

**GORGE LOCAL: IN BUSINESS**

# Hood River's newest bottle shop and lounge has something for everyone

By Janet Cook  
For Columbia Gorge News

WITH THE OPENING of Hood River Common House at the end of May, the Kitts family added another business to their corner of town. The new bottle shop and lounge, located beneath the Ruddy Duck, is the third business for the Mike Kitts and Tassie Mack family at Oak and Fifth streets, joining the clothing boutique and Mike's Ice Cream. This one, though, is a venture dreamed up and carried out by the family's second-generation siblings: McKinley Kitts, Josh Kitts and Cecily Kitts Diffin.

"We've had the ice cream shop since 1986 and the Ruddy Duck for 15 years," McKinley said. "My siblings and I had a conversation and decided, maybe it's time to close the loop." The Common House is in the space previously occupied by the restaurant Kin.

When the pandemic hit last spring, McKinley was touring with his band, Flor. After a show in Aspen in mid-March, the tour was abruptly halted and he returned home to Hood River. His fellow band members figured they'd resume the tour after a few months, but McKinley was doubtful. "I got a weird feeling that it was going to be more long term," he said.

He threw himself into helping with the family businesses — something he'd been unable to do over the years as his music career flourished. "I wanted to step up and help out," he said. As the pandemic year wore on, there was some brainstorming among the siblings about what they could do with the remaining space in the historic building, which was once home to Tum-A-Lum Lumber. Josh, who lives in Portland near an eclectic bottle shop and bar, floated the idea for something similar.

The rest, as they say, is history. The space required renovating, which they did over the winter and spring — remodeling and updating extensively, including the kitchen. There's currently no formal food service at the bottle shop, but McKinley said they wanted to prepare it for the future. "We put in everything a nice restaurant kitchen would have," he said.

McKinley credits Josh with seeing the project through "from concept to opening," although all three siblings were involved every step of the way. "We all had the opportunity to be shoulder to shoulder," McKinley said. "It was chaos, and also really good bonding."

The lounge has seating areas and tables with plenty of space between. "We didn't



The Hood River Common House opened at the end of May, dreamed up and carried out by siblings McKinley Kitts, Josh Kitts and Cecily Kitts Diffin. Photo courtesy Pickles Photography



An outdoor seating area is arranged around the exterior brick fireplace at Hood River Common House. At right, a guest laughs in the indoor seating area. Photos courtesy Pickles Photography

want to build the business around COVID, but the flow is important to us," McKinley said. In addition to the inside space, the outside of the building facing Fifth Street has been reconfigured into an additional seating area.

A dedicated wine section is filled with a selection of local and regional wines, as well as some from farther afield. Bottles are available to purchase for take-away, or to drink onsite with a small corkage fee.

Being a bottle shop, there is, of course, a large drink cooler. And there's a story behind it. The lounge is relatively small, and the wall where the cooler sits is visible from everywhere. "We didn't want people to have to look at an ugly, industrial cooler," McKinley said. They came across an old cooler for sale at a market in Kelso, Wash. The price was right for anyone who would come and remove it immediately.

McKinley and Josh, along with a couple of friends, drove to Kelso with a trailer and extricated the cooler from the space it had occupied since sometime in the middle of last century. Once they got it home, Josh spent countless hours getting it in working order, including crafting narrow custom wood strips to make the doors slide open and

closed and refitting it with new lighting. But the effort paid off and the cooler fits right in with the aesthetic of the lounge. And, McKinley points out, it literally fits perfectly along the length of the one wall where it needed to go. "It was meant to be," he said.

The cooler is stocked with a varied selection of mostly regional beer and cider. At the bar, six taps offer a rotating selection of beer, cider and, eventually, hard kombucha.

Although there are light snacks available, visitors to the lounge and bottle shop are invited to bring food in with them — preferably from one of the nearby food trucks or take-out eateries. "We want to encourage people to patronize all the businesses around us," McKinley said.

One of the bottle shop's final touches came together shortly before opening: The hand-painted signs on the outside. "They're kind of throwback," McKinley said. "The building is from the 1920s. We thought, let's restore some of that vintage feel."

The signs add the finishing touch to Hood River's newest gathering spot. "It's all in the name," McKinley said. "There's something here for everyone."



