



Elks Upgrades

New windows, a restored neon sign, and an upgraded entry on Cascade Avenue were the visible exterior improvements done over the winter at Hood River Elks Lodge. Meanwhile, inside the the lodge, the organization was doing an extensive remodeling on the second floor. At a soft opening on March 5, bar manager Tyler Stevens talks with member Mary Jane Hay, with the revamped bar and new paint, floor and furnishings in the restaurant visible. Second photo shows the work in progress in December. Exalted Ruler Derek Larsen said that since the lodge had to close due to COVID-19, leadership saw it as a good time to make long-desired upgrades for when members, and the public at some events, would enjoy improved surroundings when facilities could re-open to food and drink service. Future phases include upgrades to the pool room, which separated from the dining room by a collapsible wall.

Kirby Neumann-Rea photos



HR Distillers promote O'Sullivan, Bartlemay

HOOD RIVER — Hood River Distillers has announced promotions for its two lead distillers. Joe O'Sullivan has been promoted to Master Distiller for the entire Hood River Distillers portfolio, and Caitlin Bartlemay has been elevated to Head Distiller of Clear Creek Distillery.

"These promotions are well deserved, and we are proud of Joe and Caitlin. They are dedicated to their craft, which is evident in the great spirits they make, and we are happy they make those exceptional spirits for Hood River Distillers," said David Ballew, President, Hood River Distillers.

"Innovation is part of our DNA, and we are excited to see where Joe and Caitlin's creativity and imagination helps take our portfolio," Ballew said. "At Hood River Distillers, our best days are in front of us, and these two will play a large part in getting us there."

In his new role, O'Sullivan is now responsible for the planning, management and oversight of all aspects of liquid production at Hood River Distillers, Clear Creek Distillery and Big Gin Distillery. O'Sullivan will leverage his extensive distilling, blending, and barrel aging experience to lead new product development, facility development, and drive new liquid product development. O'Sullivan is bolstered by a long history in Pacific Northwest distilling, starting his career at Clear Creek in 2005. He studied under Master Distiller, Steve McCarthy, learning the craft of distillation and wood management.

From 2005 to 2010, O'Sullivan worked his way up through various roles at the distillery, and in 2010, he struck out on his own on the East Coast launching a start-up beverage consultancy.

After seven years,



Pandemic shortages resulted in a new produce for Hood River Distillers, Alcohol Antiseptic.

O'Sullivan moved back to Oregon and rejoined Clear Creek Distillery, where he was named Head Distiller in May 2017.

He subsequently added leading distillation and product innovation efforts for all of Hood River Distillers, which he continues to head up today.

Bartlemay, one of the few female distillers at this level in the region and the country, will oversee the production of Clear Creek's portfolio of products and is in charge of barrel aging, fermentation and distillation.

A fourth generation wheat farmer from Eastern Oregon, her family decided to diversify and start a winery and vineyard when she was 11 years old, giving her the opportunity to learn viticulture, enology, and small business ownership first hand.

With a taste for fermentation, Bartlemay attended Oregon State University and acquired a B.S. in Food Science with an option in Fermentation and Minor in Chemistry.

Upon graduation, she secured a position at Clear Creek Distillery, and now, over 10 years later, her dedication to creating high quality spirits remains unchanged.

The Hood River Distillers spirits portfolio includes Big Gin, Batanga Tequila, Trail's End Bourbon Whiskey, McCarthy's Single Malt Whiskey, Clear Creek fruit brandies and many others.

The company also began producing one of the highest outputs of hand sanitizer in the region with the onset of COVID-19.

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