

New Arcade Not For Kids

Daily News-Record (Harrisonburg, VA) - February 5, 2016

• Author/Byline: RACHEL CISTO

• Section: News (Local)

HARRISONBURG — It may be called Ruby's Arcade, but when it opens near the end of February, patrons won't see — or hear — any electronic games.

Owner Clay Clark said the space was designed to be more of an "adult's game room" than what many think of as an "arcade."

"We're going for a different market," he said. "Who wants to listen to a dingy pinball machine when you've got a pool table right next to you?"

Clark is opening the arcade in the basement of the Wine Brothers building at 165 S. Main St., which adjoins his other businesses, Clementine Cafe and Ruby's Lounge.

In addition to two pool tables — both over 100 years old — the arcade features dart boards, two shuffleboard tables, two pingpong tables, a foosball table and four duckpin bowling lanes.

"These [duckpin] machines, they were built in the '60s and have been completely refurbished," he said. "They're not produced anymore."

Duckpin bowling is similar to traditional 10-pin bowling, with smaller pins and balls.

It's more difficult to bowl a strike in duckpin, which Clark said is part of the appeal.

"It's a little bit harder, but that's a great equalizer," he said.

Clark said it will cost \$20 an hour to rent a lane.

"It's automated, but we still have a guy in the back making sure it works the way it's supposed to," he said. "But you could bring in a friend and split the lane cost and get an hour of bowling for \$10."

He said he hasn't decided how much the other games will cost.

"I'm thinking maybe \$5 an hour for the others," he said.

Years In The Making

Clark said he got the idea for Ruby's Arcade four or five years ago.

He purchased the Wine Bros. building in late 2014, a sale facilitated by Harrisonburg's Matchbox Realty, and began working to bring it all together shortly thereafter.

According to Clark, Matchbox staff are pursuing preservation credits for the historic building's renovation.

In addition to the games, Ruby's Arcade features a full kitchen and bar.

Clark said the kitchen specialties will be barbecue and pizza. The kitchen features a wood-fired pizza oven and meat smoker.

The bar and game room is down a small flight of stairs from the kitchen, table seating and a lounge area with plush chairs and a couch.

Mike Hendricksen, associate broker at Matchbox, said the layout is part of the arcade's appeal.

"It gives the visitors different options," he said. "The areas are separate, but not disconnected."

Clark said he is catering to people in their mid-20s or early 30s — who he jokingly says "travel in packs."

"The idea is to give them somewhere they can sit and enjoy each other's company," he said. "We're giving them something to do other than sit and drink."

Clark and Hendricksen predict the arcade will be busy.

"I've already gotten a few inquiries about renting the place out for private parties," Clark said.

Though he was originally aiming to open the arcade last fall, Clark said a few finishing touches remain before it's ready for business.

Clark did not have a firm date, but said the arcade would be open by the end of the month.

"We've got to hang stuff up and finish setting up the kitchen," he said. "And we've got to get the staff together and trained."

Contact Rachel Cisto at 574-6272 or rcisto@dnronline.com

- Caption: Clay Clark, owner of Ruby's Arcade, bowls on one of his four duckpin bowling lanes on Thursday. (Photos by Austin Bachand / DN-R) Clark said the bowling machines were built in the 1960s and had been refurbished. One of the game areas in Ruby's Arcade includes pingpong, foosball, pool and shuffleboard.

- Record: 14f23291dcf5c64a6ae537a5a1a8a7245f68bcd

- Copyright: Copyright (c) 2016, Byrd Newspapers, All Rights Reserved.