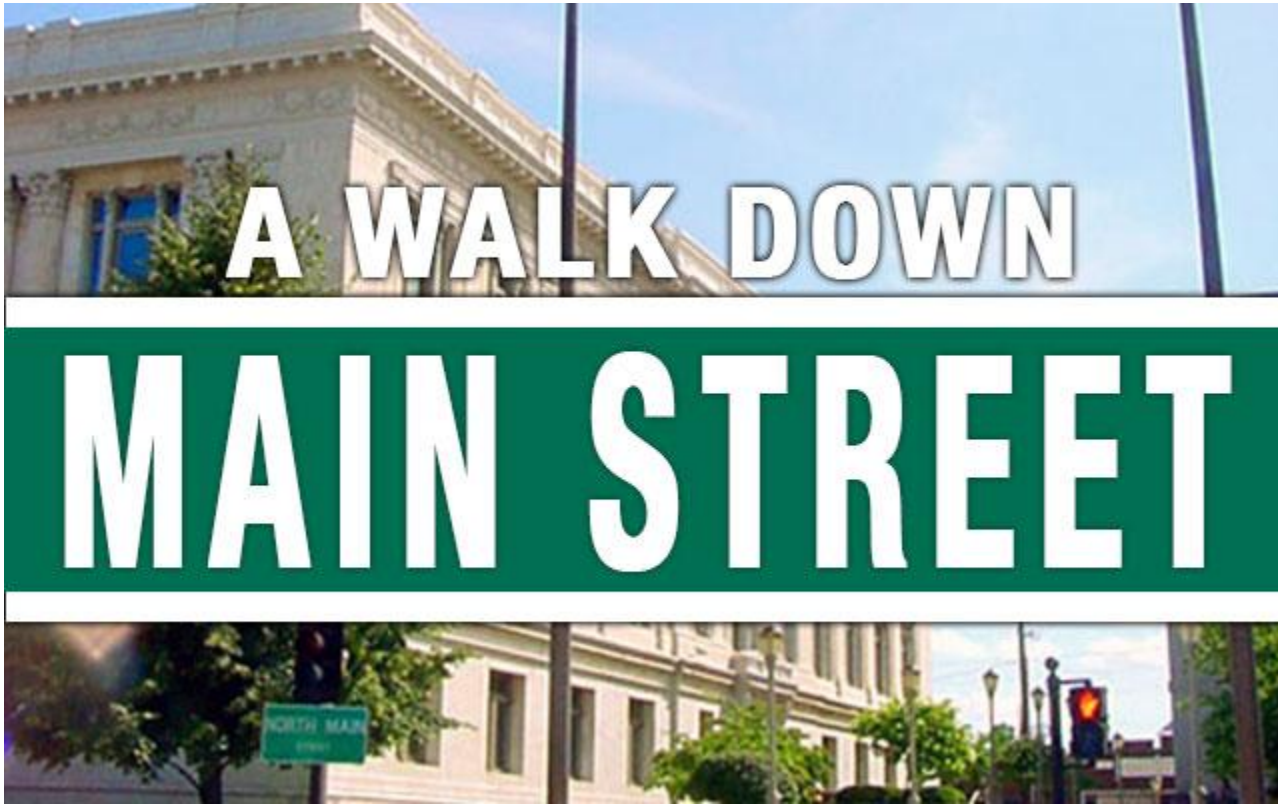




# A Walk Down Main Street: Edwardsville

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer  
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*Once a month, a reporter from Riverbender.com and/or EdGlenToday.com will be walking around the main thoroughfare of a municipality in the Riverbend area to pop in on local businesses and ask "how's it going?"*

*On the afternoon of Dec. 23, 2016, Reporter Cory Davenport walked down Main Street in Edwardsville and talked to the owners and managers of **Gingham Buffalo, Where They Roam, Recess Brewery, Source Juicery, and Whisker Bones.***

**EDWARDSVILLE** - Edwardsville's **Main Street** is continuing to grow and expand to include several retail locations and eateries thanks to cooperation from the city and the community's willingness to try new things.

**Steve Stewart**, who owns Gingham Buffalo and Where They Roam with business partner, **Chris Beard**, said the pair made the decision to move from their former location near the movie theater to their current locations on Main Street because, in Stewart's words, "Main Street is hopping right now."

"Coming to this side of town was a fantastic move," he said. "There are lots of businesses coming here. We have food, coffee shops and lots of retail. We have at least three times the traffic we had at our other location."

The Gingham Buffalo specializes in home decor. While it does sell furniture, Stewart said decorative items, specialty gifts and lighting elements are their main attractions. Stewart said some of the items at the Gingham Buffalo can only be found there locally.

"We carry unique items you're not going to find anywhere around here," he said. "We carry **Annie Stone Chalk Paint**, and we're the only store in a 50-mile radius who does. That draws a lot of people in here who paint kitchen cabinets."

Where They Roam is Stewart and Beard's second location. Much like the Gingham Buffalo, it specializes in unique gifts and decor items, but with a focus on a younger crowd. Stewart said half the store is dedicated to babies and toddlers and the other half is dedicated to teenagers.



