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Pub franchises to open

An Anheuser-Busch retiree and his son are planning three Firkin sites - in Newport News, Chesapeake and Virginia Beach.

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NEWPORT NEWS -- A Suffolk resident and retired Anheuser-Busch employee is planning to open three authentic English pubs in Newport News, Chesapeake and Virginia Beach, as a part of a franchise agreement with The Firkin Group of Pubs.

Of the 40 pubs in Canada like "Fox and Firkin," each starts with the name of an animal and ends with "Firkin," the English name for a beer container, said Molly Brown, a spokeswoman for the Canadian-based company.

The local pubs, each with a different name, will use Firkin first, followed by the name of an animal. Brown said the three pubs/restaurants planned for Hampton Roads are in addition to 32 other U.S. locations planned in New York and Missouri.

Suffolk resident Harry Daniel and son Greg said they could have the first location in the country if they open the Newport News location by Jan. 1 as planned.

"If we can find an existing location, it will take three to four months to get it built out," Harry Daniel said. "If we have to build from scratch, it could take six to eight months."

Daniel said he and his son were looking to open the Newport News location between J. Clyde Morris and Denbigh boulevards. He said he has contacted an out-of-town real estate agent to help him find a location.

"We could look to locate in an existing building or we could locate in one of the two proposed shopping centers, Jefferson Commons or Patrick Henry Marketplace, to be built in the Patrick Henry section of Newport News," Daniel said.

Although Brown said Daniel has only purchased the right to build three pubs, she said it's likely that more would be built in Hampton Roads.

"We have 40 pubs in Canada, and 35 of those are in Toronto. You can put a pub on each corner, and you would still have regulars at each place," Brown said.

Brown said the pubs seated between 80 to 100 people and attracted a crowd similar to those who go to places like Cheers or TGI Friday's. The Firkin setting is to be more dimly lit and will serve more English-type fare like fish and chips and stir-fried and roasted chicken.

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