

## NEWS

# Former Rochester firefighter to open hot new brewery, restaurant

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NAPLES, NY — For almost 30 years, Greg Borden wanted to open a brewery and restaurant.

Borden, who was a Rochester firefighter for 22 years until retiring as lieutenant in 2019, wanted to be in the Naples area, but never was able to find just the right spot.

But then, just like that, the right spot came to him, in the form of an unused section of Hazlitt's Red Cat Cellars, 1 Lake Niagara Lane, that he was asked to look at. And he liked what he saw.

"It was actually perfect for what we want to do," Borden said.

And while he said he's a bit behind schedule, by spring or early summer, Borden, along with his wife, Kate, and sons, Adam and Zack, expects to open Engine 14 Brewery.

Borden may be retired as a career firefighter, but he said he is working harder than he ever has to get everything just right.

"I'm down there, seven days a week, 12 hours a day working on the place," Borden said. "I'm really enjoying myself, though."

They say you should do what you know, and Borden, who continues to be a state fire instructor and remains a volunteer with the Maxfield Hose Co. in Naples, knows firefighting. And he knows about making beer, which he has been doing off and on since the 1980s.

"I have been a craft beer enthusiast for a long, long time, and I love beer," Borden said.

When complete, Engine 14 Brewing will have the look of an old firehouse, with lockers, turnout gear and an old fire truck.

A while back, Borden found a 1953 Ward LaFrance fire truck in Georgia and purchased it, later finding out that it was a decommissioned Rochester fire truck — Engine 14 — that last

operated in 1964 from the same firehouse he had worked out of, he said.

“It was kind of a neat connection,” Borden said. “At the time, we didn’t purchase it to open a brewery with that name. We just thought it was neat that we found a fire truck. It runs, it drives down the road.”

The plan is to use it for events, parties, and weddings, when it’s not parked inside the brewery, which will feature IPAs, stouts and porters made on a 7-barrel system that includes a copper brew kettle and copper mash tun, which is used in the grain fermentation process.

“They’re gorgeous,” Borden said.

Engine 14’s flagship will be an American lager or pilsner, Borden said, a light, easy-drinking beer with low alcohol content and a nice crisp flavor to it.

“We hope that one takes off,” Borden said.

His son Adam, a former chef at Oak Hill Country Club in Pittsford, will run the kitchen, which will offer visitors standard American fare, such as brick oven pizza, burgers, wings, and fries. Another son, Zack, who works for Xerox Corp. as a software developer, handles the marketing, as well as the business plan, website, and logo.

Ontario County Economic Developer Michael Manikowski said the county economic development team provided a \$200,000 loan to help the Bordens get the ball rolling.

The investment means the county has helped Hollerhorn Distilling, Hazlett and now Engine14, while developing the full package for alcoholic beverage lovers of spirits such as Scotch, wine and beer on the Southern Gateway Beverage Trail through Naples, which already is home to Arbor Hill Grapery and Winery and Inspire Moore Winery and soon will boast of another craft brew operation in the village.

“We’re bullish on Naples,” said Manikowski, noting that the department is interested in promoting the growth of the adult beverage industry throughout Ontario County.

“They do make products. They’re manufacturers too. It’s really a growth sector. When we get through this pandemic in some way, or reduce it a little bit, I think we’ll have explosive growth in that sector.”

Of course, there is history to alcoholic beverages in Naples, especially wine. And the 4,000-square-foot Engine 14 building has some pretty cool history to it, Borden said.

The structure once was used to manufacture baskets for workers to carry grapes in from the field. A major fire in the 1940s spelled an end to the top story of the two-story building, Borden said.

After Widmer Winery took over, trains would come into a loading dock, where juice was offloaded and bottles of wine were put on trains and sent off. At one point, Borden said, one of the rooms was made for making champagne.

“It’s just a really cool space,” said Borden.

Borden said Engine 14 will be a family-friendly place as well, and he expects that his and the Hazlitt tasting rooms will be able to play off of each other while drawing more people to Naples.

“It’s just another stop for folks coming through on the wine trail,” Borden said. “Now they can stop for a beer as well.”