

Chaffee's Got Heart Community Spotlight: Simple Eatery

The Chaffee's Got Heart Committee is extremely proud of local businesses and individuals that have gone above and beyond by doing extraordinary things during these uncertain times.

From innovating ways to thrive despite trying circumstances to showering struggling members of our community with generosity to prioritizing the health and safety of our most vulnerable, these businesses and individuals, who have been nominated for this honor by fellow community members, have shown what it really means when we say: **Chaffee's Got HEART.**

Today, we sat down with **Ryan McFadden, owner of Simple Eatery** to find out how the pandemic changed operations at this casual restaurant, artisan bakery, and frozen yogurt establishment committed to offering a fresh, natural, relaxed dining experience.

How did COVID cause you to innovate the way you do business?

When the shutdown first happened, I made a commitment to our staff that we were not going to lay anyone off. This is our town, we live here, everyone employed lives here and I couldn't walk around with that. So, we decided if we weren't going to be open, we were going to take the opportunity to do other things. We remodeled the inside, started delivery, opened the grocery store and made meal kits. My staff was totally into it and did an amazing job.

When we were able to reopen, even at 25% capacity, we were so busy that it was awesome we had our whole staff on



board to handle it. We even opened up a pop-up pizza kitchen inside that gives a preview of the Italian restaurant we are opening down the street.

Why did you decide to go above & beyond to contribute to our community?

I live here. This is my town so the last thing I wanted to do was make people collect unemployment or shut our doors. We just made a call to keep everyone working and to stay open in whatever way we could. We were (and still are) committed to doing whatever we need to do survive even if it involves stepping outside our comfort zone.

Where do you see examples of the idea that 'Chaffee's Got Heart'?

Most of the locals have been very supportive of us and the regulations to keep people safe. The fact that we never got shut down completely in this county was a testament to the fact that people were doing their part and that residents are full of heart. We saw another example in our staff of over 50 people; we asked them to watch their behavior outside of work since we were all depending on each other to stay open. They took it to heart. And, with care and commitment to the regulations and a little luck, we stayed healthy and could stay open.

What's your biggest takeaway from 2020?

The biggest thing I learned is that we are all pretty adaptable and willing to try new things. I wasn't sure how things would go or if we would make it at limited capacity, but we learned what works, what doesn't and rewrote our thoughts on how to do business. This made us more efficient and creative with avenues of revenue and we've been successful as a result of our adaptability.



Cool Tidbits:

For a month every fall, the Simple Eatery gives back and takes care of the Buena Vista business community by providing lunch for a couple businesses a day.

Check out their menu, specials, order online and stay up-to-date:

- Visit their website: www.spoon-it-up.com
- Like Simple Eatery on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/spoontherapy>
- Follow on Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/simpleatery/>

Stories of Chaffee County individuals and businesses rising to the challenge abound.

We will be shining a light on those doing extraordinary things for the community throughout the upcoming months. Visit our websites ([Chaffee's Got Heart](#) or [CCPH](#)) or follow us on [Facebook \(@COVID19ChaffeeCounty\)](#) to see more.

Know a potential candidate, or are you one yourself? Send nomination ideas to: health@chaffeecounty.org.