father's legacy, and in 2019 Schmidt passed away at the age of 73.

Additionally, the Barbecue Hall of Fame annually recognizes a group of people with an Impact Award for their contributions and commitment to the world of barbecue. This year's Impact Award is dedicated to all of the people who have supported "The BBQ Forum," founded by Ray Basso. The BBQ Forum is a catalyst for barbecue enthusiasts to share friendship, knowledge and business startup success, which has changed the barbecue industry and impacted thousands of lives, including the establishment of the Barbecue Hall of Fame.

"By demonstrating exceptional excellence, passion and unwavering commitment to the barbecue craft, this year's inductees have earned their place in the Barbecue Hall of Fame," said Jackie McClaskey, president and CEO of the American Royal Association. "A thorough evaluation process involving 90 nominees and 10 finalists was conducted by the Barbecue Hall of Fame nominating committee and living members of the Barbecue Hall of Fame to select the inductees. We are proud to celebrate their remarkable achievements to the barbecue heritage by welcoming them into the Barbecue Hall of Fame."

The 2023 inductees will be recognized during the 43rd American Royal World Series of Barbecue® planned for Sept. 27-Oct. 1, 2023, in Kansas City, Kansas. For more information about the American Royal Barbecue Hall of Fame, visit [barbecuehalloffame.com](http://barbecuehalloffame.com).

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**About the American Royal Association**

A Kansas City tradition since 1899, the American Royal is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization whose mission is to be the nation's leader for food and agriculture education, events and engagement. The American Royal provides opportunities for youth and adults from around the world to engage in high-quality events and experiences, including nationally competitive livestock shows, the world's largest barbecue competition, regional and national equine shows, youth and professional rodeos, and elementary and secondary education outreach. Support from partners, members, and volunteers help the American Royal achieve its vision of a world where food and agriculture are celebrated, and all generations are committed to its future.