

OLD BULL BREWING

SMALL-SCALE BREW TIMES TWO



SHANNA MADISON PHOTOS, MISSOULIAN

Brewer Shon Gooden, left, and Nic Pestel stand Tuesday in the brewhouse of the new Missoula location of Frenchtown's Old Bull Brewing.

Frenchtown brewery expands, adding ‘small, community-based’ location to south Missoula



The taps at Old Bull Brewing's new Missoula location, set to open later this month, are pictured Tuesday.

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Nic Pestel was busy on a recent Tuesday afternoon putting the finishing touches on a few new batches of beer he's preparing for the grand opening of his second brewery in the Missoula area.

Pestel started Old Bull Brewing in 2019 in Frenchtown as a community gathering spot, regularly hosting live music, food trucks and events.

It was such a success that he and his business partners are now expanding to Missoula, and they'll be hosting a grand opening for the second Old Bull Brewing sometime in late October at 335 SW Higgins Ave.

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“We want to build small. That’s what it was in Frenchtown. It’s a small, community-based brewery. And so why not bring it to Missoula?”

Nic Pestel, owner of Old Bull Brewing

Seeley Lake Medical Center ends next week

Officials eye new options for care

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The Seeley Lake Medical Center will close on Thursday, Oct. 15, after current provider Partnership Health Center withdrew from the clinic, but officials said this week they are still seeking options to provide rural healthcare.

The clinic had been facing a long-term deficit, according to Partnership Health Center.

The provider and the Seeley Swan Hospital District Board had worked to keep the federally qualified health center, but those efforts fizzled over the last three months.

Now, both groups are now looking at ways to provide healthcare to the Seeley Swan Valley, which is more than an hour away from the nearest healthcare services in Missoula and Kalispell.

PHC officials said they are looking at home visits, telehealth and a possible new location, while the hospital district is still seeking a provider, either through a larger healthcare organization or a private practice.

“I would really like to start exploring the possibility of privatizing the clinic,” board chair Terry Bartlett said at a meeting Wednesday night. “If we get a (request for proposal) that’s icing on top of the cake, but until then that is an avenue that we haven’t really researched much yet.”

The hospital board said Wednesday that no provider has responded to its request for proposals to operate a primary care clinic in the area. Logan Health respectfully declined the proposal, according to the board.

Meanwhile, PHC told the Missoulian its last day in Seeley Lake is Thursday, Oct. 15. From there, the nonprofit health provider will begin removing its equipment by the end of its lease on Oct. 31.

The future of the clinic first became uncertain after PHC requested additional financial resources from the hospital district, like reducing rent at the Seeley clinic and considering a taxpayer levy for nearby residents.

The hospital board declined to provide financial support to PHC, which said the clinic faced a \$400,000 annual shortfall and initiated a 90-day lease termination in June.

The hospital board also declined a three-month extension from PHC through January, contending that it is now time to find someone new to provide healthcare.

PHC had previously operated the primary care and dental clinic for 12 years, but had reduced services, including hours of operation, and removed a doctor of medicine over the last two years.

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BUSINESS BUZZ

Downtown mainstay closing after 30 years

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It looks like downtown Missoula is losing its Sol.

But it's gaining some hot dogs.

Taco del Sol on Higgins Avenue, which first opened in 1997 and has served affordable burritos and tacos to generations of hungry college kids, tourists and local families is finally closing down.

Taco del Sol founder Dave Beaton said it was just time.

“We’ve been there almost 30 years,” he said. “It was great to be a part of downtown. You kind of know when it’s your time. We’ve been there a long time for a small restaurant.”

Beaton gave credit to his staff over the years.

“I had a lot of help along the way, so I don’t necessarily consider it my space,” he said. “The original staff was incredible and built it up.”

A new gourmet hot dog restaurant, Pipe Dream, is moving in. They already have a

food truck in town, and they serve things like a Japan dog that comes with teriyaki glaze, wasabi crema, pickled cucumber slaw, togarashi spice, crispy seaweed and sweet and spicy aioli.

The other Taco del Sol locations around town and across Montana remain open.

Below is more business news from the Missoula area.

The new Liquid Planet cafe and drive-through at 400 W. Broadway has opened. They’ve got indoor seating and a menu that includes a full espresso bar along with food like panini sandwiches, a Thai peanut chicken wrap, burritos and a tomato grilled cheese.

A Missoulian investigation earlier this year found that Liquid Planet owner Scott Billadeau is facing lawsuits related to financial issues at other restaurants he owned. The Liquid Planet coffee locations around town, however, are a separate business.



TACO DEL SOL

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The interior of the Taco del Sol on Higgins in the late 1990s.