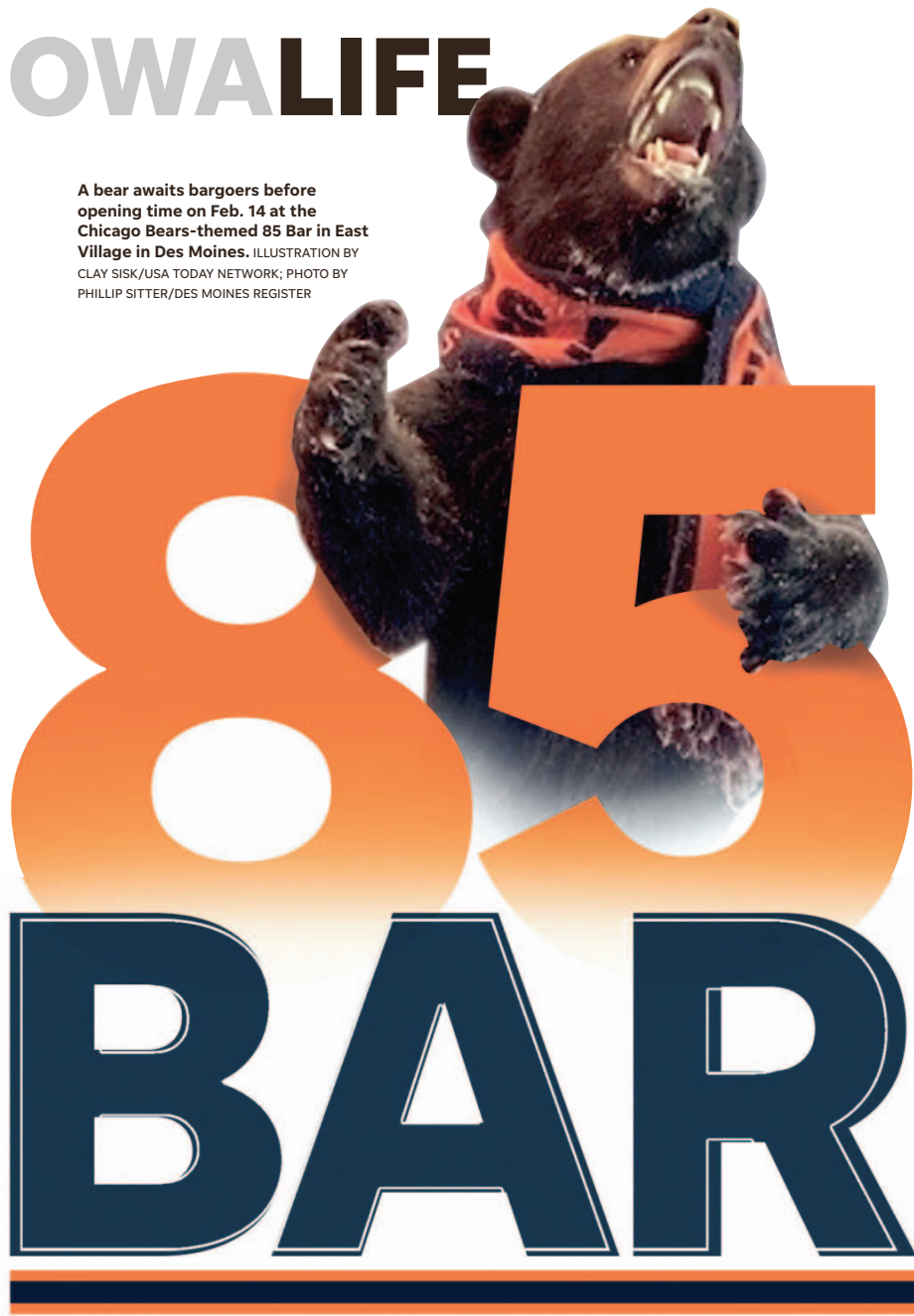


# IOWALIFE

A bear awaits bargoers before opening time on Feb. 14 at the Chicago Bears-themed 85 Bar in East Village in Des Moines. ILLUSTRATION BY CLAY SISK/USA TODAY NETWORK; PHOTO BY PHILLIP SITTER/DES MOINES REGISTER



