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MacDaddy's set to open any day

Cape Carteret center is much more than just a bowling alley

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Mac Holz is pictured in front MacDaddy's, a bowling alley that is much, much more. The Cape Carteret facility will be open in a few days. (Scat photo)

Tideland News Writer

Calling MacDaddy's a bowling alley is like calling the legendary Biltmore Estate a country home.

After more than two years of planning and building, the dream of Mac Holz of Cape Carteret will finally come to fruition in the next few days when the state-of-the-art entertainment center opens for business.

"About four years ago I started thinking about this," Holz said during a recent tour of the facility. "When I was a college student in a college town there was a lot to do. When I got back here there was nothing to do. The Golfin' Dolphin just didn't have enough to meet the demands of families with younger kids and teens."

MacDaddy's will be adjacent to the Golfin' Dolphin, which is owned by Holz's parents. It will create an "entertainment destination" at the Carteret Crossing Shopping Center.

"This is somewhere everyone can come and enjoy themselves," Holz said. "This is totally interactive. You can have quality time with your family and buddies or you can have corporate team-building with your company or clients."

Holz, who was paralyzed in a boating accident five years ago, said the idea for MacDaddy's evolved over time ◆◆" and that led to some delays.

"I wanted to be open at Easter, but obviously that didn't happen," he said. "I have told people we'd be open in three weeks for over three months now."

Holz declined to be too specific ◆◆" he wants the opening to be a treat for the public ◆◆" but it's safe to say that there are aspects of the facility that are completely new to the area. And that meant bringing in specialists.

Subcontractors had to come from as far away as Indiana, Illinois and Tennessee to pull the project together.

"This was an almost overwhelming process. When I first started I didn't realize what I was getting into," he said.

Holz credits general manager Connie Nelter with helping complete MacDaddy's.

"Connie made this whole thing possible. She's been my anchor. Between the two of us we were able to bring this thing together," he said.

Nelter, originally from Chicago, brought a lot of building experience with her.

"Mac and I sat together every day for two years. We tweaked the architect's design and pretty much made every decision right down to the carpet," she said.

She said this is much more than just a bowling alley.

Officials have been very secretive about the facility. In fact, a note on the door says something to the effect: "If you are not a contractor, do not enter." No one has been allowed inside to photograph for news story purposes, except for certain locations.

"We want people to walk in and be completely surprised," Nelter explained. "We won't let anyone in here except people who are working."

The 37,500-square-foot facility has two separate bowling areas with state-of-the-art computerized lanes, complete with electronic scoring.

The general bowling area has 16 lanes and the "Boutique Bowling" area features eight lanes. It can be reserved for special parties and has more of a lounge feel.

There are also smoke machines, a laser light show and flat screen TVs that can display just about anything from music videos to sporting events.

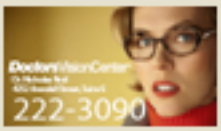
The facility features three birthday party rooms and a banquet room with audiovisual equipment and room dividers, suitable for reunions or corporate events, according to Nelter.

There is also a sports bar, a billiard area and numerous arcade games. The most popular arcade game, at least among the workers, who have to try everything out periodically, is the shooting gallery, complete with authentic .22-caliber rifles.

All of the games are run without coins or tickets. Instead, patrons swipe preloaded credit cards. Each time the card is swiped the user is given a readout of credits and tickets accumulated.

There are a variety of eating choices from the snack bar, which features hot dogs and pizzas, to the sports bar, which features a full menu and beer and wine.

"There is nothing like this in Eastern Carolina. In fact, you'd have to go to a big city to find something comparable to this," Holz said.

Although, the exact date isn't firm, the principals are sure that when MacDaddy's does open, it will have been worth the wait.

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