

Bryan Schaaf: It's the first annual Tony's, not that one, award show presented by the Meat Speak podcast and the Certified Angus Beef brand. With special mentions of Brett Sawyer and Good Company, the braised beef shank, Glen Wheeler of Spencer's in Omaha, and also featuring a performance from meat scientist, Diana Clark's Solid Gold dancers. And now your hosts, Bryan Schaaf and Tony Biggs.

Right here on the Meat Speak podcast, powered by the Certified Angus Beef brand, Bryan Schaaf, chef Tony Biggs. Chef, how are you doing?

Tony Biggs: I am great. How are you today?

Bryan Schaaf: I feel good. I'm a little disappointed you didn't wear your tuxedo for this.

Tony Biggs: I should have and my bow tie, my red bow tie and my red, slippery slippers from the Wizard of Oz. I should have wore those.

Bryan Schaaf: It's a big day. For the second year in a row, one of the things that I have gotten to plan... I get a lot of questions, generally it's around like, what do you do? Or, I should actually more accurately state that, what do you do?

Tony Biggs: You do a lot man, come on.

Bryan Schaaf: I show up, I drink coffee.

Tony Biggs: You eat burgers.

Bryan Schaaf: I eat stuff.

Tony Biggs: You're really good at what you do. You're a musician. Let me pour on the accolades. You don't have to do this to yourself. You're a great musician. Oh my gosh. Especially Beatles tunes. Unbelievable. You are a burger connoisseur. I mean, of the extreme.

Bryan Schaaf: That just means I eat a lot.

Tony Biggs: All I have to do is, where's the best burger? You know exactly where it is. You also work the room better than anybody. Getting chefs to come here to Certified Angus Beef. You're a master of this buddy. Give me five. Give me a pump fist.

Bryan Schaaf: Chef, I appreciate you saying that. Unfortunately there's no award for that.

Tony Biggs: And you're such a lovable Teddy at the same time.

Bryan Schaaf: I am like a big, squishy, bearded teddy bear. But that said for the second year... One of the things that I have gotten to do for a number of years now is I always

attend the James Beard foundation awards, which generally happen, the restaurant awards at least, happen in early May. You go, you get your tuxedo and it's fun. And the after party is always a good time. But for the second year in a row, last year, obviously with the pandemic, they canceled it because it's a very large, couple thousand people event at the Lyric Opera House in Chicago every year. And this year, they decided to take the year off. Not necessarily I think as much because they were concerned about the crowd size, but more so it's difficult to give out awards based on what has happened over the past year. The real award, I guess, is if you are a restaurateur and you were in a business before the pandemic, and you're looking around, you're still in business today. Congratulations.

Tony Biggs: Congratulations.

Bryan Schaaf: Because it's real difficult to call out best, better, whatever, in an awards format. But that said, we want to take some time and give some recognition, at least through our show. We don't really have any awards that we can hand out, although I will come and drink a cocktail with you at some point.

Tony Biggs: I appreciate you naming the award after me. The Tony award.

Bryan Schaaf: That's right.

Tony Biggs: I really do. The Tony's.

Bryan Schaaf: Yeah. So this is the first annual Tony's awards. Now, we're going to put in parentheses after it and say, "Not that Tony's", because we don't want a lawsuit.

Tony Biggs: We don't want a lawsuit. We don't.

Bryan Schaaf: Yeah.

Tony Biggs: The Tony B awards. Yeah. That's not bad.

Bryan Schaaf: So we want to call out and as I think about awards and things like that, I think about... Actually, it was said on a podcast, All About Burgers a year ago with our pal, Brett Sawyer, from Good Company in Cleveland who makes a phenomenal burger-

Tony Biggs: He does.

Bryan Schaaf: ...called the Good boy.

Tony Biggs: He's a great guy.

Bryan Schaaf: He's a great guy.

Tony Biggs: I love him.

Bryan Schaaf: But he said, "We don't concern ourselves with being the best. We concern ourselves with being your favorite." Which to me makes awards and things like that feel even better because to say you're best is a very subjective thing.

Tony Biggs: Sure.

Bryan Schaaf: But-

Tony Biggs: Exactly.

