

BizSnaps

A Snapshot look at local businesses



Your Name: Gene Heiman **Title:** Owner

Business Name: Wild Ride Saloon **Address:** 7530 Cty. Hwy. M, Evansville, WI

Phone: 608-882-1216

Directions: Just off Hwy. 14 by the Piggly Wiggly.

Business Hours: Open 7 days, now open at 9 a.m. every day.

We close at 2 a.m. Sunday through Thursday, and 2:30 a.m. Friday and Saturday.

When was the business started? September 1, 2007.

Describe your products/services. We serve beer, liquor, regular bar food such as burgers, various grilled sandwiches and miscellaneous appetizers.

What do you do, product, service or philosophy, which differentiates you from your competitors? The big draw is the mechanical bull, a barber chair where we serve shots, the indoor version of horseshoes, Baggo, which you can play anytime, and Wednesday nights we have Beer Pong tournaments. Outside, a professional volleyball court with a beer garden and two tournament-sized horseshoe pits. We also have karaoke and bands; just call for the schedule.

How did you get interested and/or started in this business? My family has been in the business for quite some time. My mother owned Jack & Maryanne's in Madison, sister Debbie owns Double Days in Cottage Grove, and my sister Jackie owns South Bay Lounge in Madison.

What kind of training or background do you have? I also own the Red Barn Diner & Catering and Gene'os. Special thanks to Tracy Gibbs in helping me to make the decision to try.

What have you learned from this business? Don't take anything for granted. Work hard 7 days a week and be considerate to all of my patrons.

What are your future plans for your business? I'm remodeling the entire outside with new windows and siding. I want my customers to be proud of their favorite place to relax and have fun.

What or who has had the most influence in the way you do business? My mother, who had her own bar for 21 years. I'm in a wheelchair as the result of an automobile accident in 1979, but I never give up. I remind myself there are people in this world with worse problems than my own.

Do you have a favorite saying that applies to your business? It has to be fun...It has to be wild!

What have been some of the challenges you've faced and how did you work them out? I bought the mechanical bull that was in the movie, Urban Cowboy. I actually changed the name of my Big Hall in Gene'os to Wild Ride Saloon because of the events that occurred during that trip to get the bull. I drove 975 miles, and on the way back home, the trailer carrying the bull came off the mini van as it was going 75 MPH. The trailer, bull and all, went across two lanes of traffic and hit a wall. The bull stayed on the trailer. The state patrol said, what the heck is this? I told him the story, and he called another state patrol officer to take pictures. Afterward I said that was one wild ride, so let's call it Wild Ride Saloon!

What do you find most rewarding about this type of work? Meeting new people and visiting with regular customers. I love listening to all their stories.

What type of customers use your products/services? Anyone who is looking to enjoy all kinds of entertainment under one roof. So, come out, take a ride, be a part of history, and hold on!