

Little Toad brewing plant moves downtown

Written by [Stewart McClintic](#) on February 18, 2017

“Babe, we’ve got water in the brewery,” Dave Crosley shouted to his wife, Teresa Dahl-Bredine, on Tuesday evening inside of the old Silver Skate rink.

Crosley and Dahl-Bredine, owners of the Little Toad Creek Brewery and Distillery, have been renovating the old skating rink, which they bought in 2015, in preparation for their new venture — to bring their brewing and distilling operation downtown from its former home at the Little Toad Creek Inn and Tavern out at Lake Roberts.

The Toad brew crew will begin brewing beer and distilling spirits inside the old skating rink at the beginning of March, instead of hauling it from their Lake Roberts location. Dahl-Bredine said their master brewing and distilling licenses for the Lake Roberts location expire at the end of the month, so the March 1 starting date to brew downtown is pretty firm. Until then, however, Crosley and his brew crew are working double time at their Lake Roberts location to make sure they have enough beer and liquor stockpiled when the license switches over because they expect there to be a learning curve with their new equipment.

Being closer to their popular restaurant and bar downtown isn’t the only advantage of the new brewing and distilling operation. Inside the old skating rink, Crosley and Dahl-Bredine have installed a completely new — and much larger — brewing operation. With that new equipment, the pair have plans to start distributing their products — bottling their spirits like TeGila (their take on tequila) and whiskey, and canning their beers, like the RyePA, an India Pale Ale brewed with rye.

The new equipment was installed in about 21 hours earlier this week by Mark’s Design and Metalwork, based out of Vancouver, Wash.

“It’s like we just had five kids at the same time,” Crosley said.

The new brewery will host a 15-barrel system, which will allow them to produce up to 9,000 barrels of beer each year — a lot more than the 300 barrels per year they currently produce. One barrel of beer is approximately 31 gallons. That means The Toad will be able to produce more than 279,000 gallons of beer each year — 10 times more than they now brew.

The two employees from Mark’s Design, Anthony Pierre and Sean Meister, worked tirelessly at the beginning of this week to complete the project and then sat down and had a beer with Crosley and Dahl-Bredine after the work was done Tuesday. They sat around chatting, finally finished with three days of construction, and said they were proud to have helped a small company fulfill their dream.

“To be able to come in to a city and impact this community, it’s cool to see everyone excited about all this go down,” Pierre said.

Pierre and Meister work all over the country installing brewing equipment, but they said the feeling after completing a project in a big city has no comparison to helping out small-business owners.

“I’ve never seen people this stoked. It’s really cool to see that,” Meister said. “It’s priceless.”

“Being in Portland, we’re spoiled with good food and good beer,” said Pierre. “But in a town like this, it’s great to help give them that big-city feel, and to help impact such a tight community.”

Scott Terry, chief executive officer and president of the Silver City Grant County Chamber of Commerce, said seeing a local business grow is always a good thing in a small community.

“Teresa and her husband have continually invested in our community,” Terry said. “We’re so very proud they’re here in Silver City and contributing so much to our local economy.”

Lucy Whitmarsh, executive director of the Silver City MainStreet Project, said it’s great to see the old industrial district revived.

“I think that area has a lot of potential and having the distillery and brewery in that neighborhood will help with the whole revitalization of that area,” she said.

Whitmarsh said that having the brewery and distillery down there may encourage others to fill some of the other vacant buildings in south downtown.

“There’s a building on S. Bullard that used to be a bakery. It could be a tearoom. It has a commercial kitchen. It would really complement the whole ambiance of that area,” she said.

MainStreet has coordinated with the town to install streetlights down as far as Mill Street, where the new distilling operation is located, so that will help tie things together, she said.

Crosley and Dahl-Bredine can finally breathe easily for a while since their new equipment is installed, but they still have a lot of work ahead of them.

Dahl-Bredine said the project to install their new equipment cost about \$500,000, partly paid for by a \$100,000 Local Economic Development Grant. That grant comes with some stipulations, though, Crosley said. They have to create a bare minimum of eight well-paying and quality jobs. Those jobs include, he said, two brewers, two assistants, a brew house manager then three salespeople.

“The people who really succeed in the community, it’s us, but the community is going to benefit exponentially,” Crosley said.

But, the new brewery has a potential to create even more jobs when they begin to can and bottle their products.

“As soon as we can afford it, that’s going to be our next big purchase,” Dahl-Bredine said.

Dahl-Bredine and Crosley have decided to can their beer instead of bottle it.

“It’s the new debate in the craft world,” Dahl-Bredine said.

It’s lighter to ship, there’s less chance of beer arriving to its destination skunked because there’s no glass to let light through, cans are recyclable, and, overall, the process is cheaper. Dahl-Bredine said that canning is also great for people who like to go into the wilderness and have a few beers since it’s easier to pack out than glass.

Although the brewery is brand new downtown, the two have decided to keep the graffiti painted inside of it.

“We wanted to keep the character of the building,” Crosley said.

In the future, customers will be able to take tours, possibly reminisce about the time they spent in the skating rink, and enjoy a brew or spirit in the planned taproom or on the proposed patio that will overlook the Big Ditch.

For more information about Little Toad Creek Brewery and Distillery call 575-956-6144.

Stewart McClintic may be reached at stew@scdailypress.com.



(Press Staff Photo by Stewart McClintic)

Sean Meister, left, and Anthony Pierre, employees of Mark's Design and Metalwork of Vancouver, Wash., install new brewing equipment Tuesday inside the old Silver Skate rink, home of the new Little Toad Creek Brewery and Distillery's brewing operation. Brewing operations are to begin there on March 1.