

DESTINATION BEER, WINE & DISTILLERIES



May 2019

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Lake Time Brewery grows from hobby to business

Regional hot spot is now a statewide favorite

by Marianne Gasaway

Clear Lake is well known as a tourist destination. After all, there's the lake, the State Parks and the Surf Ballroom, to name just a few. With the addition of Lake Time Brewery to Clear Lake's business landscape, there's another great reason to spend some time at the lake.

Bob Rolling and his wife, Suzy, founded the brewery in 2012. Bob's interest in craft beer started in 1999 as a home brewer and really picked up when he was a stay-at-home dad for a year. With some extra time on his hands and a lot of motivation while watching the kids, he began to perfect his home brewing recipes. As his skill increased, he realized that Clear Lake was the natural place for a microbrewery and taproom.

In 2012, Bob enrolled in the Launch & Grow Your Business course at the NIACC Pappajohn Center. In June 2013, he opened Lake Time Brewery as a small batch operation with a modestly sized taproom in downtown Clear Lake.

Within five years, the Lake Time taproom was a hit with both locals and tourists alike, and was distributing to 23 counties across northern Iowa and eight counties in the Des Moines/Ames area. This month, Lake Time Brewery was named number one on a list of the 50 fastest growing small and independent craft brewing companies of 2018 by the Brewers Association (BA), a not-for-profit trade group representing small and independent craft brewers.

With Lake Time Brewery established as a favorite destination for locals and tourists alike, Bob believed it was time to take the logical next step. His vision was to expand his distribution to include cans as well as kegs, growing from a single barrel operation to a 15-barrel operation with 30 barrel fermenters and a five barrel pilot system.

Lake Time Brewery's motto for the expansion is: "Our mission is to make great craft beer and make it available to our customers when they want it, not just when our

taproom is open." Bob worked with the NIACC Pappajohn Center and North Iowa Area SBDC to achieve this goal. The Lake Time Brewing canning line began operation in May 2018.

Lake Time beer is no longer just a local or regional favorite, but now found statewide.

Tim Putnam, director of the NIACC Pappajohn Center, said, "It has been really exciting to see what Bob and Suzy have done with Lake Time Brewing since attending the Launch and Grow Your Business classes at NIACC. Lake Time Brewery has seen steady growth from year to year. Over the last two years the Rollings have really taken their vision to the next level with the addition of a production facility and now the canning line. The Rollings have also utilized all the resources around them to position the Lake Time brand to be a well-respected craft beer in Iowa and soon to come, the Midwest."

Recently the business also recently finished as runner-up the 2019 Des Moines Register Beer Brackets. In that competition, Iowa craft beer enthusiasts voted for their favorites. Lake Time's Peanut Butter Porter was second in the field of 64 Iowa beers.

According to the BA, the small and independent breweries on the list experienced a median growth of 163 percent with the median size being 1,350 barrels of in-house production in 2018. The Brewers Association reported the production of craft beer has doubled between 2011 and 2016, with the number of breweries growing from 2,000 in 2011 to 5,200 in 2016. The craft breweries are also seeing an increase in beer tourism, seasonal brews, and a marketing effort to get more women involved in beer production.

"The past six years has been a lot of fun," said Bob. "We have learned a lot about business and relationships. It has been a pleasure getting to know the community and being able to give back when we can. We have come a long way and can't wait to see what the next five years holds in store for us."

Lake Time Brewery is more than great beer...

Fastest growing small/independent craft brewing company of 2018

Peanut Butter Porter named runner-up in Des Moines Register 2019 Beer Brackets



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"IT'S A STATE OF MIND"

Brothers prepare to open third property in Clear Lake TAP'd will feature Iowa craft beers and more

by Marianne Gasaway

Clear Lake will soon have another option for fun.

Al and Mike Hejna will soon open TAP'd at 313 Main Ave.

"It's been over a year since we have had it (the property) and it took us a long time to come up with a name. But now we are nearly ready and are excited to people to enjoy a new spot in town," said Al.

The owners have completely remodeled the interior of the building, adding new modern restrooms, while also preserving some beautiful features, such as the restoration of its antique tin ceiling.

