

**GORGE LOCAL – IN BUSINESS**

# 'Why wouldn't you want to live upstairs from an ice cream place?'

By Alana Lackner  
Columbia Gorge News

It's the subject of daydreams for many sweet-toothed little kids who watched "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory" one too many times, the type of thing that seems too good to be true. But it's not too good to be true: Shannon and Jonathon Zilka live above an ice cream shop.

Shannon's Ice Cream, located on E. Fourth Street in The Dalles, just opened a few weeks ago, but it's been a work in progress, and a pipe dream, much longer than that.

Jonathon had been thinking about opening an ice cream place for years inspired by his friend of more than 20 years, Goody Cable, he said. Cable owns Rimsky-Korsakoff House in Portland.

Even so, the dream didn't quite come together until they found the house that would become Shannon's Ice Cream.

It was Jonathon's brother, who lives in The Dalles, that found it, Jonathon said. The second he and Shannon saw the building, everything just clicked.

"It's like when something's in the back of your mind and you get the right scenario, it just falls into place," he said. "When we found this house it just all clicked together and I said, 'Yes, Goody will be so proud.'"

The house would end up being more than just a shop, but would also be a home for the Zilkas.

"We wanted to live upstairs because why wouldn't you want to live upstairs from an ice cream place?" Shannon said.

Of course, living above the shop isn't all sprinkles and chocolate sauce. On more than one occasion, the Zilkas have forgotten to lock the doors and went downstairs to come face-to-face with hungry customers.

"They don't even knock, they just come through and stand there, and I come out of the kitchen thinking everything's locked up and all of a sudden there's someone standing there going 'Oh!'" Jonathon said.

The business has also been a lot of work. After months of renovations to meet ADA requirements, opening has provided its own unique challenges.

"We spent so much time making it that we really didn't think about running it, the systems you have to get in place," Shannon said. "Just working all day, close the doors, clean up and then 'Great, time to make ice cream!' We'll get it sorted out, but it's a little overwhelming."

It's made even more overwhelming by the fact that it's just Shannon and Jonathon working at the shop. The pair has yet to hire any employees.

"We're busy making ice cream and not wanting to do paperwork at the moment," Jonathon said.

However, Shannon thinks they'll find employees when the time is right.

"It's kind of a flying by the seat of



A pair of customers enjoys ice cream on Friday, June 11, outside of Shannon's Ice Cream on E. Fourth Street in The Dalles. Alana Lackner photo

our pants operation, but like, cool things have just appeared right when we need them, so we kind of figure that's going to happen with employees too. The right person is going to show up like Mary Poppins."

The pair may not need Mary

Poppins, however, because they themselves have a lot of ideas for the shop. Jonathon said they're considering adding pastries. Additionally, Shannon said she wants to take the ice cream in a local-themed direction.

"The goal is to come up with

some signature flavors and use, like, local hazelnuts and peaches, whatever we can find locally, and just try to make some great stuff from it," Shannon said. "Kind of Gorge-themed flavors."

Shannon's idea includes potentially showcasing coffee from local places in an espresso ice cream flavor. It's important to her that the community becomes part of the shop, because when she thinks of The Dalles, she thinks of community, she said.

Shannon said the first time she ever came to The Dalles, they were making the drive to Montana and stopped for breakfast at Momma Jane's.

"There were a bunch of farmers all sitting at one table just talking about how there'd been an early wheat harvest and they were scrambling," Shannon said. "Everybody had to help each other. Like, everybody take all the tractors to one person's field and plow it and then for the next one, and they were just all helping each other out. I thought that was so cool. It always stuck with me."

Shannon's Ice Cream is open from 2-9 p.m. Wednesday through Sunday and is located at 318 E. Fourth St. in The Dalles.



Jonathon Zilka serves a customer ice cream on Friday, June 11 in Shannon's Ice Cream on E. Fourth Street in The Dalles. Alana Lackner photo



Shannon and Jonathon Zilka stand inside their ice cream shop, Shannon's Ice Cream, on Friday, June 11. Alana Lackner photo



## Targeted Funding


David West of Centerville was the proud winner of the Klickitat County Republican's raffle for an iTargetPro. Garrett Towle, the KCR's fundraising chairman, organized the fundraiser, which lasted approximately 8 weeks. The winning ticket was drawn at the KCR's Central Committee meeting in June. The iTargetPro integrates a laser round with a target and an app on a phone. "I was pleasantly surprised to hear my name announced as the winner," said West. "Responsible gun owners know that practice of fundamental skills is vital to proficiency. With the cost of ammunition way up and the supply almost non-existent, I am happy to be taking this home." The money raised from the raffle helps the KCR fund their Lincoln Day Picnic and support candidates running for office. Contributed photo

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