Success Story: Pine Ridge Campground

Second Family, Second Home, Happy Camping

According to Patti Haut, she and her husband Stephen have been campers “since the beginning of time, when our son (Jamie) was small.” They were seasonal campers, campers who rented a site year-round, at Raystown Lake for about ten years and became friends with the owners. This experience allowed them to “learn a lot about the business” of owning a campground. It became their “dreams and hopes” to someday open a campground.

Several years ago, realizing they were quickly approaching their fifties, they “decided it was now or never.” They began by looking at “small mom and pop campgrounds” hoping to find an affordable opportunity with an established business site. That approach “did not pan out” and they were riding in the mountains near their home in Shippensburg when they came across a piece of land for sale in Adams County that had once been used for camping purposes.

The Hauts and their son, Jamie Budesky, purchased the land and “started the long trek, approximately 2-3 years, of getting it cleaned up, engineered and permitted for development.” Patti attended a SBDC First Step workshop and then sought consulting assistance in developing a business plan to pursue needed capital. She notes, “I knew about camping, but as far as business plans…..I had no idea.”

The Hauts had been turned down by several lenders when Cheryl Young began working with them. Patti notes, “I was more nervous doing the business plan and, without Cheryl helping me, I don’t know that I could have gotten that done.” Cheryl introduced them to Steve Hawbaker at Adams County National Bank. Steve and ACNB “turned out to be among their greatest assets, along with Cheryl, because they worked together so well.”

With financing secured, construction began in October 2016 and the campground was opened on Easter weekend 2017. The Hauts filled all 41 initial campsites for 2017 and are booked for 2018 as well as having names on a waiting list for new sites. They were not planning to expand until year three, but they were recently back working with the SBDC and successfully secured the necessary financing to add another 24 sites to have ready for the second season of operation.

The Hauts initially wondered, “If we build it will they come?” Not only did they come, now more campers are waiting to come in. In addition to increased campsite capacity, future plans include a community bathhouse, a retro-fitted sewer system for all campers, a pavilion and a swimming pool.

Most of the campers are local and appreciate a “comfy, turn-key place they can come on the weekends for relaxation and entertainment.” “All we want to do,” says Patti, “is make campers feel like family and give back. That’s what we set up to do and that’s how folks like it.” Based on the comments on their webpage and social media, they are succeeding!