

Clendenin Dairy Queen family recalls legacy lost in floods

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Folks line up outside the Dairy Queen in Clendenin during its heyday. The community icon was destroyed in flooding that ravaged West Virginia. (Courtesy Photo)

CLENDENIN, WV (WCHS/WVAH) — Anyone who has driven through Clendenin over the past 50 years has seen the Dairy Queen sign shining bright.

Now that sign is the only thing left, of a once thriving business.

The recent flooding that wiped out much of the town also took the Dairy Queen.

If you talk to the longtime owner, you will quickly learn, there's much more to this DQ than meets the eye.

"Everywhere you go, they know that Dairy Queen," owner Hoyt Newman said. "I don't care where you go, they've been there."

<https://wchstv.com/news/local/clendenin-dairy-queen-ruined-in-floods-family-talks-about-its-long-history>

Newman, who has owned the Clendenin Dairy Queen since the 1970s, has even overheard radio conversations between truckers over the years, talking about his hot dogs.

"They said, 'If you ever go past that Dairy Queen stop and get you a Dairy Queen, boy they've got good ones,'" Newman said.

The Dairy Queen is a family affair.

Newman bought it from his mother, and then his children worked there.

Family is not the only thing that makes this DQ different from its counterparts.

Newman will tell you, it's because he only hired people with a good work ethic.

"I said, 'Boy, you make someone a thousand hot dogs, and you make one they can't eat, which one are they going to remember?'" Newman said.

Newman's family will tell you, it's because Hoyt cared more about the people than the money.

And that he always stayed strong against the big box corporations -- a strength that Newman clearly draws from his family.

"We'll get by someday. We'll stick together," he said.

While members of the Newman family do not plan to rebuild the Dairy Queen, they said creating another business is not out of the question.