



DAWSON OFFICER IN FRONT OF
THE MEMORIAL WALL AT 4 SPIRITS
DISTILLERY IN ADAIR VILLAGE

PHOTO BY TODD COOPER

IN GOOD SPIRITS

Adair Village's 4 Spirits Distillery makes great liquor while honoring fallen heroes BY AMY SCHNEIDER

Dawson Officer stood at the eighth hole of the Shadow Hills Country Club golf course, watching as golfers and prospective taste testers piled out of their cart and onto the green. "Do you want to try some whiskey?" Officer asked from behind his table, where bottles of vodka and bourbon whiskey were displayed.

"You want to golf for me? I'll just stay here with the liquor," a golfer joked, moseying up to the table for a shot.

It was a cloudy day at the country club, where Officer served free samples of his liquor for an Oregon Club event, but the prospect of whiskey and vodka from 4 Spirits Distillery brightened the scene. Officer, a craft distiller and owner of the distillery, takes his liquor to events in Eugene

and Portland, but the distillery itself is based in Adair Village, just north of Corvallis.

There, Officer refines his Indiana-imported whiskey and makes smooth-finishing craft vodka that's sure to catch the eye of any Oregonian: Half the vodka is bottled as SlapTail, labeled with a beaver doing a face plant, while the other half is bottled as WebFoot, adorned with a clumsy duck. "We're trying to educate people that you can have a high-quality and locally made vodka with a very fun and kind of comical label," Officer says.

Officer also wants people to know that there's more to Oregon than just wineries. To stir up interest in the distilling, craft-brewing side of Oregon-made alcohols, Officer and nine other breweries, ciderhouses, meaderies and distilleries came together to create the Mid-Valley Sip Trip, a 10-stop tour of the best brews nestled between Eugene and Portland. "It's to get people out of their norms," Officer says.

The tour includes the familiar Corvallis brewery Block 15, as well as newer establishments like Nectar Creek Honeywine, which serves craft mead. It's the perfect summertime alternative to wine tasting and a great way to cool down on a hot day.

The 4 Spirits tasting room offers free samples of its signature vodka and whiskey, and although the distillery has only been open since 2010, Officer hopes to launch his own brand of rum, which will be ready by summer of 2014.

But there's more to 4 Spirits Distillery than high-quality alcohol — it's also a tribute to the four spirits mentioned in the distillery's name, referring to four fallen soldiers that served with Officer during his time in the National Guard in Baghdad.

"I got overwhelming support from members of the military," Officer says. "It's so people don't forget the guys from Oregon who died when they were fighting for us in Iraq." The label for 4 Spirits whiskey features a soldier's cross, a representation of a fallen soldier.

A portion of all proceeds assists veteran services in Oregon. In addition to that, 4 Spirits recently set up a scholarship through the OSU Foundation to help keep veterans in school and staying social. "It's very personal to me, and of course it transcends to a lot of other people," Officer says. "What it's supposed to do is inspire and make people remember."

4 Spirits Distillery is located at 6040 NE Marcus Harris Drive in Adair Village. Tasting room hours are noon to 5 pm every Saturday.

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