

Alton Main Street Night Market settling into new location

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer
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ALTON – After the closure of Elijah P's, Alton Main Street was out a place to put their newly-established Night Market, having formerly housed it in a warehouse on that property.

The new location, however, makes Alton's Broadway Corridor feel like an outdoor bazaar. The Thursday night event, which is a nod to local artisans, is now located at the small pocket park outside Jacoby Art Center, as well as inside the center itself. As many as two dozen vendors may set up shop during the evening, and a band is always playing at the bottom of the pocket park's slope.

A few weeks into the season now, Alton Main Street is saying the new location is working great, but, as expected, there are a few things to contend. One of them is the weather. Following a passing storm Thursday evening, many people left the market, which started at 7 p.m., but crowds were returning as the evening turned to dusk and the weather was more cooperative.



Niki Busler, a vendor who runs the Night Market's Facebook page, said she was worried about the move at first due to the park's slope, but said it has turned out fantastic, adding the slope originally bringing her some concern provided a great place for people to sit and enjoy the bands.

“It's great,” she said. “It's like theater seating. It would be a great place for a picnic or something.”

Sally Kirbach, co-chair of Alton Main Street's Promotions Committee, said the new location has been a bit challenging, but said she is excited at the things she has seen happen there. One night, Decaro's sponsored the Night Market, and people were able to place orders at a vendor booth. Those orders were sent to the restaurant's kitchen and people were able to have them delivered to the park as they enjoyed music and perused local vendors.

Working with Jacoby has also brought benefits to the Night Market, Kirbach said.

“We have people in Jacoby too, and that's not affected by the weather,” Kirbach said. “They also have the bar open in there during the Night Market.”

Vendors at Thursday's Night Market included handmade clothes, beautiful carved stones and occasionally henna body art. Each Thursday brings a different opportunity and musical guest. Thursday night's band was The Echo Base Quartet.

More information for the Night Market can be found on its Facebook page, and Kirbach said she is hoping to work with more local businesses for sponsorship options.

