



# *OpenRoad Brewery*

THIS FATHER-SON TEAM  
OPENED WAYLAND'S  
FIRST BREWERY, AND  
CONTINUES TO PROVIDE  
A COMMUNITY  
GATHERING SPACE

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Photos and Story by Phil Eich,  
Storyville Social, as part of the  
Michigan Main Street Story  
Series

In 2016, we opened Wayland's first brewery, OpenRoad Brewery. I had been running a coffee shop out of this location for 10 years when we fell in love with craft beer and decided to open a brewery. I had been a lifelong Busch Light drinker, but I was discovering all these amazing beers. I also loved the business model. As we went around to different breweries, we found it was so easy to talk to the owners and the brewers, and when I expressed that opening a brewery was something I wanted to do, they were friendly and helpful. I liked the community around beer, and for me, it is a lot more fun than coffee.

My son wanted to be a partner, so we started home brewing on an escalated scale very fast. I knew there was a process that was more complicated than a

lot of people understood. So, we tried to really dig into that process: the heating, the cooling, the transferring, the fermentation times, fermentation temperatures. That was our focus. I wanted to make true-to-style beers that, when you drank one, you wanted another.

Getting through the pandemic was very hard. I've owned small businesses for years, and this was the most challenging period we ever went through. But, we have a tremendously loyal customer base. In 2020, like a lot of businesses, we transitioned to takeout. We were canning and pushing beer and food out the back door. Our customers showed us tremendous support, and they got us through it.

Wayland is a great community

with a lot of good people. For instance, last night, one of our customers who has been a mug club member from the start, had his birthday party here, and it was a tremendous turnout. The people that have been coming here all know each other and have all become friends. They refer to it as 'Cheers,' you know, 'where everybody knows your name.'

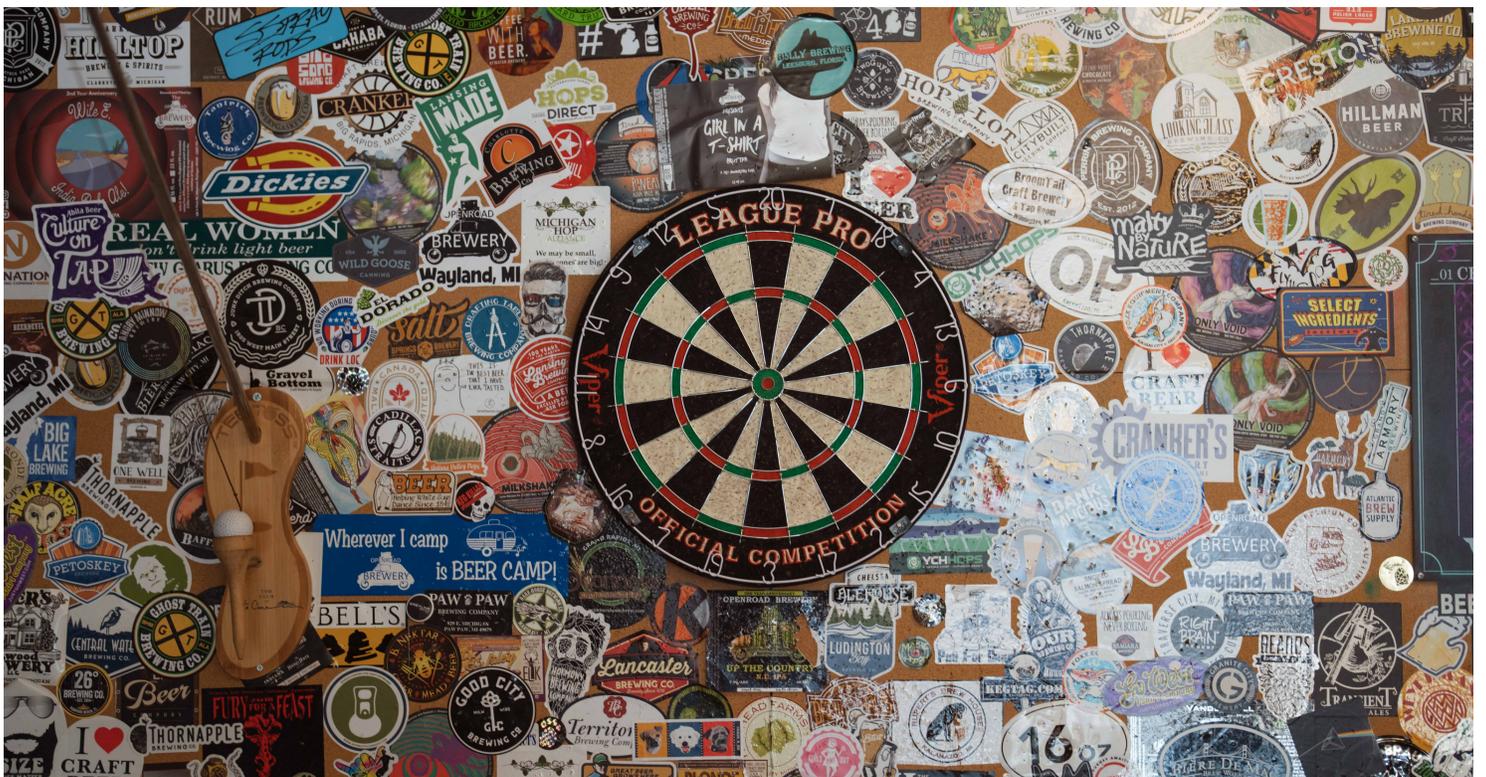
Creating a gathering place was always the goal. We achieved that with the coffee shop, but the brewery fills that need even better. What I noticed with the coffee shop business is that when cell phones and texting became popular, people didn't need to meet over a cup of coffee anymore.

But friends will still get together to have a beer.

- Bruce Patrick, Co-Owner,  
OpenRoad Brewery



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