A stylish new bar and back bar will provide for 24 beers to be on tap. "We will also feature as many local and craft beers as possible," added Hejna. Bottled beer, wine and a full array of cocktails will also be served.

Food is also an option at TAP'd.

Hejna said a pizza line will be included on the menu, as well as sandwiches and wings.

A shuffleboard space and pool table are included in the space and darts may be added if customers support the idea.

This will be the third Main Street business for the Hejna brothers. They first established the popular sports bar called "Rookies" in 1995. When the building next door became available in 2009, the Hejnas opened a passage way between the two spaces and expanded their offerings. "Sevens" is a full-service restaurant.

Al says TAP'd will have a different look than Rookies and Sevens, but will feature the same friendly service and fun atmosphere.

In addition to televisions, a video system has also been installed at TAP'd to play music videos and classic rock for patrons.

"We can do whatever the crowd wants," said Al. "We're just excited to begin welcoming people. We think this will make a great addition for big events in town."

In addition to the owners, longtime employees Kyle Hejna and Justin Tarr, are an important part of the TAP'd crew. They will float between all three businesses.

The Hejna's are eyeing mid-May for the opening of TAP'd. They anticipate being open six — maybe even seven days a week. Weekdays the business will open in the afternoon; weekends will have an 11 a.m. opening.



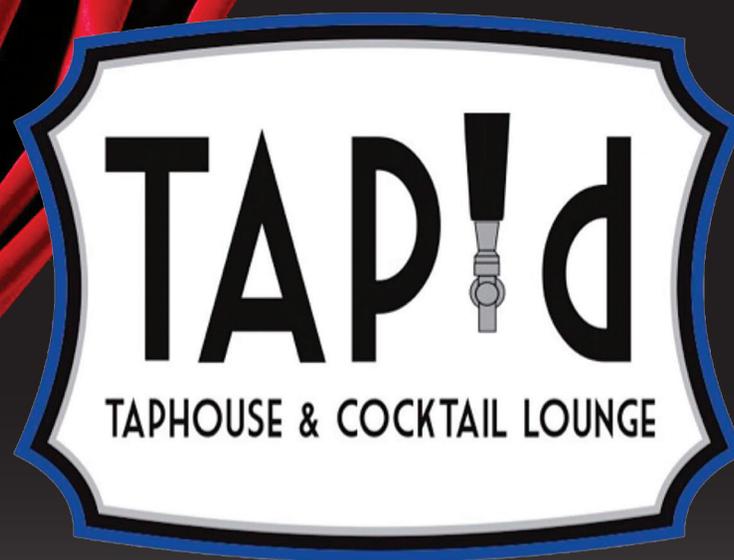
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313 Main Avenue, Clear Lake

Fat Hill Brewing owners place emphasis on local beer, community engagement

by Greg Forbes

For Fat Hill Brewing owners Jake Rajewsky and Molly Angstman, being third place is preferred.

In this instance, “third place” doesn’t mean a bronze medal – it means owning a location where friends and family can unwind after a day of work with good company and meticulously crafted beer.

“(A friend) used to talk to us about your ‘third place,’” said Angstman. “If home is your first place and work is your second place, where do you spend the rest of your time? The third place is where you spend your time voluntarily, because that place makes you happy or enriches your life in some way.

“I think a strong community has lots of great third places,” she said, “and we love being one of those here in Mason City.”

A crafted community

The husband and wife duo opened the downtown Mason City brewery on De-

ember 7, 2016 after leasing the building at 17 N. Federal Ave. in March that year. The two immediately began refurbishing the inside, constructing tables and other furniture and perfecting the recipes that would eventually flow through the taps. The turnaround was hectic, they said, and pretty much non-stop, except for one occasion.

“We actually married here (in the building) on Nov. 12 and opened on Dec. 7,” said Rajewsky.

As they worked to complete their brewery, Molly and Jake knew they wanted to not only provide a high quality product but also be a contributing and upstanding member of the Mason City business community. Their attention to quality, cleanliness and a friendly environment that encourages strangers to meet one another reflects that desire.

