

Farmington Voice (<http://www.farmingtonvoice.com/partners-share-love-of-craft-beer-in-downtown-farmington-brewery-001522>)

Partners share love of craft beer in downtown Farmington brewery

By: **JONI HUBRED-GOLDEN** | November 14, 2014

Jason and Gary Schlaff and Jason Hendricks open the doors of Farmington Brewing Company on Saturday.



Brad Probert

From left, Gary Schlaff, Jason Hendricks, and Jason Schlaff prepare for Saturday's Farmington Brewing Company opening.

Jason Schlaff and Jason Hendricks became fast friends when they met six years ago as co-workers at an environmental lab in Novi.

"We bonded over *The Simpsons*," Hendricks said. "Jason was a little bit more into the craft beer than I was."

After experimenting with a home brewing kit, the duo felt certain they could do better on their own, and they have. On Saturday at 2 p.m., the friends—along with Schlaff's father, Gary—will open Farmington Brewing Company in downtown Farmington.

Gary Schlaff got involved after sampling the product. "They won me over to the point where I said, 'This is good enough to sell,'" he said. But when friends who tried the brews started asking to buy it by the case, "I suggested they start to produce for the public."



The team chose the former Mentobe Cafe 33336 Grand River in downtown Farmington. The building seemed tailor-made, most of the colors already on the walls match the Farmington Brewing Company logo. Local architect Steve Schneemann designed the space, with an industrial, modern look.

“(Steve) had a really nice vision for this place,” Jason Schlaff said. “We really lucked out with this building.”

It’s clear the business is filling a neglected niche; the [Farmington Brewing Company Facebook page \(https://www.facebook.com/FarmingtonBrewingco/\)](https://www.facebook.com/FarmingtonBrewingco/) has more than 3,300 fans, and a 150-member Mug Club promotion sold out in just two hours on a freezing cold morning. And fans have gotten a little antsy about the opening date.

“It boggles my mind,” Jason Schlaff said of the response. “People in the community want good craft beer, and that’s what we’re going to give them.”

Opening brews include brown, wheat, and pale ales, and a blood orange beer that Jason Hendricks’ wife requested for her birthday. Creativity is a big part of Farmington Brewing Company’s success, so much so that they’ve even tried brewing beer with Skittles fruit-flavored candies.

“It actually wasn’t terrible,” Jason Schlaff said.

Farmington Brewing Company does not serve food, but patrons can bring it in. Some local restaurant owners have offered to deliver.

The partners have even found a local way to make use of the grain left over after brewing; a Farmington Farmers and Artisans Market vendor is feeding it to his sheep and chickens. Eventually, Hendricks said, he’d like to create a line of dog

treats sold to benefit the Michigan Humane Society.

Farmington Brewing Company will be open 4 p.m.-10 p.m. weekdays and Sundays, and 2 p.m.-midnight on Fridays and Saturdays. Opening day patrons can choose from eight beers; four more in the fermentation tanks will be worked in when they’re ready.

Join the crowd and [follow the company on Facebook \(https://www.facebook.com/FarmingtonBrewingco/\)](https://www.facebook.com/FarmingtonBrewingco/).

Correction: *The article has been changed to correctly identify Jason Hendricks’ wife in connection with the blood orange beer idea.*