Bryan Schaaf: ...everything's subjective. We all have our different favorites. As we-

Tony Biggs: But you know it's more than the food, to be a favorite. You know what I mean Brian? It's the person who owns it. It's the service, the people remember your name. Are they on top of their game when you walk in? You're a customer. So there's so much to that, being a favorite.

Bryan Schaaf: Yeah.

Tony Biggs: Yeah. Great point.

Bryan Schaaf: So Brett Sawyer, we're following your lead here. And we want to take a moment to kind of celebrate the medius moments of the past year. Because honestly, after everything that's happened, we need some reasons to celebrate here. So I would like to start out, and we're not going to talk about people right now, but we are going to talk about cuts. Because I know we have a lot of people who listen, and I just think it's a good idea to throw some of your ideas out there, chef. I would like to recognize your favorite alternative cut. And we're talking about alternatives. We're not talking about things like middle meats. If you go into any steak house and you see, of course, the bastions. The tenderloin, the rib eye, the strip. We're looking for what's outside of that, that really sort of tickles your fancy, chef?

Tony Biggs: I'll tell you, and if you haven't followed my Instagram, it's chef Tony Biggs on Instagram, one word. We started doing the hind shank a couple of years back ago. And once we got this cut, it was like all of a sudden, the ideas, that creativeness started coming out of all of us, the chefs. And not only did we braise it and prepare it for a long cooking times. But after that, we said, "Okay, what else can we do with this?" And we made a hind shank beef wellington that was just epic. We served it for 400 of our guests in the annual conference. They went goo goo gaga over it. It can feed six to eight folks. It's inexpensive. It's just a long cooking process. But boy, when you get that cut at your table and you have that marrow bone sticking out of the puff pastry, it's just unbelievable. It's just magical. Well, Culinary Solutions out of Virginia, they're are big sous vide operation. My friend Gerard is the director there. He saw this, he reached out to

me. I sent him some hind shanks. They have sous vide them. And now they're just selling like hotcakes all over the country. And as a matter of fact, I'm going to be doing barrels and a monkey at Grand Cayman, and that cut is going to be the hind shank coming out of the fire barrels.

Bryan Schaaf: That's fantastic, chef. Hind shank. It's highly... Actually I'll tell you what, it's so highly underrated we actually devoted an entire podcast to it back in season one, with our pal Vinoy Rogers from American Kitchen.

Tony Biggs: Oh I love Vinoy.

Bryan Schaaf: Yeah.

Tony Biggs: Love him.

Bryan Schaaf: He uses it for so many different applications. Obviously served as a traditional shareable dish, but then he also peels some of the meat off it, folds it into different dishes as you go. You know my favorite thing about hind shank is?

Tony Biggs: What's that?

Bryan Schaaf: Marrow.

Tony Biggs: Marrow me tomorrow will you Brian? It is just glorious.

Bryan Schaaf: You said it's like when you get a Papa John's pizza.

Tony Biggs: Yeah. You know, you get the little pepper and the butter or the margarine, the garlic margarine. Hey, Gerard should just put a little marrow in a little plastic bag and here you go. Don't waste it.

Bryan Schaaf: Yeah, I love marrow. I would put marrow on everything. I am probably for about the third year in a row, continued to be completely enamored with the coulotte. The top sirloin cap. Sirloin is good. The coulotte, which is considered part of the coulotte, even better.

Tony Biggs: That's your favorite?

Bryan Schaaf: I love a coulotte.

Tony Biggs: Yeah I like coulotte steaks.

Bryan Schaaf: You can do anything with it. You can steak it out. You can dry roast it.

Tony Biggs: I love it.

Bryan Schaaf: Of course, it's the cut. It's the la picaña.

Tony Biggs: Picanha, you put it on swords. A little bit of pineapple or roasted vegetables, carve it right there table side. We did that a couple of weeks ago by the way. It was just magical. Crazy.

Bryan Schaaf: Yeah. It's so good. I actually had it up at Costella up in Bay City, Michigan, which is a Tarasco based restaurant.

Tony Biggs: You bet your Tarasco.

Bryan Schaaf: Was it delicious? You bet Tarasco it was. So, yeah. So I would highly, highly, highly... If you have not played with the coulotte, do so.

Tony Biggs: It's amazing.

Bryan Schaaf: Yeah. And I know she's not here, but Diana would even possibly recommend, if you buy the whole top bud.

Tony Biggs: Yep.

