

Deb Farris Makes St. Pat's Day Special With Her Legendary Corned Beef and Cabbage

by CJ Nasello

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ALTON - Deb Farris is known around the Alton area as an excellent chef, but what she may be most known for is her corned beef and cabbage on St. Patrick's Day at Johnson's Corner.

Deb has had a busy past few weeks and has worked on corned beef and cabbage preparation each day during that period.

“I have been cooking for about 52 years,” she said. “I started at a nursing home at age 16. I started at Johnson’s Corner in August 1999.”

Deb remembers in her first year, Johnson’s Corner had a flood of people on St. Pat’s Day wanting some of her corned beef and cabbage. She said she was well-known at the nursing home she worked at and several turned out, and the crowd kept coming.

In her second year, she remembers coming into Johnson’s Corner and seeing a line formed outside for corned beef and cabbage, a tradition that continues to this day.

“Cooking is my passion,” she said. “I love cooking, period, but we prepare 600-700 pounds of corned beef and cabbage here every St. Pat’s Day. It takes a lot of time. People ask me for my recipe, but I don’t ever give it to anyone.”

Deb is a proud 1972 Marquette High School graduate. She said she is also a lifelong Alton resident.

She also said proudly that she will take a hot plate of corned beef and cabbage home to her mother, the highlight of her day and something her mom cherishes.

[Dan Brannan also contributed to this story.](#)