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## **Ryan's Roadhouse is proud to be smoke-free**

St. Johns~ Ryan's Roadhouse, located on E State Street in St. Johns, has been in Ryan Colthorp's family for 41 years. In that time, the Roadhouse has undergone many changes.

When Ryan's grandparents, "Big Jim" and Rosie Nuser, purchased the restaurant and bar back in 1959, it was known as the Parkway Inn. The Nuser's changed the name to the Roadhouse in 1961, followed by extensive remodeling in the 1960s and 1970s.

After a brief change in ownership in the 80s, the Nuser's once again were back in business at the Roadhouse, with yet another name change-- Ye Ol' Roadhouse.

It was at this time that Ryan Colthorp began running the restaurant with his grandparents and, in 1997, ownership of the Roadhouse was passed to Colthorp. It wasn't long before Colthorp began making changes of his own, beginning with another name change—Ryan's Roadhouse. A total renovation inside and out was soon to follow.

But of all the changes that have taken place at the Roadhouse over the years, the most recent change has left customers breathing a little easier because, as of December 26, 2009, Ryan's Roadhouse went smoke-free.

So why did the Roadhouse go smoke-free now, when the entire state is scheduled to go smoke-free on May 1? According to Colthorp, the decision was made for a variety of reasons. "I'd been thinking about it for awhile and it just made financial sense, Colthorp said. "I knew having a smoke-free establishment would save on cleaning costs and I actually had customers requesting a smoke-free environment. I also did it for personal reasons; my mother died of lung cancer four years ago at the age of 54, so in a way it was a small tribute to her."

Colthorp was somewhat concerned that the new no-smoking policy would hurt business, but he has found just the opposite to be true. "Customers have been very enthusiastic," Colthorp said. "We've definitely seen an increase in the number of customers in our dining room as well as at the bar," he continued. "I've actually had people come up to me and say 'thank you.' So no, going smoke-free has definitely not hurt business. I only wish I'd done it sooner!"

According to Board of Health Vice Chair and Clinton County Commissioner Paul E. McNamara, Colthorp is continually upgrading the facilities and atmosphere at the Roadhouse as well as giving to the community.

"I'm very appreciative to the people of St. Johns for supporting my business and I try to support the community in return," Colthorp said. "All of the changes at the Roadhouse would not have been possible without the strong support of the community."

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## 2~ Ryan's Roadhouse

The Mid-Michigan District Board of Health and staff wish to congratulate Ryan's Roadhouse for choosing to be smoke-free prior to the May 1 state-wide ban. In recognition of his efforts in implementing a smoke-free policy that prohibits smoking in his establishment, Colthorp was recently presented with a certificate by McNamara which read, 'Thank you for protecting your patrons and employees from the potential hazards associated with exposure to secondhand smoke.'

"Smoke-free policies decrease absenteeism, reduce housekeeping costs and maintenance costs, lower insurance rates and result in fewer smoking-related deaths," said Kimberly Singh, Health Officer for MMDHD. "Smoke-free air is good for patrons, workers and business."

For more information on the negative health effects of secondhand smoke or to view the Smoke-Free Restaurant Directory, please visit MMDHD's website at [www.mmdhd.org](http://www.mmdhd.org). If you are aware of any additional smoke-free dining establishments not listed in the directory, please contact Connie Smith at MMDHD (989) 227-3109.

*Mid-Michigan District Health Department serves the residents of Clinton, Gratiot and Montcalm Counties.*

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**PHOTO CAPTION:** Left to right: Ryan Colthorp, owner, Ryan's Roadhouse and Clinton County Commissioner and Mid-Michigan District Board of Health Vice Chair Paul E. McNamara