Bryan Schaaf: It's going to bring down the cost of everything. If you can find a use for the rest. I mean, it's sirloin. Center cut sirloin. If you can find a home for that. You could stake it. You can grind it, you can do whatever. And you can break it down, it's pretty easy to break down yourself.

Tony Biggs: Well remember what we did a couple of years back. I've gotten some requests is the cool locks.

Bryan Schaaf: Yes.

Tony Biggs: Okay. The cool locks.

Bryan Schaaf: The beef prosciutto.

Tony Biggs: So we have made a beef prosciutto with old world classic brines, with salt, sugar, fruits and different herbs and spices. We left that in a brine for 21 days, and then we put it into our dry age cooler and it cuts and tastes like butter. This is where the Bostonian comes out of me. Butter.

Bryan Schaaf: Put it on a slicer. It just melts on your tongue.

Tony Biggs: Beautiful.

Bryan Schaaf: Yeah. It's so good. It's so good. All right. Let's turn this on its head. Your favorite use of... An alternative use of a main stream cut. Now we're going to limit the... We're going to narrow down the field into your ribs, your strips, your tenders. I personally saw, and I love this because it's something that chef Michael Ollier, who's appeared on the podcast a couple of times, swears by is you get a whole

strip loin. You take it length-wise and you cut it vertically or length-wise. You cut it into two barrels. And at the holiday season, and this is where it really jumped off of me, our buddy Todd Johns at Plow Boys in Kansas City was doing a holiday take-home meal. It's a pandemic. You're blowing through a lot of product. You're doing a lot of takeout. And if you notice, and if you're listening to this, chances are, you're probably aware of this. Rib price is around the holidays get a little high, right? So what's an alternative to the rib? Well strips are coming down. Have you ever said, "Strip steak is terrible." Of course not.

Tony Biggs: Of course not, it's my favorite.

Bryan Schaaf: It's phenomenal. So instead of doing a rib, do a strip. Simple swap out, save some bucks and it's going to be fantastic and you can make some serious money on it. So I love the split strip. It's so nice to see it finally come to fruition because poor Michael Ollier has been preaching this for years.

Tony Biggs: I tell you my favorite. We've done this a couple of years back. People are still using it. Now that you are talking about the rib, we're going to bring the rib back in this conversation. And I have to tell you the deconstructed rib eye is probably my favorite. Where we take the whole rib eye apart, the spinalis, which is the top cap on top of the rib. That's the beautiful, soft tissue up there. Then we take the rib eye filet itself separately, and then we actually de-bone it. And we have the whole back rib there too. So if you cook that and prepare that in three different applications, it is just, it's a wow, because you've taken the whole rib eye and you've done something to it in three different cooking methods or applications, either it's barbecue, a strip filet or a spinalis lollipop. It is just unbelievable. It's great for wine dinners. It's great to impress. That's my favorite.

Bryan Schaaf: Yeah. I mean, you're taking something that's already kind of a wow and making it...

Tony Biggs: A Wower.

Bryan Schaaf: Is wowee a word?

Tony Biggs: Wowee. Wowee, I still use Wowee. Yeah. Wowee!

Bryan Schaaf: It's like Adam West Batman. All right. Let's turn the page and get into some specific dishes that we have enjoyed. Obviously it's been a difficult year for restaurants. One of the cool things that you see is, and it's certainly not a year that we'd ever wish on anybody to go through again, but sometimes innovation comes out of necessity, right? And so you see if there was ever an impetus to try something new, maybe something that could make you some additional money, something that's going to lower your food costs, something that's going to help keep this ship afloat. 2020 was a great year to try new things. One of my favorite things that I had yet to see in a restaurant, Greg Gaardbo, I apologize, because we're going to talk about the sirloin flap once again.

Tony Biggs: Love that. Love it.

Bryan Schaaf: Love the sirloin flap. It's like a skirt steak, but honestly, a little thicker. I prefer it over an outside skirt. This was actually plucked straight from your playbook and menued over... Our friends over at South Street Grill in Ashland. Which is actually my home in Ashland, Ohio. It's halfway between Cleveland and Columbus. If you're on I-71, you know how you know Ashland? Grandpa's Cheese Barn is the exit.

Tony Biggs: I know that. Yes.

