

Alton remembers a fun-loving character after shock of him found in abandoned home

by Dan Brannan, Brittany Kohler
December 22 2014 5:10 PM



The man found last week in the home at 1708 Maupin St. is a well-known and beloved patron in Downtown Alton circles.

Larry D. Arnold, 66, was identified as the man discovered in the house. The cause and manner of death has not yet been determined and an investigation is ongoing at this time.

Arnold was a regular at many establishments in the downtown area and had many nicknames he went by such as “Larry Love” and “Boone.”

Arnold often made references to his style of dancing and some nicknames were even developed this way.

“We always called him Coffee,” said Drew Marshall, a former Alton bartender. “And if you asked him why they call him Coffee, he would respond, “cause I grind so fine.”

Chris Keidel, owner of Big Muddy Pub at 204 State St. in Alton, said he was just a good guy and quite the character.

“He usually came in during the early evening,” Keidel said. “He collected a lot of cans around downtown and he would take a break and have a couple beers. Budweiser was his beer of choice and nearly everyone bought him a beer.”

Arnold didn’t enjoy cold weather, Keidel said, and didn’t come out as much in the winter months. The Big Muddy Pub owner thought that Arnold might have been staying out of the cold in recent days and had not seen him. Keidel also shared that Arnold had his own homes, so he was surprised he was discovered at the home on Maupin Street.

“From what he had told me, he was trying to fix one of the homes up to sell,” Keidel said.

Arnold also enjoyed playing pool, Keidel said, and often talked about playing pool at Riverbend Billiards.

“He was a pretty good pool player,” the Big Muddy Pub owner said.

In recent days, there was a sense of loss around the pub at the discovery of Arnold in the Maupin home, Keidel added. “There has been talk about him all over the internet.”

“It was sad to hear he passed away in an abandoned house,” said Geoff Long, who has known Arnold for over a decade. “It makes me wonder if there was something that could have been done to prevent it.”

For days after the news, Arnold was the topic of discussion among the patrons in the area.

“When we had dollar drafts on Thursday nights, he would come in right at the beginning of my shift, when no one else was there,” said Marshall. “He would say to me, I’ll tell you a story if you can buy me a beer. I always said sure and his stories never disappointed me. This would go on for about two hours and when we started to pick up business, he would thank me for the beers, I would thank him for the stories and he would leave. I definitely think he made an impression on peoples’ lives. I know he did on mine.”

Arnold had a reputation of a colorful character. His dancing, his singing and his comical comeback would entertain almost any crowd.

Long remembers seeing Larry at Muddy Pub and the back room at Mac’s and says he would always ask him, “What’s up Larry Love?”

“I can’t call it,” Arnold would say.

Larry was always so “smooth,” Long added. “Whether it be with his handshakes or his dance moves when a song came on that he liked.”

The investigation in Arnold’s death is ongoing at this time. Anyone with information relevant to this case is asked to call the Alton Police Department Investigations Division at (618) 463-3505.

Keidel said he thinks Larry’s nickname, Larry Love, came from his favorite song, “Everybody Loves Somebody.” Sam Coslow, Irving Taylor and Ken Lane wrote the song, which topped the Billboard charts in 1964 by Dean Martin.

“He sang that song every time he left,” Keidel said. “I miss hearing him sing it.”

Story By: Dan Brannan & Brittany Kohler

Text @RB to 618-202-4618 to sign up for Text Alerts from RiverBender!