

Hawk Lanes Opens In Broadus

(Article compliments of Powder River Examiner)

After over a year, a huge void in the downtown business area and social life of all ages will be filled with the re-opening of the landmark bowling alley. Mark and Sue Wiltse, who have made numerous improvements and renovations to the old building since it closed last year, re-opened the kitchen Monday.

Soon to open will be a smoking area for poker and keno machines, a huge arcade area, and the bowling lanes themselves. Partitioning walls have been constructed for privacy, separating the kitchen, dining area, poker room, arcade and lanes. The walls are painted with soft, attractive colors. Beautiful new wood flooring has been laid, and new tiles are going in, in the dining area.

Along with a complete renovation, the bowling alley also has a new name: Hawk Lanes. The couple has spent 40 years in ranching, and after selling out operated a trucking company for the past three years. They purchased Powder River Lanes two years ago, and leased the business to Frank and Sue Danielson, who closed the operation on October 1 of last year. Mark will continue to truck and Sue will continue employment at the 1st Bank of Broadus, working at the bowling alley as time allows, while son Tim manages the business.

Adding to the renovation problems was the fact that the old sprinkler system froze and burst last winter, flooding the back end of the facility and damaging numerous ceiling tiles throughout. It didn't get into the lanes, but the whole building had to be de-humidified. We also had to get in the attic and pull out the insulation. In remodeling the interior, we have lots more room, said Tim. The old small, cramped kitchen has been moved to the west end of the interior, and that area made into the poker room. The gaming machines are pending the transfer of the license, which could take several more months.

The Danielsons transferred their beer and wine license, and the temporary waiver was expected to go through Monday.

We have new or nearly new kitchen equipment: new grills and frier. All of our kitchen washing equipment is new. Our menu will stay pretty much the same, but we've added some wraps and a couple of salads, said Tim. We'll have soup every day and will have a salad bar. Eventually in the future we will do steaks on Friday and Saturday night. We want to see how things go to get started.

The arcade runs from the kitchen south, encompassing a huge enclosed area. We took three of

the bowling lanes out and put laminate flooring over the lanes. We will have two pool tables, two dart machines and as many kids arcade games as we can cram in.

Bowling leagues will begin on Monday, November 26. A bowling meeting for all bowlers, men and women, is scheduled for Saturday, November 24 at 6 p.m. The meeting is to organize leagues and teams for the coming season.

When we had the insurance company claim (for the water damage), either the money had to go to the bank or back into the place, said Tim when asked why they took on the project. We've really been wanting this place as something for the kids to do - to give them someplace to go and something constructive to do. That's the biggest reason we decided to wall up the arcade area and replace the lanes, so that the kids can come in. The business will also accommodate both dart and pool league players. As long as we're doing it we're going to see if we can accommodate as many people as we can.

Through the winter months, the dining area will be open informally for card players on Sunday afternoons to play pinochle, 500 and things like that. The kitchen won't be open, but we will have snacks. Meanwhile, the couple invites the community to come in and take a look at the newly remodeled establishment. The new phone number for the business is 436-2760. It will be open until 10 a.m. Monday through Saturday.