

# Running Dogs Brewery *continued from front page*

with another brewery is scheduled in February. The space is also available for rent for private events and parties.

"We like to partner with other local businesses and artists," says Clayton. "Things are growing and happening a lot faster than anticipated."

Guests are welcome to select from an ever growing collection of over 100 board games and settle in with their friends to hang out. They also have a television monitor for sports events. Regulars can join their "Mug Club" for \$100 and get their own 25 oz. mug filled up for the price of a pint. A few outdoor tables with umbrellas provide a nice place to sit with your best friend... either human or canine, which is encouraged.

Originally from Hood Canal in Washington, the Claytons, like a lot of other small brew pub owners, first got interested in brewing as a hobby. Jaron started home brewing in 2009 when he returned from Iraq after serving in the U.S. Army; he also spent time in the Washington Army National Guard. In 2012 Jaron was transferred to the Portland area for his work as a health care administrator, and he and Maggie settled in St. Helens. Their interest in brewing continued to grow. "We bought a five gallon home brew kit," explains Maggie. "We taught ourselves, built our own mash ton, and fermented in a carboy. And then in 2015 we bought our one-barrel system and started brewing big batches."

Running Dogs Brewery is named for the Clayton's two dogs, a Hungarian Vizsla and an Italian Greyhound.



"Those breeds are two of the fastest dogs in the world, and ours were always running, so that's where the name comes from," explains Maggie. "Our logo comes from an actual photo of those two dogs and our tag line, 'Lap It Up' comes from when we were just home brewing and we would give the dogs some of the mash liquid and they would lap it up. So it's all very personal." Unfortunately the Clayton's Italian Greyhound recently passed away, but the Claytons now have another Vizsla.

Jaron just left his day job, and will now be the brewmaster, while Maggie runs the taproom. "Now that we have a full-time brewer we hope we can keep up with demand a little better," says Clayton.

Clayton says their small system actually allows them the opportunity to experiment quite a bit. "We really like to be creative and think outside the box

with our recipes, because we don't have to worry as much. If something doesn't work out it's not that big a deal to dump out a one-barrel batch as it would be to dump a ten-barrel batch."

Running Dogs like to use fruit in their recipes, using a lot of locally grown products. "We haven't tried brewing with vegetables yet, but it's something we're thinking about," says Clayton. "A mushroom infused beer is something that we've had requests for. We're just not afraid to be creative because there are so many ingredients that can produce a good flavor in a beer."

With space limited, Running Dogs has a small kitchen area and menu of light fare, serving a variety of panini sandwiches and several choices of meat and cheese charcuterie boards, snacks, (everyone gets a dog bowl with pretzels when they order a drink) and will be adding chips and salsa and quesadil-

las. "We're not a place where you want to plan on a big dinner, but it's good for hanging out," says Clayton.

In the immediate future Clayton says Running Dogs plans to add 14 more taps. "Our goal is to have eight to ten of our own beers on tap and then begin to showcase even more regional beers and ciders, because there really isn't any other place in this area where you can sit down and try different craft beers. So we want to bring a nice variety of craft microbrews to Columbia County."

Running Dogs has a variety of merchandise like glassware, growlers, sweatshirts, T-shirts, and trucker hats, with coasters and stickers on the way, so customers can help advertise and spread the word about Columbia County's newest brewery.

Clayton says that, as their popularity grows, they will explore upgrading to a larger seven or ten-barrel system. She says they would love to someday move to a larger location in Columbia County with a full restaurant, and maybe even an enclosed outdoor beer garden area where dogs can play off leash while their humans enjoy a good brew.



Running Dogs Brewery is located at 291 S. 1st Street in Old Town St. Helens and is open Wednesday and Thursday 11:30 am to 9:00 pm; Friday and Saturday from 11:30 am to 10:00 pm and Sunday from 1:00 pm to 7:00 pm; closed Monday and Tuesday.

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