

**APRIL 25, 2026**

Go snout to snout at the friendliest amateur BBQ competition in the south! Backyard chefs compete for ultimate bragging rights during the 11th annual Battle Below the Clouds, benefiting the Lana's Love Foundation!

ELIGIBILITY TO ENTER Battle Below the Clouds is an amateur competition and all team members must qualify as amateur backyard cooks as defined by Kansas City Barbeque Society (KCBS) rules. To qualify, *teams may not include any participants who have competed in more than 3 KCBS sanctioned "Master Series" BBQ competitions within the current competition year and teams cannot include participants awarded Grand Champion or Reserve Champion status in any KCBS sanctioned "Master Series" competition.* (Battle Below the Clouds is not a KCBS "Master Series" competition; participation in our competition does not count towards KCBS sanctioned event and award limits.) A team may include one person, or a chief cook with as many assistants as the chief cook deems necessary. The cook must be at least 18-years old. The team captain must reside within 200 miles of Ruby Falls.

REGISTRATION Eight early registration spots open for previous competitors on Feb. 23 at 10:00 AM. Registration opens to the public at 10 AM on March 2. Entries accepted first-come, first-serve until the maximum number of teams is reached. Registration is not confirmed until entry fee and completed entry form are received.

ENTRY FEE 100% of the entry fee is donated to Lana's Love Foundation. Entry fee is based on the size of the competition site your team requires. Reserve a size that adequately fits your tent and all equipment; including your grill, smoker, tables, chairs, coolers, supplies, and trailer if you plan to bring one. Teams may not exceed the boundaries of their assigned space. Parking will be provided onsite but away from the competition area. During registration, teams have the option of reserving one parking space adjacent to the competition area for an additional \$100 donation.

\$225 entry fee reserves a 15' x 15' competition site*

\$335 entry fee reserves a 20' x 15' competition site

\$450 entry fee reserves a 30' x 15' competition site

**A 15'x15' site will not accommodate both a tent and trailer*

ENTRY FEE INCLUDES: Entry fee includes competition meat (7-9 lb. pork butt, two racks of ribs, 12 chicken wing drumettes), and one swag bag with two admission tickets to High Point ZIP Adventure at Ruby Falls, two adult Ruby Falls Cave Walk tickets, two Battle Below the Clouds T-shirts, one Battle Below the Clouds apron and awesome swag. **All entry fees are donated to Lana's Love Foundation to provide fun activities for Chattanooga area kids with cancer and their families.**

TEAM SET UP + MEAT DISTRIBUTION

Teams set up April 24, 4PM–7PM. Competition meat is distributed to teams during this designated set up time. A temporary unloading area will also be available, 4:30 AM–5:30 AM on April 25. After 5:30 AM, no direct vehicle access is available to your site until the conclusion of the cook-off. Parking is provided onsite but away from the competition area, please plan accordingly. Banners and tent decorations in good taste in your competition area are encouraged! Non-potable water is available on a shared basis. Small portable generators are permitted. Electric hookup is not available. If you plan to camp Friday night at your competition site, let us know by April 18.

Parking is strictly enforced. Teams registered for one reserved parking spot adjacent to the competition area will receive a special parking pass to display on their windshield.

SAFETY + WEATHER

Unless there is an extreme weather situation, the competition occurs rain or shine. Plan for unpredictable weather. Alcoholic beverages are permitted in the cooking area for those of legal drinking age. Glass bottles and kegs are not permitted. Pets are not permitted in the cooking area. Selling samples of an amateur team's product during the event is not permitted. Any unsafe acts result in possible disqualification without entry fee refund.

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- Competitors must qualify as amateur backyard cooks as defined by KCBS rules. (See contest entry info)
- Cooking competition takes place April 25, 5:00 AM to 4:00 PM in the designated area at Ruby Falls. Cooking of competition meat may begin no earlier than 5:00 AM on April 25.
- Teams may start their fire any time after 11:59 PM, April 24. Fires must be attended.
- Pre-event rubs and marinades are permitted but pre-cooking is not allowed.
- All meat will be inspected to verify it is the official meat provided by Food City.
- All grill and smoker types are permissible.
- Teams may not exceed the boundary of their assigned space.
- **Turn chicken wing entries in the provided container to the official at noon.** Provide a total of 6 wings for the judges to sample. Entry may include any combination of sauces, toppings, allowed garnishes, & ingredients. Sauced entries may use a commercially available sauce or one of their own creation. Three judges will score chicken wings on appearance (15%), taste (50%), & tenderness (35%).
- Chicken wing competition winners will be announced at around 1:00 PM.
- **Turn in ribs entry using the provided container to the official no sooner than 3:20 PM and no later than 3:35PM.** Garnish is optional. Entry may be submitted with or without sauce and must include at least a total of six portions for the 3 judges to sample.
- **Turn in pork butt entry using the provided container to the official no sooner than 3:50 PM and no later than 4:05 PM.** Pork butt entry may be presented as pulled, chopped, or sliced. Garnish is optional. Entry may be submitted with or without sauce and must include three to four tastings for each of the 3 judges.
- Sauced pork entries may use a commercially available sauce or one of their own creation. (Sauce optional)
- If used, garnish is limited to chopped, sliced or whole leaves of fresh green lettuce, curly parsley, flat leaf parsley, curly green kale and/or cilantro.
- A panel of judges will independently score pork butt and ribs entries on appearance (20%), tenderness (40%), and taste (40%).
- Judging for pork butt and ribs will be completed by 4:30 PM and awards announced shortly after.
- By entering the cook-off, each team member grants Ruby Falls permission to use their image and/or voice in photographs, video, and audio for any purpose, including but not limited to social media, print media, publications, outdoor advertising, news releases, blogs, digital media, and in other communications related to promotion, advertising and trade without compensation or other consideration.

The top award and glorious bragging rights will be presented to the **2026 Grand Champion** by earning the highest combined score from rib and pork butt entries. The **2026 Pork Butt Champion** will be awarded to the team with the highest pork butt score. The **2026 Ribs Champion** will be awarded to the team with the highest ribs score. The **2026 Just Wingin' It Champion** will be awarded to the team with the highest chicken wing score. **Second and third place** will be awarded in pork butt, ribs, chicken wings, and Grand Champion categories. The **2026 Jim Brewer People's Choice Award** will be awarded to the team with the most spectator votes for best embodying the essence of fun and friendly competition in support of the Lana's Love Foundation. Awards will be presented on the entertainment stage when judging is completed.

Door Prizes, Live Bluegrass, Kid's Activities, Food Trucks + More! Free festival admission for spectators.

Live bluegrass music, activities for kids, BBQ for purchase, register for a chance to win **Atlanta Braves tickets** and **Gas and Grocery Gift Cards!** Spectators and competitors are eligible to enter giveaways. *Ruby Falls team members and sponsors are not eligible for door prizes.*