

Meet Richard Thiel and Ian Conboy, owners of Lucky Hare Brewing Company...

1. Describe Your Business:

Lucky Hare Brewing is a farm brewery located in Hector. We specialize in crafting classic styles of ales and lagers using as many locally sourced raw materials as possible. Our brewery and taproom are located in an old farmhouse in Hector just off of Route 414.

2. Tell us your story:

As with so many in the craft beer industry, we were avid craft beer consumers who wanted to start making our own beer. After too many years of working in the Corporate world, we decided to work for ourselves and start sharing our passion for making beer with others. After a lengthy

process of creating the Lucky Hare business, we found our current location in Hector in 2013 and started making beer in the barn. We opened the doors of our taproom in 2016 and have been thrilled with the support we have received from everyone in the community.

We have been in love with Seneca Lake since our first experience here in 1999. And even though we are from the Philadelphia area and dyed in the wool fans of the Eagles, Phillies, Sixers, Flyers and cheesesteaks, we are proud to call Schuyler County our home and look forward to raising our families here.

3. What has helped you succeed and gain experience?

Location, location, location! Being on the Seneca Lake Wine Trail and the help of the local business owners (and knowing that we stand on the shoulders of those that have put their lives, hearts and souls into building the Trail) through their experiences has been critical to our success. Making a great product and providing a friendly, relaxed environment certainly helps keep locals and visitors coming back to our taproom.

4. What inspires you?

Inspiration is an interesting thing as you never know what will inspire you in the moment. It could be a conversation with someone you known for a very long time or you are meeting them for the first time. It can be a smell, a flavor, an image, a word or phrase, or a long-standing personal passion. What is important is not that any one thing inspires you but that you find inspiration in something every day.

5. What keeps you up at night? What are your challenges?

Not much keeps us up at night that we can control. Weather and the economy are always issues when you rely on tourism dollars.

Lucky Hare is in the process of moving our production facility from the old barn in Hector to the Schuyler County Business Park south of Watkins Glen. The challenges with such a move are significant and diverse, but manageable if you have the correct plan, expectations, partners and team. Fortunately for us, we have a great team, excellent partners and plan.....we do need to work on our expectations though.

6. What is your favorite local activity?

Hiking the glens, gorges and forest and drinking local craft beer.

7. Is there anything else we should know about you?

Our "not-so-silent" partner is Suzanne Conboy-Thiel, Rich's wife and Ian's mom. Sue's support has been critical to the success of Lucky Hare Brewing since before its inception. If you ever have a chance to talk with her when she is at the taproom you will understand why she is the most important member of the Lucky Hare Team.



Pictured (from left to right); Richard Thiel, President & Owner, Ian Conboy, Head Brewer & Owner, and Tony Cordova, Brewer and Director of Brewery Operations. Summer of 2018 when they received their medals from the NYS Brewers Association beer competition.

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