

The Fat Frogg Bar and Grill brings Elon community together

Julia Sayers
Reporter

The Fat Frogg, the newest addition to Elon's bar scene, has much more to offer than just being a bar. It's a place where students, faculty and the community can come together to listen to live music, enjoy good food and even play arcade games.

The Fat Frogg, which opened in the beginning of the school year, is co-owned by Jeff Mackenzie and Peter Ustach, both Elon alumnus. Ustach said they wanted to give the students what they want, but also make it a place where families feel welcome.

"We wanted to create not just a bar scene, but an atmosphere welcoming to everyone," Ustach said.

There is a special event held almost every night, which helps to draw in a good mix of people. These activities include Trivia Night Tuesdays, Dollar Taco Wednesdays (beginning next Wednesday), live acoustic music during dinner on Thursdays, bands on Fridays and Saturdays and poker tournaments on Sunday nights, which also include 50 cent wings. There is a cover charge only on nights with live music.

"It's been a great mix of community and students," Ustach said. "Thursdays over dinner are always the most crowded."

Ustach said they are also working on putting in washer pits, which is a game similar to horseshoes, and they are coming out with a new menu soon. All of the food The Fat Frogg serves is freshly made and never frozen. The

bread used even comes from a local bakery. The new menu will include paninis and wraps, along with favorites from the original menu.

The owners wanted to make their restaurant easily accessible to students, so they offer a shuttle on Thursday nights. This shuttle only goes to the apartment complexes in Elon, not the dorms. The shuttle is a free service that students can call to pick them up from their residences and bring them to The Fat Frogg.

Since both owners are Elon alumnus, they know what it is like to be an Elon student and they felt Elon needed something new. Ustach said Elon was the right school for him, but he was always looking for something else to do on the weekends while he attended school.

"I enjoyed my time at Elon," Ustach said. "I just wished there were more options."

Jeff Mackenzie, who graduated in 1977, had the idea for The Fat Frogg last year and gave the opportunity to Ustach, a business entrepreneurship major who graduated in 2009. Ustach said the two owners did everything themselves, including painting the floor, building the stage, putting in the gas lines, doing the stone work and more.

"The experience was so beneficial," Ustach said.

Ustach and Mackenzie are always looking for ways to advance The Fat Frogg.

"We're all ears," Ustach said. "We want to know what the students want."



Fat Frogg is co-owned by Elon alumnus Jeff Mackenzie and Peter Ustach. It was opened as a place where students, faculty and the community could come to enjoy live music and good food. MOLLY CAREY | Staff Photographer

16 successful years of safety to be celebrated this month

SafeRides hosts its Sweet 16 event

Marlena Chertock
Design Intern

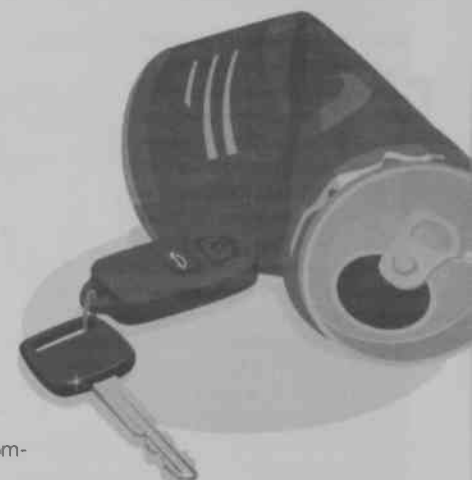
Creation and mission

SafeRides was created by Patrick O'Malley and Stuart in March 1993. The death of freshman football player Chad Macy in 1992 served as a catalyst for creating the program.

"It was the last straw" to prove to the community that the organization was needed, said junior Nicole Parker, a SafeRides captain and Sweet 16 event coordinator.

The SafeRides Sweet 16 pamphlet describes the organization as "an organization on campus and in the surrounding community that offers free, anonymous rides to students on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights with the mission to decrease the risks that come with driving while intoxicated and walking alone at night."

Volunteers become members. If a student volunteers twice a month, goes to a service event and a SafeRides social event, they can become members. "That way they get one free VIP ride and then we have this nice, secure base of volunteers during the year," Parker said.



May 2008

Alumnus Andrew Bennett donates \$50,000 to SafeRides. This goes to fund the new van, which bumped the number of students SafeRides could transfer from six at a time to 12 at a time, Parker said.

Fall 2008

The dispatching system is changed from paper to a computer system. "We test drove it in the spring of 2009 and then it was implemented totally in fall of 2009," Parker said.

Fall 2009

Kimberly Duggins is the outgoing student director. Earle Pope is the incoming director and will begin Fall 2010.

Winter Term 2010

Fall 2010

Elon donates two more vans to SafeRides. "Now we can move 24 people at a time," Parker said.

The future

Parker said she wants to see a bigger dispatch room with trained dispatchers and a bigger fleet of cars and vans.

"Maybe even more support from the student body," she said. "We have a lot of support right now but we also get (students saying), 'Oh SafeRides was slow tonight.' We want to make sure there's no bad talk about the program at all."

She also wants to see an online program that shows the waitlist, how many people have been moved during the night and the schedule of upcoming rides.

"That's something we've talked about a lot and that's totally feasible," she said.

Sweet 16 events

March 8-13

Monday: Reveal of Wreckage
The wreckage of a drunk driving accident will be revealed in the Moseley parking lot at noon and left all week. This DUI presentation is in conjunction with Elon Town Fire and Police and campus safety.

Tuesday: Marcus Engel, Speaker
Engel is a motivational and inspirational speaker. He will speak at 7:30 p.m. in the Alumni Gym. He will talk "about moving past obstacles in life," Parker said.

His speech will describe how drunk driving was an obstacle in his life because, when he was 18, a drunk driver hit and blinded him.

The speech is open to all the student body and faculty.

Wednesday: Remember the Night, Luminary and Memorial Service
A luminary memorial and tribute service will

be held for Macy on the Moseley Green from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. Parker said alumnus, Macy's parents and his roommates who began the program have been invited. This event is open to all.

Thursday: Outdoor Party
A party celebrating SafeRides will be held on the Octagon Terrace and West Lawn from 4 to 6 p.m. There will be free food, entertainment and "a presentation to show how many people we've moved in 16 years," Parker said.

Saturday: Movie on the Lawn
SafeRides is cosponsoring the SUB Movie on the Lawn. The movie will be "Boondock Saints."

This week and next SafeRides will be selling Sweet 16 T-shirts and giving away promotional items such as cups, magnets and pens with the Sweet 16 design, Parker said. A table in Moseley will be set up with the items.