

Bowling alley hopes to strike a chord with local residents

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SILVERTON – If you walked into the Silver Creek Lanes building a few months ago, it would have appeared similar to a scene from an “Austin Powers” movie complete with retro fluorescent lighting, white linoleum tabletops and the feeling of being sucked into a time warp.



Danielle Kuehnel

Tawnya Zwicker shows off Silver Creek Lanes' accrued rubbish. The discard supplies, she said, will be recycled properly.

And though the local hangout had kitsch, Salem husband and wife team Ryan and Tawnya Zwicker decided the lanes were in desperate need of a makeover.

The Zwickers purchased the Silver Creek Lanes last spring and began a \$700,000 metamorphosis in May, just weeks after the after the ink had dried on the deal, beginning with a new heating and air conditioning system and light fixtures.

“The alley has so much potential,” Ryan said. “It has been popular in the past, but the building is just in desperate need of a new look. It’s so old and dirty, and it needs updating.”

Indeed, almost everything inside Silver Creek Lanes will be new: The Zwickers went all the way with Brunswick Bowling’s state-of-the-art bowling equipment. The revitalized lanes will feature synthetic lanes in lieu of the old maple variety.

The lanes, used in nationals bowling tournaments, will be the only synthetic, low maintenance lanes in the area. And, Silver Creek will boast a new fleet of bowling balls, pins and chic black leather couches to complement a much-needed fresh coat of paint.

While the Zwickers hope to have the remodel completed by early August, there is still much to be done.

“Everything needs to be updated,” Tawnya said. “We can’t commit to one opening date.”

Another feature the Zwickers are working on at the lanes is a cosmic bowling program, complete with glowing lanes, balls and shoes and a brand-new sound system.

“We really want to make the alley a nice, clean, family-oriented place,” Ryan said. “The

lanes are used frequently for serious bowlers, but it should still be attractive for open play.”

“There’s not a lot for youth to do here,” said Tawnya. “We’re hoping this will be a place where they feel welcomed.”

The Silverton community has already stepped up to help, both Ryan and Tawnya said, with many people coming into the building to see the construction or to offer their services.

“Everyone is so nice,” said Tawnya, explaining the general interest in the remodeling project, “and the kids who come in tell us their ideas.”

Both Ryan and Tawnya have been bowling for most of their lives, and, as they explained, “We’re a family of bowlers.” All three of their children — Andrew, 13, Kaitlyn, 9 and Riley, 3 — are award-winning bowlers; last year, Andrew took home fourth in state, while sister Kaitlyn won second. Ryan and Tawnya also coach bowling.

Now, as the bowling alley rolls toward completion, Ryan is seeing a lifelong dream become a reality.

“I’ve always wanted to own a bowling alley,” Ryan said. “It’s something I always thought would be fun.”