“We just think that our taproom is providing something good for the community,” he said. “You see a wide variety of

people in here and that’s one of the good things about our taproom. At one point, I could be talking to a CEO of a local bank and across the bar, I could be talking with someone who just got off the factory line.

“One of the most satisfying things for us is when those people who have never met before talk and become friends,” he added. “That’s what we mean when we talk about building the community.”

To further foster that sense of community and belonging to all who walk through the doors of Fat Hill Brewing, staff offer a wide array of activities including live music, arts and crafts and a book club. Angstman said those activities draw in a new clientele who arrive for a particular event and become more familiar with craft beer and their fellow patrons in the process.

“For example, at our book club, we’ll have 12 people who don’t know each other sit at a table and talk for a whole hour and that’s just magic,” she said. “In this day and age, we may not necessarily even

know our neighbors so just spending some time with some new people in a casual, no-pressure setting makes folks feel more at home in their city, more connected.”

Localized libations

The focus on community is apparent in more subtle ways, as well. Perusing the menu, a patron can find some nods to Mason City’s history and area producers. Bank Demon, an imperial stout released in the late fall, pays homage to a spooky piece of Mason City lore. Legend has it that a slab of marble at a bank drive-thru once had an eerie marking that resembled the devil.

“We just like to bring a little bit of Mason City history in here,” said Angstman.

Rajewsky said that, when possible, he likes to craft new beers using local ingredients. A honey kolsch, a basil pale ale and an aronia berry saison have all used

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from previous page

fresh ingredients cultivated from friends' productions. Rajewsky said he's able to experiment with those styles because of the fact that everything is made and sold out of the brewery. With six flagship taps and a few that rotate depending on the season, he said he's able to get his hands dirty and explore new and different ingredients.

"Selling out of the taproom, we can play around with different recipes, styles, barrel aging...so we try to have six of the same on tap but the other six or seven taps, we rotate," he said. "That's why we do things like brew with local honey or partner with friends."

Rajewsky said the focus on local ingredients in the beer is another step to support the community and provide support to businesses that have taken a similar leap as they did.

"I've been trying to get more and more active in the local food scene," he said. "We produce beer locally and we're always looking for more local ingredients. We would love to talk with (producers) about partnering and we want to let people to know that if they have something interesting, to get ahold of us."

Angstman added that the emphasis on local ingredients, in itself, is a community-oriented detail. Before they opened, Angstman said they issued a survey on the brewery Facebook page asking what kinds of beer people were most interested in.

Beer with locally sourced products was the most popular response.

"It's a constant challenge to get the right amount at the right time, so we really try," she said.

"People who care about where their onions are grown probably also care about where their beer is brewed," Rajewsky added. "When they see the people who make the thing they're consuming, that's important."

Tedious taps

Rajewsky keeps his approach to brewing simple – make something expertly crafted and don't settle for just "okay."

"I do as much research as I can," he said of his process before trying a new recipe.

He said his brewing career has allowed him to see how much of an ingredient is needed and how intense an ingredient might shine through in the finished product.

He said most beers pass his personal taste test but some have met an unfortunate fate.

"We've had to dump four batches," he said. "It hurts every time but that's part of

the quality control. If you talk to a brewery who said they have never dumped a batch, they're either lying or they've served bad beer."

The staff, he said, even takes steps to make sure that "bad" beer doesn't make it to the customer.

"There are a lot of off flavors in beer and we've done off flavor training with staff," he said. "There are flaws in the brewing process and if you know what to look for, you can find it. We just try to make sure to take steps to make sure the boil has proper ventilation, to make sure the yeast can clean up after itself."

Rajewsky said that it's not just the seasonal and unique beers that require some trial and error. Even with the "core six," he said, the product may come out with a different flavor profile because of the hop used. Depending on the season, he said, Rongorongo, a fruity IPA, may taste a little different than it did in the previous batch.

"Sometimes, the mosaic (hop) is more papaya or sometimes it's more mango," he said. "We'll always do a test to see if an ingredient keeps the beer on brand."

