

After Five Supper Club

Madison, MN



Keeping the legacy of a long-time, local establishment alive while adding new and exciting ideas are the goals for the owners of the After Five Supper Club in Madison. Anne and Aaron Kells were looking to take on a new adventure when they purchase the After Five. With Anne's experience in business and Aaron's culinary skills, owning a restaurant was a perfect fit.

Anne and Aaron are high school sweethearts who have been a part of the Appleton and Madison communities for the past 20 years. They enjoy the benefits of small town living- spending time outdoors, raising their family in a safe environment, and now, following their dreams of owning their own business. The support from the community of Madison has encouraged them to be their best and inspired them to work toward their goal of becoming the go-to place for community celebrations and get togethers.

Along with all their hard work, comes many rewards. Anne says her favorite part of owning a business is witnessing kind acts of customers, pointing out memories of a someone secretly paying for a friend's dinner, customers toasting to a lost loved one, or singing happy birthday to a 96-year-old grandma.

The UMRVDC's Revolving Loan Fund, Southwest Initiative Foundation, and the Lac qui Parle County Economic Development Authority helped the Kells purchase the After Five. The whole family pitched in to help with renovations to create the modern, inviting environment that the restaurant offers today. Their two sons, Korbin and Kyson, also help out with the day to day functions of the restaurant. The Kells hope to continue the updated look, provide space for friends and family to come together over a good meal, and give back to the area they grew up in for years to come.

After Five Supper Club
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Madison, MN
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Upper Minnesota Valley
**REGIONAL
DEVELOPMENT
COMMISSION**

Helping Communities Prosper

with Anne Kells

What motivated you to take over the After Five Supper Club?

My husband and I were at a point in our lives that we could take on a new adventure. Our children were grown, I was looking to get out of working behind a desk and my husband has always been creative in the kitchen. I thought between my business background and his cooking skills we would make a good team to own and operate a restaurant.

What are your goals for the business?

The After Five was already an established supper club in the community of Madison. Our goal is to continue the legacy of this restaurant while adding our own ideas and culinary concepts, for example, adding our smoked meats to the menu. The ultimate goal is to become the restaurant of choice for all types of celebrations in Madison and all surrounding communities.

Where do you hope the After Five Supper Club will be in five years?

We did a lot of our cosmetic updates right away with the help of our amazing family. In five years I hope to continue our updated look, stay financially viable in our small community and evolve our menu with guest feedback and creativity.

What is your favorite part about being an entrepreneur?

My favorite part is having the opportunity to witness the kind acts of others. I can see the love and support of our guests for our small business and for each other. Some of my favorite nights are those where someone wants to secretly pay for their friend's supper, toasting a glass of wine for a lost loved one, or singing happy birthday to a 96 year old grandmother. Seeing tables laughing and enjoying each others company over a good meal - that is why we are here. I've also enjoyed the opportunity to spend time and create these memories with my husband and children.

What were your biggest hurdles to building your business and how did you overcome them?

Having the upfront capital was definitely a hurdle. We approached several rural development committees and all were receptive to our business plan. We also utilized the resources of the Southwest MN Initiative Foundation in which we were able to work with a business financial planner. I did not realize how many free resources we have in greater Minnesota to help entrepreneurs with their business.

Why did you choose to own a business in Madison? What do you enjoy most about owning a business in here?

My husband grew up in Madison, and I grew up just 20 miles away in Appleton. We went to the same high school at Lac qui Parle Valley and were high school sweethearts. We moved back to the area after college and have been a part of these two communities for the last 20 years. Our parents and a few siblings still live in the area. We are small town people who enjoy the outdoors and the comfort of raising our children in a safe and beautiful environment. We were also impressed with the Madison Chamber of Commerce and other community organizations that are very involved and supportive to the success of their town.

What would your main piece of advice be for someone just starting out?

Surround yourself with others that believe in you and your project. Be proud of your project, do the homework, work with the resources that are given to you and stay focused. Create relationships with those that have skills you lack. There will be negative feedback, there will be those that don't want change, and may tell you that this will never work. Listen, extract any information that might help your business, but stay on your course and stay true to yourself. This is your dream.

How has RLF helped you become the business you are today?

RLF, besides the funding, provided essential free resources to help us with our business plan. We are very lucky to have these resources in greater Minnesota.