

Belton's First Micro-Brewery: Broken Hatchet Brewing

Belton's first ever micro-brewery is finally open! Broken Hatchet Brewing offers a variety of handcrafted craft beers brewed right on Belton's Main Street. The idea for Broken Hatchet Brewing was born from co-owner and brew master Brad Steele's love of brewing craft beer. He started by brewing small batches in his garage and soon realized brewing was his passion.

"There is a beer for everyone," says Steele. "My passion for beer is fueled by the brewing community and the people in the brew industry. The brewing industry is a family."

Broken Hatchet Brewing's mission is to create a craft brewery experience and community in Belton and South Kansas City as a whole. Brad plans to get a home brewing group established with the intention of getting more people interested in craft beer.

"We love the location of our brewery," says Cara Steele, Brad's wife and co-owner. "We are excited to be a part of the Belton community. We chose Belton and the Old Town Main Street area because of the good people we have met."

Cara spent her entire career in the Belton School District. She was an elementary school teacher and vice principal at Mill Creek. Brad was an IT project manager for 15 years at both Sprint and Cerner. They currently live in Lee's Summit but plan to move to Belton in the near future.

With a new business comes the task of picking the name that will fit the business perfectly - the Steeles have done just that. The brewery's name was not chosen at random; it was created with the help of Belton history. Did you know that Carrie Nation is buried in the Belton Cemetery? Nation was a temperance advocate who encouraged fellow Americans to reduce the amount of alcohol they consumed. She is famous for using her hatchet to demolish barrooms.¹

Nation was typically dressed in stark black-and-white clothing. She would march into a saloon begin to sing, pray, hurl biblical-sounding vituperations, then smash the bar fixtures and stock with her hatchet. During her brief "hatchetation" period she was arrested 30 times, which brought her national notoriety. As Nation's fame grew, bars began to hang signs that read *All nations welcome—Except Carrie.*²

In honor of Carrie Nation and her history in Belton, the Steeles decided on the perfect name for their brewery, Broken Hatchet Brewing. Carrie Nation may be rolling over in her grave.

Broken Hatchet Brewing has a modern, open interior with plenty of bar space, table seating, and a lounge area. The front wall is a functional garage door. The open garage door draws patrons in and connects the brewery to the outdoors. On the other walls there is a life-size Carrie Nation picture, a broken hatchet, and "Brewed in Belton" painted on the wall. There is even an area to play Cornhole or Bags, whichever you prefer to call the classic yard game. The atmosphere of the brewery makes you want to stay a while.

The Founder's Wall is another unique aspect of the brewery. During construction the Steeles advertised buying a brick to be placed on the Founder's Wall. The Founder's Wall is filled with bricks emblazoned with people's names who have supported Broken Hatchet from the beginning. The benefit to the Founder is that their name has a permanent home in the brewery.

Broken Hatchet knows what it does best, brewing beer. While the brewery does not serve food, patrons are encouraged to order food from businesses located on Main Street. The Steeles plans to have runners who will go pick up your order and bring it to you at the brewery. This idea offers a convenient, hassle-free service for patrons to order food, have a meal, enjoy their craft beer while also supporting other small, local businesses.

Broken Hatchet Brewing is one of a kind! Offering handcrafted craft beers, supporting local businesses, and pursuing their goals to build a community. Judging by their first week, it appears they are doing just that.

¹ [Carry Nation, American Temperance Leader](#)

² [Activist Carry Nation Used a Hatchet to Smash Booze Bottles Before Prohibition](#)