Bryan Schaaf: So stop by, get yourself some cheese. Come on into town, South Street Grill. They have a thing called steak bombs on the menu and what these are... You know what this is out of your brain. Tell us about steak bombs.

Tony Biggs: Okay Bostonian's we've changed the name, okay? Now you know it as the Boston steak tips. Well, our friends from Ashland came over to Certified Angus Beef via Bryan Schaaf. We did a nice ideation one day. They're opening up a steakhouse. They wanted some new ideas and I gave him my Boston steak tips recipe. Okay. AKA our steak bombs. So I'm going to give you the recipe here. So you better write it down quickly because I'm going to go real fast, all right? Basically it's a marinade of some really good high quality Kentucky bourbon, a little bit of Italian dressing. Garlic. I put a little bit of a Worcestershire sauce in here. I always sneak in a little bit of A.1. Sauce in there too because I have it on hand. Lots of black pepper, salt.

And I put those in like... Oh, and Coca-Cola and a little bit of brown sugar. OH, Coca Cola. You need sugar to caramelize these pieces when you're cooking them. Sirloin flap is perfect for this because it holds up to marinade. Unbelievable. Especially over 24 hours. The beef has marinade in plastic bags. And then we just take them out and make sure you have a hot grill or a really hot cast iron pan. And you're just searing these. I mean, you don't want any liquid, you don't want any poaching. I always tell chefs, you're not poaching. You're really searing and grilling and charring here. You get those babies really hot and you serve that with a creamy blue cheese dressing on the side or a hot sauce. Oh my goodness.

Bryan Schaaf: All day long.

Tony Biggs: Wowee.

Bryan Schaaf: They're so Good. So good. I like to dip mine, and this is the only time I think in the history of this podcast I've actually admitted to eating vegetables or as I saw them referred to as dirt candy. But I feel like that makes it sound like I like vegetables.

Tony Biggs: There's a restaurant called Dirt Candy in New York. Yeah.

Bryan Schaaf: I can get down on that.

Tony Biggs: They do a broccoli hot dog. Would you eat a broccoli hot dog?

Bryan Schaaf: Only if it had a real hot dog underneath it. But they serve them. You can get a nice... I love a simple brussel sprout with the little balsamic glaze. I know it's like balsamic glaze has been around. Balsamic glaze is delicious.

Tony Biggs: Nobody used to like brussel sprouts until some genius came up and cut them in half, threw them in the deep fat fryer. They became crispy. A different flavor. Balsamic is one way. You could put like a honey mustard and a Parmesan cheese and glaze them under the broiler. That's one of my favorites. I've had that. That's pretty good.

Bryan Schaaf: Maybe dress them up with a little bacon bits.

Tony Biggs: Gosh. Killing me.

Bryan Schaaf: Chef, you got anything you want to call out here? Favorite dish that you've enjoyed over the past year?

Tony Biggs: I tell you, one of the most innovative dishes, I know this is going to sound really crazy, but I love Cowfish, outside of Charlotte. If you ever go there, it's a really cool restaurant where they do burgers and sushi. Probably the first one. It became so popular they have one at Universal Studios in Orlando. That's how popular it is and good it is. But I had something that was called the burgushi. Okay, so you really have to blow my mind, because you know, I've eaten all over the world, right? But I ordered the burgushi and I got to tell you I was blown away. Let me tell you. It's a soy wrapper,

Bryan Schaaf: Nice and crispy.

Tony Biggs: Not a nori and regular sushi rice. They do a ground beef, like ground Certified Angus Beef into a burger. They put your favorite cheese on there. What do you want? Like a little American?

Bryan Schaaf: On a burger, American.

Tony Biggs: You want some cheddar cheese, put a little cheddar cheese on there. You roll that up and then it's not done yet. They wrap this in stringy potato. So you have to have a little Japanese mandolin to make the string potato and they wrap that from end to end and they deep fry it. Did you have me a deep fried? So when that comes out, you get this golden brown crust which is the potato. And then you slice that, and you slice the sushi roll and we're not done yet, Brian. Okay. Ketchup, mustard and mayo in a squirt bottle all over it. And then onion, pickle, and tomato.

Bryan Schaaf: It's a cheeseburger.

