

THE MORNING CALL

Retail Watch: Craft soda company ready to hire veterans as it relocates near Allentown



Commemorative mugs line the shelves Wednesday, April 15, 2026, at Wild Bill's Craft Beverage's new headquarters in Hanover Township, Lehigh County. The company recently relocated from New Jersey. (Monica Cabrera/The Morning Call)

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A craft soda company has relocated to the Lehigh Valley, ready to hire local veterans and make the most of local warehouses.

Wild Bill's Craft Beverage Co. recently relocated its headquarters from Morris County, New Jersey, to 904 Marcon Blvd., Suite 102, in Hanover Township, Lehigh County, CEO and co-founder Michael Quilty said.

The company offers soda varieties such as root beer, black cherry, orange cream, "Rocket Pop," mojito, pumpkin spice and zero sugar as well as accessories such as mugs, straws and lids, as listed on its website. It sells online as well as across thousands of retailers and at events like New York Comic Con and Easton Garlic Fest.

"That canned soda business really only happened because of COVID," Quilty said. "Because our primary model is we sell mugs with unlimited soda at events with commemorative and collectible mugs, usually with the logo of the event on it. And then when the events went away during COVID, our customers — and we have like a million

people who bought our mugs — [reached] out, saying ‘Where do I get the soda?’ And so we only canned it ... If COVID hadn’t happened, we never would have put it in a can.”

Wild Bill’s was founded in 2002. Quilty, a Navy veteran, became a franchisee in 2017 in Texas, and then purchased the company with business partners in 2018.

Quilty said he was inspired to start a business and hire veterans during a reunion of Marines who had served together in Afghanistan.

“Here were these amazing people who made this huge sacrifice, came back and had like no jobs or bad jobs,” he said. “What they were doing in life did not match the ribbons on their chest and the experience they had been through. And at that reunion, I decided I was going to either start a company or buy a company to employ the actual people I met, [that] I was with.”

Quilty hired four Marines from that reunion for his company that eventually became the Wild Bill’s franchise. The effort to hire veterans eventually expanded to include a veteran franchise program that provides discounts on initial fees. Hiring veterans in the Lehigh Valley is now the goal as well.

When looking to relocate the headquarters from New Jersey, Quilty said commercial real estate brokers “resoundingly” recommended the Lehigh Valley. He highlighted perks such as the new or refurbished warehouses in the region, lower operating costs and a great talent pool to hire from.

“We love it, and my only regret is we didn’t do it sooner,” he said.