"None of this is accidental," added Angstman. "This is all on purpose. Every flavor you get from the beer is because Jake wants it to be there."

The meticulous testing and tweaking results in products that entice beer enthusiasts and make new fans. With the core six and a rotating cast of characters, Fat Hill offers a range of beers that appeal to all customers and with a staff full of Cicerone-certified Beer Servers (roughly the beer equivalent to a level one wine sommelier), each customer can find something that fits his or her palate.

"Customers come here to get educated, they want to know more about beer and want to know more about beer in general," he said. "They want to know where the good beer is and when they recommend something, it holds weight."

At the end of the day, Rajewsky said Fat Hill staff takes the brewery seriously in order to give customers an experience that fosters enthusiasm for beer of all levels. Patrons at Fat Hill are encouraged to either drink leisurely or pick apart the subtle flavors that come in each glass. No matter the reason someone enters the door, Rajewsky and Angstman said there's always one underlying goal they have for each visitor.

"Beer is supposed to be fun," he said. "We want to make sure we connect with the casual drinker and the most expert of experts."



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The craft beer business

Beer terms to know

The craft beer business is booming. While overall beer volume sales in the United States decreased by 1 percent in 2017, the Brewers Association notes that craft brewery sales continued to grow at a rate of 5 percent. In fact, the Brewers Association notes that retail dollar sales of craft beer now account for more than 23 percent of the \$111.4 billion U.S. beer market. No two beers are the same, and the following beer terms, courtesy of BeerAdvocate.com, can help craft beer aficionados better understand the beers they love.

- **Top-fermenting yeast:** Two types of yeast are used in brewing, and this type works better at warmer temperatures. Top-fermenting yeast, sometimes referred to as “ale yeast,” is better at tolerating high-alcohol concentrations than bottom-fermenting yeast. Because it is unable to ferment some sugars, top-fermenting yeast often produces fruitier, sweeter beers. Altbier, Kolsch, stouts, and wheat beers are some examples of beers brewed with top-fermenting yeast.

- **Bottom-fermenting yeast:** The other type of yeast used in brewing, bottom-fermenting yeast ferments more sugars than top-fermenting yeast, producing a crisp, clean taste. Bottom-fermenting yeast is often referred to as “lager yeast,” and the eventual flavor of beers produced with this yeast will depend a lot on the strain of lager yeast chosen and the temperatures at which it was fermented. Pilsners, bocks and dortmunders are some examples of beers brewed with bottom-fermenting yeast.

- **Hops:** People just beginning to explore craft beer will no doubt hear the word “hops” a lot. Hops refers to the herb added to boiling wort or fermenting beer to impart a bitter aroma or flavor.

- **IBU:** Expressed as a number, sometimes on the bottle or can in which the beer is sold, IBU stands for “International Bitterness Units” and indicates the hop bitterness in the finished beer. The higher the IBU, the more bitter the beer.

- **ABV:** ABV stands for “alcohol by volume” and indicates the amount of alcohol



in beer in terms of percentage volume of alcohol per volume of beer.

- **IPA:** IPAs are incredibly popular among craft beer drinkers. An IPA is a style of beer and stands for India pale ale. These beers boast a strong hop bitterness, and many provide a piney, floral flavor. IPAs tend to be high-ABV beers and come in different varieties. American IPAs, Imperial or Double IPAs and English IPAs are popular styles.

- **Shelf life:** Shelf life might not have been a consideration years ago, but craft beer drinkers often want to know this information, which indicates the number of days a beer will retain its peak drinkability. Some craft brewers indicate the date the beer was bottled on the beer’s label, and BeerAdvocate notes that the shelf life for commercially produced beers is usually no more than four months.



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HOW TO TASTE WINE



THE 5 STEPS

COLOR

Observe the color and clarity of the wine by holding your glass up to a white background (placemat or tablecloth) in a well-lit room. Color is a first indication of quality, age and wine type.

- White wines can appear anywhere from light green, clear, straw yellow, gold to brown in color. As white wines get older they gain color.
 - Wine color is affected most by these three conditions:
 - The age of the wine
 - The grape variety
 - Whether or not the wine was aged in wood
- Red wines may be purple, ruby, and brick red to brownish red. As red wines mature, they lose color and take on a brick tint.