Tony Biggs: I'm telling you something so simple and they just can't keep up with it. I mean, there's one guy, one person back. I went into the back of the restaurant. They show me how to do it because they're partners of ours. And it was just like, I came back into the center. I had to do it. It's actually addicting seriously. I mean, it's really good. That was my favorite dish.

Bryan Schaaf: Yeah. I had that-

Tony Biggs: Cowfish.

Bryan Schaaf: ...last year you made that. It was fantastic.

Tony Biggs: It's good. I mean, to blow people away, you really got to do the sushi or you got to do this roll. It's amazing.

Bryan Schaaf: I'm with you. I'm with you. All right. Let's change gears. Let's talk about side dishes.

Tony Biggs: Side dishes.

Bryan Schaaf: I know this is the Meat Speak podcast. We are powered by a Certified Angus Beef. But you know, you don't have to have beef even in your side... Now sometimes if you do, bonus points. But chef, what's your favorite side dish?

Tony Biggs: I'll tell you what, I got so many Brian. I know you do. I mean, I love everything. They go from Merlot french fries to... Merlot french fries is one of my favorites. We just talked about the brussel sprouts, deep fried. Amazing. But I think one of my favorites, and it goes back to my childhood. Lobster. Now who doesn't like lobster mac and cheese from Red, the Steakhouse in Cleveland. I got to tell you. Little panko bread crumbs on top of there, melted butter. It's just sickening. Delicious. I could order that instead of a steak. I shouldn't say that, but I mean, really I can order a double side of that.

Bryan Schaaf: Tell you what you can do that, and I'll eat your steak.

Tony Biggs: What's yours? What's your favorite?

Bryan Schaaf: Not only Cleveland, but don't forget our-

Tony Biggs: Miami.

Bryan Schaaf: ...Peter Vauthy down on South Beach, right?

Tony Biggs: Peter I love you, baby. I hope you're listening because...

Bryan Schaaf: That man makes them mean lobster mac and cheese.

Tony Biggs: He's a great chef. He's amazing.

Bryan Schaaf: So good. One of the things that just blew my mind, and to your credit, I eat like all the time. I was a vegetarian.

Tony Biggs: You and I are professional eaters, you know that? I mean, we can tell too, right? We should be a tag team for WWF, the Professional Eaters.

Bryan Schaaf: I don't know how I'd look at a singlet though.

Tony Biggs: I don't think I look good in a French tickler.

Bryan Schaaf: Okay. So if you are in Chicago, which fortunately, a lot of people are. We've got lots of amazing options in Chicago. If you get downtown, go down to Fulton market, right. Dave Bonner is the chef pit master at Green Street Smoked Meats. So good. So good, phenomenal barbecue. But his side dish, he makes an elote. But it's not an on the cob Mexican street corn. It's off the cob. So it's all of those flavors that you would get off a portable Mexican street corn, but you're just shoveling it into your mouth. My complaint with corn on the cob is you don't get a whole lot with each bite. But you can just make a vat of this and just shovel it in. Woo Nelly.

Tony Biggs: You had me a cojito. Okay. Wow.

Bryan Schaaf: So good. Little mayo, little cilantro-

Tony Biggs: Lime? That's a great idea actually. I love it.

Bryan Schaaf: Yeah. Green Street Smoked Meats, Fulton Market, Chicago.

Tony Biggs: I love that.

Bryan Schaaf: And while you're there make dinner plans, go out and see the Gaardbos at CCK, go see K.C. Gulbro at FoxFire. Stephanie Iser. Actually Stephanie is right around the corner. She's that close. So yeah. So good. So good. Big fan. Let's talk about stories. Obviously it's been an interesting year, and so out of it have come some really interesting stories, some stories that make you realize how much people really care about the industry. I mean, you could go a lot of ways. I know our buddy Glen Wheeler from Spencer's in Omaha, took a bunch of meat. He has a big steakhouse downtown that's heavily reliant on downtown Omaha business, tourists, people coming in to go to the College Baseball World Series. Going to, I think it's the Century Link stadium down the street where they have concerts.

When they closed up, he kept cooking and he kept feeding first responders. He launched a program to feed kids who were no longer getting school lunches.

Glen being sort of an icon in Omaha got a lot of the chefs in town behind him and just a really feel good initiative. There were lots of little things like that, that would have happened in the past year where you realize, man, the humanity that exists in the restaurant industry is amazing. The one that I wanted to call out though, was specifically down in a place called Los Tanitos.