## EAST VILLAGE CHICAGO BEARS-THEMED BAR TO OPEN WAUKEE LOCATION

Phillip Sitter Des Moines Register | USA TODAY NETWORK

**A** Chicago Bears-themed sports bar in the East Village in Des Moines is expanding its footprint — or paw print, rather — in the metro by planning to open a second location in Waukee. ● There’s a stuffed bear with paws and claws out and teeth bared, adorned with a Bears scarf and mounted above the bar at 85 Bar in the East Village. ● The NFL’s Chicago Bears won their first and only Super Bowl title at the end of the 1985 season — hence the name of the bar. ● The 85 Bar includes Chicago-inspired interiors and a short food menu with Chicago-style hotdogs. ● There’s space for about 47 patrons, according to Isaac Alaniz, one of the owners. ● The new location, 85 Bar West at 432 E. Hickman Road in Waukee, will be larger. Alaniz and Taylor Rogers — who manages the East Village bar and will be the general manager and an owner in Waukee — said they’re looking forward to being able to offer food and drink options and more that they can’t in the East Village because of space limitations. ● Rogers said they will be “definitely taking the core of what made this place successful” but give it a new look in Waukee.

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# Bar

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Alaniz, who will be an owner-operator at the second bar, said the Waukee location will have room for about 90 patrons in a 1,600 square-foot dining and bar area — not including the patio, which is something else the original location does not have.

“We’ve always wanted to do a full kitchen,” Alaniz said. Having that capacity in Waukee will mean “better bar food,” including appetizers, desserts and pop-up and seasonal items, he said.

Rogers said he looks forward to adding healthier options, including salads and fresh juices. He also wants to use the added space for ingredient storage to be able to expand offerings of hand-crafted cocktail options.

In addition, Alaniz said the Waukee location will be a family-friendly space and will have better parking availability. The staff will all be new hires except for Rogers.

Alaniz said they’re hoping to open in mid-April or at the latest in May.

## New Waukee location has long been planned

The journey to opening a second location has been a long one. The East Village bar opened in October 2020, in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic. It survived, and Alaniz credited co-owner Andrew Ferren with being “our Swiss Army man” who’s been driving the effort to open a second location.

After a 17-month process of applying for a U.S. Small Business Administration loan to help with the financing for the Waukee location, Alaniz said the lease for the new location was secured on Oct. 10, 2023 — coincidentally, the third anniversary of opening 85 Bar in the East Village.

The Waukee bar’s street number, 432, also is the same as the East Village bar’s: 432 E. Locust St.

A car recently hit the rear of the Waukee location, but Alaniz said the damage was minor except for a crushed sapling that’s not salvageable.

The bar will be at the east end of a small shopping center built in 2022 that also includes Waukee Dental and Tropical Smoothie Cafe, according to Dallas



The Chicago Bears-themed 85 Bar awaits bargoers before opening time on Feb. 14 in East Village in Des Moines. The bar is expanding, adding a second location, 85 Bar West, in Waukee. Owners hope 85 Bar West will open by the end of May.

PHILLIP SITTER/DES MOINES REGISTER

County property records. It’s located south across Hickman Road from The Palms Theatres and IMAX.

Alaniz said his measure of success after the first year at the new location will be happy customers and “just fitting into the growing development of Waukee.”

## ‘I don’t love the Bears by choice’

Speaking as a resident of Waukee

since October 2023, he said 85 Bar West will complement the bar scene in Waukee.

Rogers said he’s looking to provide “an atmosphere that separates itself from any other place you walk into,” one that people look forward to coming to.

There is emotional investment in the original location that will remain.

“I don’t love the Bears by choice,” Alaniz said, but it’s a nod to his family’s tradition in Illinois.

“We look at it like our second child,” he said of opening the Waukee location, adding that the integrity, charm and character of the East Village bar will be there, “but a little more polished.”

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