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Tallmadge man 'brews' new venture

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by Amanda Harnocz

Reporter

Tallmadge -- Resident John Myers and two friends had a thirst for something different, and what they came up with is a new company and a crafted lager brewed in Akron.

Myers, Barry Rosenbaum of Shaker Heights and Gordon Schorr of Uniontown met in a twist of fate and wanted a professional change as they all at some point worked for a large corporation.

"We were coming up with things we all had in common," said Myers. " ... and we had all brewed beer at one time."

Rosenbaum, Schorr and Myers, who provides economic development assistance to the University of Akron and entrepreneurship support services to the region, decided to tie the community into their new endeavor and call the company ROOBREW.

Thirsty Dog Brewing Co. owner and microbrewer John Najeway liked ROOBREW's idea, and although he stays busy making his company's 16 different varieties of beer and distributing them to 14 states, he and his crew are now helping ROOBREW make, bottle and distribute its lager.

Thirsty Dog, located at 529 Grant St. in Akron, is the former Burkhardt Brewery which has been a staple in Akron since the pre-Prohibition era.

After crafting the beer there, which Myers called a Munich Style Hellos Lager, they decided to name it "Litigation Lager" because of the various legal hurdles they jumped through early on.

Myers explained the university's legal department, at first, wasn't thrilled with associating its "Fear the Roo" campaign with beer.

"We still keep at arm's length from the university," Myers said. "Three-quarters of the students are still underage, and we don't want to think people are drinking too much ROOBREW or drinking it underage."

Although, when asked, "we do speak often about the business and entrepreneurship on invitation from professors in the classroom and from other organizations," said Myers.

"Litigation Lager" is now being sold to various stores and restaurants in the area at \$9.99 for a six-pack. A full list of places it is being sold is available at the ROOBREW Web site, www.roobrew.com.

The lager is the home drink at the new InfoCision Stadium and was featured as the beer of the month at Erie Station Grille, 70 East Avenue.

"Erie Station took our beer on as one of the first on-premise places," said Myers. "The local help has been overwhelming."

The beer, which was named the "Best Munich-Style Hellos Lager in the Midwest" by the U.S. Beer Tasting Council, made its premiere in April last year, but Myers said a new beer is in the works and should be available this spring.

Free tours of the brewery where ROOBREW calls home are available every Saturday at 3 p.m. or by appointment. The brewery also hosts a "Thirsty Thursday" event from 3 to 7 p.m. where a half-gallon growler of select Thirsty Dog beers and "Litigation Lager" can be filled for \$8. For more information about the brewery, visit www.thirstydog.com or call 330-252-2739.

For more information on ROOBREW visit www.roobrew.com or find them on Facebook, but they will only accept friend requests from those of legal drinking age.

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