Tony Biggs: Yes. Carla, my baby.

Bryan Schaaf: Just south of Miami International Airport.

Tony Biggs: She makes the best empanadas in the world. Homemade.

Bryan Schaaf: She's got a whole case.

Tony Biggs: I mean, she sends us... One day you got a box, right? I call Brian. Brian, did you order empanadas? Because I'm going to steal yours and take yours home. Carla, if you're listening, oh my gosh. You're not done yet. We're going to have you make another event here, darling. So you're going to have to come and make your empanadas.

Bryan Schaaf: Yeah. They're that good. If you go into the restaurant, there is a glass case. Every day it's just stuffed with empanadas.

Tony Biggs: Does she make a cheesecake empanada? I want to know.

Bryan Schaaf: I don't know.

Tony Biggs: I'll tell you what that'd be kind of cool.

Bryan Schaaf: I would eat it.

Tony Biggs: Cheesecake... Me too. My god.

Bryan Schaaf: But Los Tanitos. It's a meat market. It's a restaurant. It's all sorts of things down outside of Miami. During the pandemic, they had to reduce staff. It's Carla and her brother, they both stayed on to keep the business running and they ran it seven days a week. They were the only two people working there for months and months and months, just trying to keep the lights turned on, trying to keep in business, trying to do that. I'm sure that they are not the only ones who were in that boat, but you've reduced your staff only down to the brother and sister who are the brainpower who run it. They're back, they've withstood it. God bless you for keeping pushing.

Tony Biggs: Bravo. I mean, these are philanthropic acts. I'm blown away by the folks that came to bat for the restaurant industry. Our industry. We're in this industry. We've worked it. We've been there. We've done this. I mean, this is kind of the one and only industry that weathers lots of storms. But these are people who

give all the time, all the time. Like you mentioned, Glen. I witnessed so many great things and it's heartwarming.

Bryan Schaaf: Excellent. On my little note sheet, I actually called it the Best Original Screenplay. Because although we've gotten on... I mean, we're still calling these the Tony's so kind of got to make sure we tie it back to that.

Tony Biggs: You know, I noticed a lot of folks like hiring chefs for their homes. I see that industry just booming. I mean, people are afraid to go out still. But they want high quality and they don't mind paying for it, and they want somebody that's a little bit fun to come to their house and put on the dog and pony show and have great food.

Bryan Schaaf: If they have you to their house, they put in some bunk beds. Top bunk or lower bunk. What are you choosing?

Tony Biggs: Well it depends, how long... I'd have to charge him overtime for this.

Bryan Schaaf: On that note, chef, any parting shots as we begin to put a bow on this? There's lots of stories out there. If we didn't mention you please know it was certainly not intentional. We're always curious to hear about additional stories, additional dishes. The restaurant industry is coming back, state by state. Feels like we're on the way back. Hopefully next year at this time we are able to celebrate without this constant drum beat of, remember last year?

Tony Biggs: I'm going to wear my tuxedo next year for the Tony's, and my red bow tie and my slippers.

Bryan Schaaf: I'm going to get out my high heels.

Tony Biggs: You sure? I'm looking forward to this.

Bryan Schaaf: It's going to be great.

Tony Biggs: That's unbelievable.

Bryan Schaaf: If this is your first time listening to the Meat Speak podcast, powered by the Certified Angus Beef brand, please know that you can find us across all of your major podcasting platforms. Google Play, Apple, Spotify, and a glut of others that I have never even knew existed. Or you could simply visit certifiedangusbeef.com/podcast. This is season two. We are nearing the end of season two before we take a little bit of a hiatus for summer, but do catch up on everything that's happened in this past year. Go back to season one, soak it up. We mentioned it already, go back in and absorb the shank episode with our buddy Vinoy Rogers. Take Tony's advice. It's a great piece of meat that can be procured for a nice price.

This transcript was exported on May 24, 2021 - view latest version [here](#).

Tony Biggs: Yes. I love it. Oh my gosh.

Bryan Schaaf: Giddy up. On behalf of the Certified Angus Beef brand, chef Tony Biggs, Diana Clark who's not here today. We appreciate you for listening to The Meat Speak podcast powered by the Certified Angus Beef brand.