

## PATCHOGUE



Partners Tim Lorito and Matt Dill by the steps to the 2,000-square-foot dance floor and stage. Their new venture, The Emporium, opened last week and drew 5,500 to the new music/restaurant business on Railroad Avenue.

ADV/Leuzzi

The Emporium is located at 9 Railroad Ave., Patchogue. On Sept. 20, Andy Gibson and DJ Deuce are scheduled. On Sept. 27, Southbound will be performing. For more information, click online at [theemporium.com](http://theemporium.com) or call 627-8787.

# Rock, bowl and country

*The Emporium makes its debut*

By LINDA LEUZZI

If some of the staff at The Emporium looks familiar, there's a reason.

Matt Dill, 28, graduated from Patchogue-Medford High School in 2002. His partner Tim Lorito, 33, a former Detroit Tigers player, hails from Holtsville. They opened Canz-a-City Roadhouse in Patchogue last year.

The Emporium, their new music/restaurant venture off Patchogue's Main Street, opened last week. "We did 5,500 people over this weekend," Lorito said.

The place is quite a venture. It has the hip steel feel of Williamsburg with the warm wood details of its original roller rink environs. The restaurant area seats 80 and is situated between two bars, fashioned and lacquered from reclaimed wood with a rough-hewn bottom. Two baby sharks circle their tank behind the dance floor bar and there's a bona fide bowling alley to the far left of the entrance. Renovations to bring the old Patchogue Manor catering hall up to snuff tallied \$5 million, and it shows. There's even an outdoor beer garden. The space can accommodate up to 1,200.

Dill designs restaurants. He points out that work on The Emporium, including permits, began in December 2011.

What got the partners together to this moment?

"Tim drove by the place and saw the space," Dill explained. "He said, 'You have to check it out.'" Dill was hesitant, but did.

His reaction? "I was concerned about the low ceilings," he said.

The low ceilings are now toast. The original wood trusses hearken overhead.

What was the most challenging part of the renovation?

"Digging the dance floor," he said. "The dance floor took out 520 yards of dirt."

Dill started his career working in security and construction when he graduated. He met his partner at different places where Lorito worked as a promoter (Lorito mentioned the Williamsburg connection). Dill has five years of building restaurants and they formed a partnership four years ago.

Did Dill watch the sharks to sometimes relax? He laughed. "I wish I had

spare time to relax," he answered.

Opening time is 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday and noon on the weekends. Those underage will be asked to leave at 9 p.m.

As for the venue, Lorito said he was looking to create a place to attract all age groups, not just the younger set. "Just the layout and design was so people won't walk in and say, 'I'm too old for this,'" he said. "We have a band you can watch on stage and still be secluded in the restaurant area on show night." Parties and catering were on his agenda as well; with a staff of 111, it's well equipped for both.

They had a soft opening on Sept. 12 with Casey James and Six Gun; on Sept. 13, the country band Rattlesnake Dawn is scheduled. Thursday nights with country bands and singers will be a regular feature.

Michael Karbowski, who manages the restaurant and nightclub, lives in North Patchogue and can actually walk to work. "The kitchen has been doing amazing," he said of the fare made from scratch. That includes comfort food like steak and chicken. Karbowski pointed out that Friday is Friends and Family

night. "We have security upwards of 25," he said. "It's not just inside but also up and down the street."

Lorito's dad, Phil Lorito, helped launch Cyndi Lauper's and Michael Bolton's careers. He acted as a consultant on the project and you'll find Lauper's gold and platinum records, as well as those for Billy Squier and Peter Frampton. Those babies are up-front by the entrance and the ticket office. As you enter the cavernous dining bar area, black and white photos pop against a red backdrop that include greats like Ray Charles, Prince, Sting, David Bowie and Jay-Z.

"They are a member of the chamber," said Greater Patchogue Chamber of Commerce executive director Gail Hoag, "and we are planning a grand opening for them, to be announced."

"There's nothing like this on Long Island," Lorito said. As for what drew them to Patchogue, "the whole revitalization effort was a factor in investing so much money," Lorito said. "I've done a lot of projects all over New York and this is the first municipality to really help us. It's so pro-business. It's been phenomenal in a down economy." ■

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