

News

Bar and Grill

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tenderloins, grilled loins, chicken wings, chicken strips, onion rings, fries, cheese balls, typical bar food,” Van Vark said. “We will also run specials once we get going.”

Lunch will also be available from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Fridays and some Saturdays.

“We’ll expand as we go but we are going to start small and make sure we do that well,” Van Vark said. “Then, we will grow from there.”

The bar does have a signature drink, “the Fishing Bowl,” which comes in a small fish bowl. The contents change each week as Van Vark comes up with new flavors to share.

“We add gummy worms in to make it fun,” Van Vark said.

The bar will also serve as a signature piece and bring together the decorations and theme perfectly. Unfortunately, Van



Fishing poles, bobbers and more decorate the Fishin' Hole in Monroe. Jamee A. Pierson/PCM Explorer

Vark has had to wait to share the eye-catching piece.

“I have a bar coming, it is only six weeks late, but it has a live-edge wood with an epoxy stream,” Van Vark said.

As the Fishin' Hole officially opens and begins to welcome patrons to take a drink or grab a bite, Van Vark is most excited to get people in the door and begin building relationships with the people of Monroe.

“I am excited to meet new people, make some new connections,” Van Vark said. “I live close to Monroe and have come to Monroe all of my life, it is good to support small towns, so hopefully I give something back whether it is food, drink or a place to go and hang out and be welcomed.”

For more information about the Fishin' Hole and weekly specials, check them out on Facebook.

Burning

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burn. There are also enforcement measures for repeat offenders.

“It gives us the opportunity to give them some consequences,” Halferty said.

As someone who has served for the fire department in Kellogg for 45 years, supervisor Denny Stevenson said he is all for this new ordinance. It should be no problem for a resident to pick up a phone and call dispatch. There is no reason not to, he said, and it should encourage people to make it a habit.

Supervisor Doug Cupples said it is a “no-brainer” to have an ordinance like this in the county code. Supervisor Brandon Talsma said a few fire chiefs reached out to him

about the ordinance to voice their support. None of the supervisors or staff indicated residents showed opposition to the proposal.

As a result, the board of supervisors waived the remaining readings and passed the ordinance. The controlled burn ordinance would be effective July 1.

The ordinance, which was proposed earlier this month, does not require residents to ask for permission to burn, but rather notify when a burn occurs.

“Just a ‘Hey, I’m going to do this on this day’ and kind of the rough plan,” Pietrack said at a past meeting. “...Other counties have permits that are required for any type of burn. It’s not this. It’s just strictly notification. If somebody does not notify dispatch and a fire department responds, there are some civil penalties.”

Veterans

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Keith Thorpe, and said, ‘You know, Keith, I’m sorry. I’m sorry this happened, man. I really expected a bigger crowd.’ Keith says, ‘Don’t worry, man. We’re uses to it.’ Those words stuck with me,” Bishop said.

However, a number of local veterans worked tirelessly to form the Jasper County Vietnam Veterans group in 1991 to form bonds with their fellow brothers in arms. The group offered fellowship and a way for veterans to move on from the war; the members also became known for creating spectacular Fourth of July floats.

“They resurrected the Fourth of July Parade,” Bishop said. “They made floats and carried the colors every year.”

John McMahon of the Jasper County Vietnam Veterans group also spoke at the ceremony.

What he has learned from this group and everything they mean to him is they cut the path for all soldiers to enter military service. Many of these veterans are still living with wounds and diseases they brought back with them.

“We get together socially and informally as much as we can,” he said. “We eat together, we laugh together and we have a small business meeting where we take dues that we pay each year and we donate that to not only veterans in our group that need help but (veteran-focused) organizations.”

According to the U.S. Department of Defense, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial is the most-visited memorial on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., attracting more than 5 million people each year. The massive wall lists the names of more than 58,000 men and

women who died during the Vietnam War.

Bishop recalled the first large flight of veterans who visited the wall. One of the veterans had a hard time finding a soldier, a friend. Bishop and Marta Ford helped the man find the name. When the man reached his hand out to the black granite wall, the sun reflected against the surface just right.

“A set of fingers came from the other direction,” Bishop said. “It still makes my hair stand up on my arms thinking about that. You talk about a connection.”

There is also a traveling monument called The Wall That Heals. In 2018, the wall was welcomed in Newton. Bishop, again, recalled another memory with a veteran and that wall. The man was a chopper pilot with more than 1,200 hours of combat flying time and two Distinguished Service

Crosses.

When The Wall was in Newton, the man served as a speaker and kept his back to the monument the whole time. Bishop said he had a hard time looking at it.

“I said I can understand that. It’s gotta be hard on you guys. He said, ‘I always think how many of those guys took a ride in my chopper. I’m not talking about the ride out. I’m talking about the ride back ... Knowing how many names are on that wall. It haunts me,’” Bishop said. “...Those stories stick with me.”

In years past, it was believed that only four individuals from Jasper County had been killed in the Vietnam War. However, it was brought to attention that actually six people in Jasper County had given the ultimate sacrifice:

- Lance Cpl. David McMath, United States Marine Corps, killed in

action Aug. 12, 1967

- Staff Sgt. Tommy Knapp, United States Army, killed in action April 4, 1968

- Specialist Rollin “Rollie” Davis, United States Army, killed in action May 4, 1968

- Sgt. Ronald “Ronnie” Wearmouth, United States Army, killed in action June 14, 1968

- Lance Cpl. Franklin “Dan” Schrader, United States Marine Corps, killed in action, Jan. 19, 1970

- Sgt. 1st Class Edward James “Jimmy” Brue, United States Army, Aug. 12, 1972

McMahon and Bud Pickett of the Jasper County Vietnam Veterans group rang a bell to honor the memory of these six men.

“Never forgotten,” McMahon said. “May they forever rest in peace.”

Jeremy Heaberlin of the Sons of the American Legion, who is also a fabricator, made

a plaque bearing the names of the Jasper County veterans who died in Vietnam. The plaque was presented at the ceremony and will be enshrined in the Patriot Club of the American Legion Post 111.

Post Commander Jerry Nelson said, “Post 111, the American Legion family, the Sons, the Auxiliary, the Riders want to dedicate this to the Jasper County Veterans. It will be hung proudly. I’m glad you guys made it home. We’re always here for you.”

Bishop cannot process what it must have been like in Vietnam. He imagines that 50 years later that pain doesn’t hurt any less, and those memories probably are not any more dull than they were when they happened.

“But we thank you. We honor you. We’re glad you’re all here. Welcome home.”

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