

Jeff Around Town – August 16th, 2024

Otis: Let's go around town, Jeff around town.

Jeff: Otis, good morning.

Otis: There's the Jeff.

Jeff: There he is.

Otis: There's the Jeff.

Jeff: Jeff around town. Maybe today it's Jeff out of town.

Otis: Yeah, you're out, you're out state. You're north of Ord.

Jeff: Well, Otis, if you were to drive from Denver to Minneapolis or vice versa and you wanted to stop exactly halfway for a slice of pizza, where might that be? Most people might say maybe, I don't know, Grand Island, York, maybe Omaha, but how about a town on the edge of the Sandhills known not for pepperoni pizza necessarily, but for bucking Broncos...

Otis: Oh, I know now!

Jeff: ...because we're talking about Burwell

Otis: Burwell. Big rodeo out there.

Jeff: Home of, it's called Nebraska's Big Rodeo and... uh Rodeo, not Ro-day-oh, but that's a whole different topic.

Otis: I know. Don't start that debate.

Jeff: But Burwell is just west and a little north of Omaha by about 170 miles, and the owners of this popular pizzeria in Burwell tell me that Google Maps has now declared for travelers going between Denver and the Twin Cities that Burwell is exactly the halfway point.

Otis: Is it really?

Jeff: If you're willing to get off the interstate...

Otis: Oh yeah.

Jeff: ...and why not, because the Sandhills are so beautiful.

Otis: That's the best kind of driving.

Jeff: It is. The Blue Highways, William Leastheat Moon, that old book.

Otis: Oh yeah.

Jeff: I don't know if you've read It's a great book. But taking the road less traveled is often a great way to see a place just like the Sandhills. And if you don't, you'll miss a place like Burwell, and you'll miss the Pizza Palace. So, I was recently on a fishing trip at Calamus Reservoir near Burwell and Ord on a day so hot that even the fish were complaining about the weather. So, what do you do when you can't catch a single bass in the reservoir or a rainbow trout from Gracie Creek Pond?

Otis: Get out the dynamite.

Jeff: Get out the dynamite or head over to Pizza Palace for maybe a pepperoni pie. Otis also, the Reuben Pizza, complete with sauerkraut. It's such a perfect Nebraska pizza ingredient, sauerkraut. Plus, they have, I just want to mention, they have gluten-free crust, which isn't always easy to find, even in bigger cities. So, I talked with the owners, Andrea and Cody Horner. She holds down the fort in Burwell. They're a married couple, and he goes back and forth to South Dakota where they have a farm. So, when he's not tending to the cattle and the crops up north, you can find him tossing pizza crust in Burwell.

Otis: Wow.

Jeff: And the place is catching on. Not only has it become-

Otis: Called the Pizza Palace?

Jeff: Pizza Palace.

Otis: Okay.

Jeff: Not only become a favorite spot between Colorado and Minnesota, it's popular with travelers from all over the globe and some celebrities. And even Otis, the brother of the president of Panama, has eaten there. He was on a trip to the area for the Pitzer Ranch horse sale.

Otis: All right. Okay. So- It wasn't like fleeing something.

Jeff: Well, I don't know, actually. But fleeing on a horse from the Pitzer Ranch. So, Andrea and Cody's goal is to make Pizza Palace the best pizza spot in all of Nebraska. So, for those of you in the Omaha area, you're only a few hours away. So, if you stay overnight, I just want to mention just down the road in Ord, you'll find Scratchtown Brewery and a wonderful theater called the Golden Husk, where they celebrate the creative arts.

Otis: They only got like 1,500 people or something in town, so that's really amazing.

Jeff: It is amazing. And if you can't stay overnight, there's nothing stopping you from taking a drive from the Omaha area for a late lunch or early dinner and returning the same day, and you can catch a glimpse of the beautiful sandhills. And Otis, that's another Jeff Around Town, or as we said, maybe Jeff Around Town.

Otis: Jeff Outta Town.

Jeff: Jeff Outta Town.

Otis: Burwell, home of the Nebraska Rodeo.

Jeff: Exactly.

Otis: Knew that. And I was asking, what's the name of the pizza place you're talking about? How many are there in Burwell?

Jeff: Pizza?

Otis: I bet it's the only place.

Jeff: I think it's the only pizza place.

Otis: Pizza Palace. There you go. All right, buddy.

Jeff: All right.

Otis: Thanks a lot. Thanks for the Burwell update. And once again, that's just north of Ord. Around Town with Jeff every Friday at 8:45.