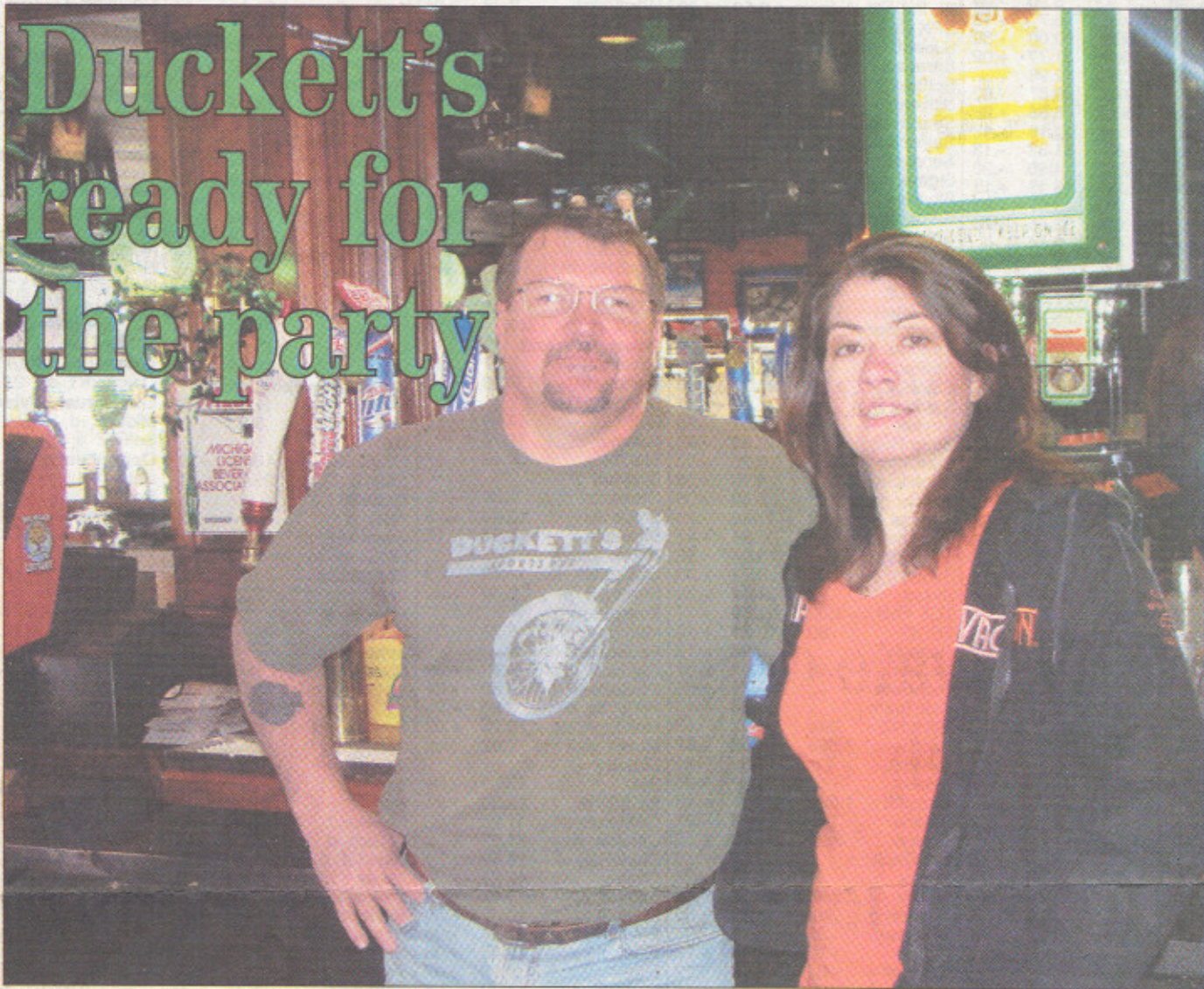


## Duckett's ready for the party



Special to The Oakland Press/MARK H. STOWERS

Emil and Jen Darling, owners of Duckett's Sports Pub in Pontiac.

### ■ Couple works to create 'neighborhood' atmosphere

BY MARK H. STOWERS  
Special to The Oakland Press

There are those special and fictitious bars that have been created on screen and in the theatre where "everybody knows your name."

But do they really exist?

In one quaint corner of Pontiac, Jen and Emil Darling make more folks feel at home than Sam Malone or Humphrey Bogart could ever dream about.

Since October of 2007, when Emil starting running Duckett's Sports Pub before

becoming owner this past November, he and his wife have been working hard to establish a "neighborhood" hangout.

"We've got neighborhood folks as customers, a lot of auto worker retirees on limited incomes," Emil said.

"Everybody is your friend here and we are always looking for new regulars."

The "sports bar with an Irish attitude" has 5,100 square feet of bar and restaurant space, including nine large screen TVs, dart boards, pool tables and even a WiFi area for customers.

A full menu offers thin and

deep-dish pizza, stuffed burgers and their famous Duckett Wings that are marinated but not breaded and come in different styles. There's even a Duckett Dog that's a variation of the Chicago style hot dog.

To wash down those palette pleasing goodies, there are 11 beers on tap, split between import and domestic, and more than 40 liquors line the bar.

"We have draft and bottle beers, no cans," said Emil. "And all of our drafts are true pints — a full sixteen ounces. Not ten or twelve like you'll find in other places."

In honor of St. Patrick's Day, there'll be plenty of fun

### FYI

Duckett's Sports Pub is at 325 West Walton in Pontiac, just north of Dixie Highway.

A Web site will be coming soon, but to catch up on what's going on you can call (248) 334-6222.

and value at Duckett's with beer, food and "drinking gloves".

"We're going to have a Green Beer Blowout and the first 200 customers in the door get a Duckett's Irish Drinking Glove," he said.

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"And we'll offer nontraditional 'Black and Tans' with Michelob." Other creative drinks will include the Famous Mickey Black, a Horny Leprechaun, as well as the Lucky Leprechaun.

And there will be plenty of corned beef and cabbage along with Reubens and Irish Stew to help celebrate the Irish Holiday.

"We embrace the holidays," he said. "And being a sports bar, we celebrate all the major sports. Super Bowl parties, Opening Day with

free hotdogs and game day draft specials."

College football gets its glory on fall Saturdays at Duckett's and Sundays are reserved for the NFL with the popular NFL Ticket package that shows game from across the country. The English/Irish heritage Emil and his German heritage wife, Jen, enjoy providing a safe atmosphere for everybody.

"We are kid friendly and are currently working on creating a kid's menu," Emil said.

But don't ever forget to bring a legal ID if you plan on celebrating the night with adult beverages.

"We are very strict on IDs," said Jen. "I've turned away

plenty of customers who didn't have one."

The bar hosts dart leagues, golf leagues and offer special nights for bikers and cruisers during the warmer months.

When they do get a moment to themselves away from the bar, Emil and Jen can be found down at the "Joe" cheering on the Red Wings.

And if there's not a Wings game in town, Emil enjoys a ride on his Harley as well as spending time at home with Jen and their four children.

The Darlings enjoy their "unique regular community" of customers and hope to see you there so they can "know your name."