



The Loading Dock Bar and Grill Ice Skating Rink opens this Saturday

by Brittany Kohler, Content Manager
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GRAFTON – The ice is frozen solid, the laces in the skates are fastened and finally, after much anticipation, planning, building and freezing, **The Loading Dock Bar and Grill** will host the grand opening of the new Ice Skating Rink at noon this Saturday, Nov. 21.

The staff has been working diligently, even throughout the nights, since the end of the summer season to convert **The Historic Boatworks Warehouse** into an exceptional ice skating arena, just yards from the river.

“The employees have been working very, very hard to get this all ready for the big day,” said **Afton Hughes**, event coordinator at The Loading Dock. “It’s going to be worth it, we’re stoked.”

The rink will be open until March 13, 2016, when the staff will convert it back to the normal venue to host flea market, swap meets, weddings, concerts and much more.

Regular hours for the arena are Friday and Saturday from noon to 10 p.m. and Sunday from noon to 8 p.m.

The admission price is \$10.50 for an entire day of skating and only \$5 to rent skates. Season passes are available for \$52 and Season Skate Rental Passes are \$25.

The ice skating rink will also be available for private events. For birthday and holiday parties, \$250 will include two hours of skating with skates for 15 guests. The rental also includes decorations, balloons, printable invitations, three pizzas and soda, all in a private heated tent in the warehouse. Skate rental and admission for 15 guests is included, each additional skater is \$10.

“They will have two hours in the tent so they can open presents, eat cake, have pizza and party in the tent and then they are welcome to skate as long as they want,” said Hughes. “They can bring in their own cake or we give the option to order a cake through us.”



A private rink rental is \$300 for 3 hours of free skate for an unlimited number of guests. However, Private Rink Rental is not available on Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays or during Holiday hours.

There is a concession stand set up near the rink where patrons can order their classic arena favorites such as pretzels, nachos, hot dogs, burgers, hot cocoa, etc.

In addition to all the fun and activities in the warehouse, the restaurant and bar will be open as usual, yet with a whole new drink and food menu.

The new menu will include items such as an open-faced pot roast sandwich with mashed potatoes, grilled cheese with tomato soup, hot cocoa and much more. The kitchen will also craft the various specials of the day to include white bean chicken chili, loaded potato soup, shrimp and grits, meatloaf, etc.

“Of course we are going to serve our famous dock salsa, because everyone loves it,” said **Kasey Demond**, employee and guest relations manager, at The Loading Dock.

It is no secret that Grafton thrives in the summer time and dies down in the winter. With this new addition to the tourist attraction of a town, it is sure to bring in more patrons to the area during the winter months.



“I think the biggest thing is the economic impact it is going to make on Grafton and for employees at every business in town,” said **Betsy Allen**, an owner and operator of The Loading Dock.

Betsy added that she expects to see a lot of the same customers, but bring in more families and kids that want to celebrate their birthdays or just come to have a blast.

“This is all so exciting and we have all worked very hard on this project,” said Allen. “It has taken a whole year to come to fruition and now I am already thinking about what we are going to do next!”