Stewart said the **City of Edwardsville** has been very cooperative with his businesses. He said he would like to work with the city and other businesses on Main Street to create a "**Day in Edwardsville**," during which people from surrounding communities would be invited to enjoy Edwardsville's amenities and unique shops.

"The city has been great to us," he said. "Edwardsville is a good place. It's a good place to live, a good place to raise a family and has a good school district."

The Gingham Buffalo is located at 500 N Main St. Where They Roam is located at 303 N Main St.

Down the street from the Gingham Buffalo and a few doors down from Where They Roam is Recess Brewing. Owner **Matt Flock** said he opened the brewery on Dec. 3, 2014, to "fill a void" in the community he believed it needed.

"I had been brewing for a while, and I saw it was something the area was needing and craving," he said. "We came here and filled that void."



Recess Brewing has 14 taps, including a guest tap and a Nitro tap, and as many as five year-round beers. Flock said other beers change with the seasons with light beers in spring and fall-themed beers as autumn rolls around. He said Recess's signature beer was its **2211 IPA**.

"It's very floral with a big bite," he said. "If you're not used to IPAs, it takes a bit to get used to. It's by far our best seller. It's very fruity. We used a couple of different hops and brew it at a temperature to give it a sort of sweet finish."

Currently, beers from Recess Brewing occupy as many as 10 taps from **Alton** to **Belleville**, and local bottle shop Bin 51 carries some of its signature brews. In the future, Flock said Recess Brewing may begin distributing four packs of bottles throughout the area.

Flock said he has worked with Alton's **Old Bakery Beer Company**, featuring one of their beers on tap for Oktoberfest and participating in **Alton Craft Beer Week** together.

Like Stewart, Flock praised the city for its cooperation with his business.

"The city has been fully supportive," he said. "They realize how things are changing with food and drink and welcomed us in with open arms."

Recess Brewing is located at 307 N Main St.

A street crossing and a short walk down the street leads to another place for someone strolling down the street to wet their whistles - Source Juicery. Store manager **Zac Pegues** said the people of Edwardsville have been extremely supportive of the business and surprisingly willing to try new things, such as cold pressed juice.

Cold-pressed juices are juices made by squeezing together several fruits and vegetables, Pegues said. Cold-pressed juice keeps for longer and has more nutrients than juice made through a hyperfuge, or spinning blade, he said. He said cold-pressed juice can keep for as long as four days.

"Edwardsville in general has been great," he said. "The community in general has been supportive. People are always coming in and willing to try new stuff. The support we get from the city alone is just awesome."

Since opening in March 2016, Pegues said he constantly sees a stream of new faces as well as people he has seen come in from the beginning. He said some people ask for help in selecting the various fruits, smoothies and add-ins, such as hemp hearts and bee pollen, while others he can make their order as soon as they walk in the door. That mix of newcomers and regulars is what keeps the business's word-of-mouth buzz going.





" gets the word out for us," he said. "We do a lot of social media advertising with Snapchat, Instagram and Facebook, but that only can go so far. I recently graduated from SIUE, and when I wore my sweatshirt from here to classes, people would always say they had to go check it out."

Besides cold-pressed juices, Source Juicery also creates specialty smoothies made of fruit and vegetable blends, including the tropical **Mango Tango** and the wholesomely delicious **Green Goddess**. Pegues said lunch is also served at the juicery and is available for dine-in and carry-out. For an additional 50 cents, customers can choose to take their juices and smoothies home in an environmentally-friendly mason jar.

Source Juicery is located at 220 N Main St.

Just down the street from Source Juicery is Whisker Bones Supply Co. **Scott Tripp**, who runs the business with his husband, **Perry Patton**, described he business as an "alternative pet store." The couple began the store after their St. Bernard became afflicted with several illnesses, which caused him to be unable to process sodium, potassium and many other preservatives used in most dog food and treats. Because of this, Tripp said they began baking dog treats in large batches.



"You can't bake just one or two, you have to do it in batches," Tripp said. "We started giving them to friends and they asked us when we were going to start selling them."

Tripp said they use all-natural organic ingredients, which are locally-sourced when possible. He said they avoid using wheat as well, due to it being a common allergen for dogs.

"We know exactly what goes into everything we make," Tripp said.

While the bakery is still at the core of Whisker Bones, the store also stocks pet toys, food, treats and even grooming - an initiative Tripp and Patton wanted to avoid when they first opened the business in late April 2016.

"Customers kept asking us for it," he said. "They said it would be nice to go to one place for food, treats, toys and get their pets groomed at one place."

Tripp said they hired established groomer **Theresa Petrolino** and only utilize all-natural botanically-based grooming products. Tripp said he made sure those products were still effective for grooming as well.

The decision for the couple to place their business in Downtown Edwardsville was easy, Tripp said.

"There's a vibe going on here," he said. "If you look at newer businesses, it is becoming more of a retail destination instead of only attorneys like it used to be. We wanted to be an alternative pet store to serve young pet owners as well as empty nesters. I think downtown fits the feel of what we're going for here."

Within a week of opening, Tripp said the city manager came into the business and addressed their concerns about increasing customer parking, promising the mayor was working toward fixing the issue.

Whisker Bones Supply Co. is located at 138 N Main St.