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## Dayton Daily News

# Local restaurant owner named 'Franchisee of the Year'



- [Mark Fisher](#)

Staff Writer

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The franchisee for a Dayton-area Wing Zone restaurant has been named the chain's "Owner-Operator of the Year."

"Honestly, this was a complete surprise to me," said Randy Saylor, the franchise owner-operator for the Wing Zone restaurant at 654 E. Dixie Drive in West Carrollton. The only other Dayton-area Wing Zone, located in the Page Manor Shopping Center on Airway Road in Riverside, is separately owned.

The Atlanta-based chicken-restaurant chain also gave Saylor its "Longevity Award." Saylor first joined Wing Zone in 2006 as a part-time employee.

"He's one of those owners that spends each day behind the counter with his staff to help ensure exceptional experiences for all his guests," a Wing Zone spokeswoman said of Saylor. Indeed, when this news outlet called the restaurant, Saylor himself answered the phone.

Saylor and his wife Trina have operated the restaurant for three years, but until last October, it was located on Springboro Pike (Ohio 741) near a Kroger store that offered to buy out its lease because the grocery chain is building a new, larger store adjacent to its existing one.

Saylor said he could have simply accepted the buyout and gone in another direction, but decided to stick with Wing Zone and find another location. He signed a lease for a former Taco Bell in West Carrollton and reopened in January 2017.

"It has been a rousing success," Saylor said. "Our sales are up 75 percent compared to our other store." The restaurant offers delivery, which makes up as much as two-thirds of sales, Saylor said.

He is confident of Wing Zone's ability to compete in a rapidly intensifying Dayton-area chicken-restaurant market that has seen new entries from Mike's Nashville Hot and Raising Cane's, as well as expansions by established chains such as Chick-fil-A, Church's, Popeye's and others. A KFC is virtually around the corner from his restaurant.

"We welcome the competition," Saylor said. "We think that from the standpoint of the quality of our food, we can compete against anyone."

Atlanta-based Wing Zone offers wings in both traditional and boneless, chicken tenders, fried shrimp, and Angus burgers, along with 14 different sauce options, including Buffalo Bliss, Nuclear Habanero, Mango Fire, Lemon Zinger, and Thai Chili. Sides and appetizers include Mac 'n Cheese Wedges, Sweet Corn Bites, Wedge Fries and Texas Toast.

Wing Zone has nearly 100 locations open or in development in 21 states across the U.S. and also is expanding internationally, with a strong presence in Panama, Singapore, Malaysia and other countries.

Wing Zone was founded in 1991 in the University of Florida fraternity house kitchen of Matt Friedman and Adam Scott, who started by delivering their wings to fellow college students. After opening several Wing Zone locations around college markets, Scott and Friedman began offering franchises in 2000.

For more information, call the West Carrollton Wing Zone at (937) 294-9663.