

Crafting a Community in Wonderland (*Excerpt*)

If you're looking for a family-friendly place to bring your dog, play games, or enjoy finely crafted beer, look no further than Broomfield's own Wonderland Brewing Company. Nestled on the four-acre lot of a former church, Wonderland brings the brewing business to the burbs with all the joy and comradery of the community gathering place it was designed to be.

"You've got to be competitive and not just make great beer," says owner and operator Robert Lucero. "You have to make an experience that people want to come back to." Combining the trimmings of an entertainment center mingled with the casual atmosphere of a public park, Wonderland defies typical conventions.

"People don't feel comfortable taking their kids to a bar, and this really isn't a bar," says Rob, whose passion for brewing represents more than just selling beer. "It's more of a community gathering place. We get moms who rode their bikes over enjoying a beer, while their kids shoot basketball or ride their scooters. It's just different; not everybody does that."

Although guests occasionally stop by expecting a sports bar or a trendy brewpub vibe, that's not Rob's forte. "We are part of the neighborhood," Rob explains. "People just show up with balloons and have their birthday party on our back patio. We've had a 2-year-old's party and a 73-year-old's one. If you're at a park, you probably can't have beer. If it's a fancy venue, it gets expensive."

Whether it comes from the Cheshire grins dotting the walls or the energy coming from the game room, feeling excited at Wonderland is easy. Like its literary namesake, Wonderland provides endless adventure.