SWIRL

By swirling the wine in the glass, you allow for oxygen and agitation to release more of the bouquet of the wine. By aerating the wine before you take the first sniff, you will be able to judge the wine better. The easiest way to do this is by keeping the glass on the table and swirling it in a circular motion. Then, while keeping the motion going, slowly lift the glass straight up from the table. This process is especially important for young red wines and over chilled wines.

SMELL

What is the very first thing that you think of when you smell wine? (If you can make your self think of this every time you pick up a glass of wine, you will learn much about evaluating wines.) Do you smell pumpkin pie? Freshly mown grass? Strawberries? Your grandpa's cigar box? These associations make wine-tasting fun and make it easier to remember wines.

Much of our sense of taste is actually our ability to smell. Flavor is the combination of taste (sweet, acid, bitter, salty) and smell. The experience is mostly smell. Not only can you smell with your nose, but there is a connection from the mouth to the olfactory cavity (the sinus). This connection is called the olfactory slit and is at the back of the palate.

Some tasters will “Slurp” the wine to help drive the aroma up into the olfactory cavity. This only needs to be done with the most critical tasting.

Note: Watch for “off” smells in wine:

- Vinegar Too much acetic acid in the wine
- Sherry Wine has been oxidized
- Cork Wine absorbed the taste of a defective cork. The taste is similar to a musty cellar.

TASTE

Your tongue has different “taste zones”. These are the different areas of tastes:

- Tip of the tongue Sweetness
- Sides of the tongue Sourness
- Center of the tongue Saltiness
- Very back of the tongue Bitterness

Taste with all your taste buds, keeping in mind:

- Body The weight and feel of the wine on the palate
- Acidity Derived from the natural malic and tartaric acids from the grapes, creating astringency
- Tannin Complex phenolic molecules that affect the proteins in your saliva. When tannin is excessive, they can produce a “clawing” feeling on the palate.
- Sweetness This can come from residual sugar or the impression of sweetness. It can also come from alcohol or some compounds that come from oak aging.

FINISH

After swallowing your first sip of the wine, begin to evaluate it. Ask yourself these questions:

- Did you like the wine?
- Was it light, medium, or full-bodied?
- Is the wine in balance? Do the components of aroma, acidity, tannin and the appropriate sweetness level work together?

GLOSSARY (Wine Speak)

- Agreeable** A well-balanced wine, a pleasure to drink
- Astringent** A wine containing too much tannin and with a “clawing” feeling
- Austere** Assertively tart and acidic
- Balanced** All the components are in the right proportion
- Clean** A well made wine with no “off” aroma or taste
- Complex** Showing a variety of subtle scents and flavors
- Delicate** Applies to wines that are light, usually white, young and fresh
- Dry** Without the impression of sweetness, a wine with no residual sugar
- Elegant** Well-balanced with finesse, a truly fine wine
- Flabby** Too soft, or flat, lacking acidity and without character
- Flinty** Dry, clean, sharp, steely; often used to describe Chablis
- Flowery** An appealing fragrance, almost flower-like
- Fresh** Young, lively and clean
- Generous** A full-bodied wine having a high quality and rich in body
- Grassy** The smell of grass or new mown hay, often describes Fume' Blanc
- Green** Unripe, unbalanced acidity, raw taste
- Hard** An astringent wine from high tannin levels
- Light** Lacking in body, color or alcohol, but pleasant
- Lively** Usually young, fruity wines with a little carbon dioxide
- Quaffing** A light and easy to drink wine, good for Sunday afternoon
- Round** Well-balanced, mature wine without harshness
- Supple** A quality wine with smooth of few tannins easy to drink
- Tannin** Extract of the skin and stem of the grapes, make astringency, found in young wines; softens with bottle age.
- Tart** Meaning acidic; in excess can make mouth pucker like lemon
- Thin** Lacking in body and alcohol; watery, will not improve with age
- Velvety** A wine which is mellow, fine and soft as velvet on the palate



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