

# Screech Owl Brewery breaks ground

## Move will allow the company to start selling packaged beer

**FOR MORE** info on Screech Owl Brewing, go to [screechowlbrewing.com](http://screechowlbrewing.com) or call 304-379-4777.

**BY KATHY PLUM**  
 The Dominion Post

**CENTENARY** — Screech Owl Brewery broke ground Friday for a 1,500-square-foot addition.

The new building will triple

the space the company has now, allowing Screech Owl to begin selling packaged beer. The demand is there, owners Roger and Christa Johnson said, but they didn't have space for the bottler that is sitting in a crate in the barn.

Also included will be the new Spent Green Cafe, which will include breads and foods made with the beer. They will be

adding at least four employees. This "dream-come-true" is "a beer kit gone wild," Christa said.

Six years ago the Johnsons started looking into a brewery. Roger wanted to leave his truck driving job. He made wine and beer at home, and their sons advised him the beer was the better of the two and to go with the brewery.

They visited breweries and met with the Eastern West Virginia Community and Technical College personnel to learn more about brewing.



Eric J. Tomlinson/The Dominion Post photo

**Roger and Christa Johnson**, owners of Screech Owl Brewing, stand by the original brewing equipment.

**SEE OWL, 13-A**

## **OWL** FROM PAGE 12-A

The West Virginia Small Business Development Center helped develop a business plan, and Clear Mountain Bank provided funding.

Two years ago Screech Owl officially went into business. With the help of Preston Silver Eagle Dis-

tributors and Mona Supply, they were able to sell as much beer as possible.

"You've got to have a good support system," Johnson said. "It's the support system behind you that makes a good business."

Microbreweries are gaining popularity, Johnson said. Screech Owl has

had visitors this year from Belgium, Germany, Ecuador, France, Alaska and several other places.

They have requests from tour bus companies, but the road to the brewery needs improvement for that to happen, Johnson said. State Sen. Randy Smith, R-Tucker, was on hand Friday to discuss that with him.

Their most popular brew is Screech Owl's Bold Blonde Ale. Second is Hoo's Your-Daddy IPA.

"Right now we're selling all the beer he can make," said Robby Peddicord of Silver Eagle. "He's got a good future here."

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