

Titletown goes to cans; get an in-person look at Northland

Streetwise

Just as Dylan went electric, Titletown Brewing Co. has gone can.

The downtown Green Bay craft brewer probably won't resolve the debate over whether good craft beer belongs in bottles or cans, but it does expect the 12ounce cans of Green 19 IPA and Johnny Blood Red hitting store shelves April 1 to boost sales.

Jim Kratowicz, the brewery's chief operating officer, said the move is in part a response to reduced use of bottles at cherished outdoor pastimes like camping, golf, boating and tailgating at Brewers or Packers games. New Glarus Brewing Co. started to can Spotted Cow and Moon Man pale ale for similar reasons in 2016.

"It opens up new markets for us in outdoor events," Kratowicz said. "We anticipate it will boost the business."

Kratowicz said market research in 2013 showed Wisconsin craft beer drinkers preferred to buy bottles over cans. That's part of the reason Titletown was slower to embrace cans than its younger local competitors.

Since, he said, cans have made a dent in bottles' popularity. He said Titletown will offer additional beers in cans later this year.

"Cans have gained ground, but bottles are still preferred," Kratowicz said.

Titletown plans to start bottling its popular 400 Honey Ale in the next month. The blonde ale remains one of the brewery's best sellers at its restaurant and tap room, and Kratowicz said he's excited the beer will be available at retailers across Wisconsin this summer.

"It's going to be big," Kratowicz said. "I liken the 400 Honey to Spotted Cow in that people know what they're going to get from it. It's a familiar flavor that we're really excited to distribute."

Get a look inside Hotel Northland

If you want a more extensive look inside the Hotel Northland but don't want to get a room, Streetwise has the details on two upcoming opportunities.

First up, the Greater Green Bay Chamber's Current Young Professionals Network will host an "After 5" session in the Northland's basement club, The Alley, at 5 p.m. Thursday.

The Alley is the event space in the basement that includes a bar, a twolane bowling alley, shuffleboard and a pool table, all of which will be available for use by those who sign up for Current's event. The event will also feature a trivia contest complete with prizes for the winners.

The even cooler part: The Alley area is otherwise available for private parties and gatherings only, so this could be

one of the your only chances to check it out.

Registration is free, but bring some cash for beverages. The event is geared toward young professionals, but anyone who wants to learn more about Current can attend.

Young or young at heart, everyone

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has to register ahead of time, though. You can find registration info at <https://events.greatergbc.org>.

For those more interested in the historic hotel's rooms, history and the building's extensive renovation, the Hotel Northland has you covered, too.

The Northland staff has tapped into the Northland's ties to Green Bay Packers history to launch "First and Ten at 10 and 1."

Translation: The Northland staff will offer tours of the property at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. every first and 10th day of every month, even if those days are Saturdays or Sundays. The tours will include the hotel's lobby, restaurants, the famed Crystal Ballroom, meeting spaces, the fitness center and two rooms in the hotel.

You do not need a reservation to take the tour. If you want more information, give the Northland a call at 920-3937499.

House of Homebrew gets new owners

John Parsons knows beer, but not business. His friend Doug Feck knows

business, but not beer.

Together, they bought House of Homebrew, 410 Dousman St., earlier this year with an eye toward keeping a key resource and supplier for Green Bay area brewers alive after founder and former owner Bill Widmer shifted his focus to his other businesses, Ned Kelly's Pub and Amphora Wine Bar.

"This was Bill's first business and he put a lot of himself into it," Parsons said. "He doesn't want to see it fail."

Parsons and Feck don't want to see it fail either. Parsons, who is also president of the Green Bay Rackers homebrew club, said House of Homebrew isn't just a supply shop, but a place where amateur brewers can discuss challenges, get advice and find solutions. Feck said customers' knowledge of brewing and winemaking keeps the place feeling like a clubhouse as much as a business.

"People just come in and don't buy anything, but will talk with each other," Feck said. "People have a choice now about where they spend their money. They can go online, but there's something about looking at it, touching it and talking with other customers about it first."

The expertise is expanding well beyond brewing beer. Feck and Parsons said they now carry the equipment, ingredients and supplies to make beer, wine, soda, cheese and tea, including kombucha.

"We try to offer a range of kits and quality ingredients," he said. "Some of it is seasonal, too. There are always new things coming in."

Cans of Titletown Brewing Co.'s Green 19 IPA and Johnny Blood Red Ale will hit store shelves April 1 while bottles of 400 Honey Ale will debut in late May.

JEFF BOLLIER/USA TODAY NETWORK-WISCONSIN