



LOCAL

This longtime Whatcom County sporting goods store is under new local ownership

BY DAVE GALLAGHER MAY 10, 2022 11:31 AM



Dave VanderHoek, right, and Will Lathrop look over some merchandise at Dave's Sports Shop in Lynden. Lathrop and his family took over ownership of the longtime business on Sunday, May 1. VanderHoek plans to retire and do some traveling. CHAR BECK *Courtesy to The Bellingham Herald*

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A longtime Lynden store is under new local ownership.

Will and Jenn Lathrop officially took ownership of Dave's Sports Shop on Sunday, May 1. The local sporting goods store at [1738 Front St.](#) was under the ownership of the VanderHoek family since its founding in 1957, when it was known as Jude's Sporting Goods.

This story is a subscriber exclusive

Dave and Claudia VanderHoek, who are getting ready to retire, have been helping the Lathrops through the ownership transition since October.

This is one of those ownership changes where a customer fell in love with the store. Will Lathrop has been a regular customer at the shop since 2007. After hearing the business was for sale, he reached out to the VanderHoeks, who agreed to sell them the business.

“We’re excited to pass this shop over to Will and Jenn and their young family,” said Claudia VanderHoek in a news release. “They have a high level of integrity and a heart for the business. Having worked with them for many months, we have full confidence that they have what it takes to succeed in the community.”

Will plans to manage much of the daily operation while Jenn Lathrop focuses on human resources, accounting and other office tasks. The couple said they don't plan on making many changes to the store; the name of the business will stay the same. In the news release, Will Lathrop joked that it would be easier to change his name to Dave rather than go through the rebranding process.

“Dave's Sports Shop has a solid reputation,” Will Lathrop said. “We have no plans to change the name of the business.”





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The changes the Lathrops do plan to make include offering in-store classes and workshops and possibly expanding some product lines.

A Marine Corps veteran, Will Lathrop has been an active outdoorsman for years. He has experience with rifle and bowhunting and enjoys the extended seasons those options provide. He has been getting more into waterfowl hunting and is an avid fisherman, according to the news release.

While Jenn Lathrop did not grow up hunting or fishing, she enjoys hiking and camping and has been active in team sports. Until recently, she lived in Canada, where she was a personal trainer. Now, in Whatcom County, she owns and operates an online training business called [The Healthy Mom Academy](#).

An open house retirement party for the VanderHoeks will be held at the Mt. Baker Rotary building in Lynden, across the street from Dave's Sports Shop, in June. This will also serve as an opportunity for the community to meet the Lathrops. Details will be shared on the shop's [Facebook page](#) as the event approaches.

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