## Public Notices

Invitation to Bid  
City of Hood River  
PROSPECT AVE,  
1ST TO 7TH WATER  
& SEWER REPLACEMENT

PROJECT #679  
Bids from qualified contractors will be received by the City of Hood River (Owner) at Hood River Public Works, 1200 18th Street, Hood River, Oregon 97031, until 2:00 PM on July 6, 2021. The City of Hood River will receive and accept bids ONLY through QuestCDN. The project location is along Prospect Ave, from 1st St. to 7th St. The work is more particularly described in the project plans.

Prequalification is not required; however, applicant must submit with its Bid evidence of qualifications and experience to perform the work.

The work is fully described in the Contract Documents, which may be downloaded via the bidding section of the QuestCDN website at [www.questcdn.com](http://www.questcdn.com). To be considered a plan holder, you must register for a free membership on QuestCDN and download the contract documents in digital form under "download bid documents" on the bid advertisement page. There is a non-refundable fee of \$15.00 to download the documents. Please contact Quest CDN Customer Support at (952) 233-1632 or [info@questcdn.com](mailto:info@questcdn.com) for assistance in free membership registration, down-

loading and working with digital project information. Bidders will be charged a fee of \$30.00 to submit a bid electronically.

Bids will only be received and accepted via the online electronic bid service listed in the "Submitting an Online Bid" section. The QuestCDN eBid doc number for this project is 7893111. All bidding documents are available at the following Plan Centers: Oregon Contractor Plan Center, Daily Journal of Commerce, Tri City Construction Council, Premier Builders Exchange, Salem Contractor Exchange, SW Washington Contractors 7017, Hermiton Plan Center, iSqFt Plan Room, Central Oregon Builders Association, McGraw-Hill Construction Dodge.

The Project has been designed by Grayling Engineers. Inquiries concerning the contents of the plans, specifications and bidding documents should be directed to Wade Seaborn, City Engineer for the City of Hood River (541.436.3510), or [w.seaborn@cityofhoodriver.gov](mailto:w.seaborn@cityofhoodriver.gov). The deadline for questions is June 30th at 5:00 p.m.

Bids will be publicly opened immediately after the deadline for bid submission. Bids shall be submitted on the bid forms supplied in the bidding documents and shall be accompanied by a bond, postal money order, certified or cashier's check from the bidder in the amount of at least five percent (5%) of the bid as security.

The successful bidder will be required to execute a formal agreement with the Owner and provide acceptable insurance and both a performance bond and a material and labor payment bond each in an amount equal to 100% of the contract award in accordance with the Specifications within ten (10) days of Notice of Award.

The project is a public work subject to ORS 279C.800 to 279C.870. Contractor must be registered with the Oregon Construction Contractors Board (CCB) prior to the bid opening and must file a public works bond in the amount of \$30,000 with the CCB prior to commencing work on the project. Contractor must pay Prevailing Wages in accordance with ORS 279C.800 to 279C.870. No Bid will be received or considered by the Owner unless the Bid contains a statement that Bidder agrees to be bound by and will comply with the provisions of ORS 279C.840 or 40 USC § 276a.

The Owner may reject any Bid not in compliance with prescribed public bidding procedures and requirements, and may reject for good cause any or all bids upon a finding of the Owner that it is in the public interest to do so. The City of Hood River is an equal opportunity employer. ADA accommodations will be provided on request; phone 541.387.5201.

June 16, 2021  
#1702



We're looking for people to join our successful team! People who enjoy working with a team to produce like-minded results. SDS Lumber Company is a goal oriented organization that strives to be efficient in safety, quality, and production. We want people that can come into our already efficient teams to learn, grow, and become an asset to the Company. If that sounds interesting to you or if you would like to learn more contact Nick Reeves, HR Supervisor at (503) 720-7465 or email [nickr@sdsllumber.com](mailto:nickr@sdsllumber.com).

- Current Openings:**
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  - Maintenance Millwright
  - Saw Filer

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  - Employees discounts on our wood products, work apparel and more.
  - On the job training
  - Plus other benefits!

**If interested please give Nick the HR Supervisor a call at (503) 720-7465 or email at [nickr@sdsllumber.com](mailto:nickr@sdsllumber.com)**

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