

Add A Little Funk To The Fun - New Toy Store In Alton Unlocks Creativity With A Uniquely Varied Selection

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ALTON - Most people have had a personal history with a toy at least once in their life. Some could even close their eyes and remember a favorite one from their childhood.

However, toys are not just some type of material molded or constructed for the pure pleasure of senseless fun; toys ignite the imagination of the young and the young at

heart. Unlocking creativity is what high school sweethearts, now husband and wife, David Nadolsky and Sage Macklay, set out to do three months ago by opening Funky Planets Toys and Gifts in the always busy downtown Alton.



According to National Geographic's Simon Ingram, toys have a rich history dating as far back as 3,000-4,000 B.C., when marble-like precious stones were unearthed in an Egyptian child's tomb. Fast forward a few thousand years, and the modernization of toys has become a staple in American culture. From the first G.I. Joe action figure that Hasbro released in 1964 (later becoming a cartoon television series in 1983) to the extremely popular Tickle Me Elmo that took stores by storm in 1996, toys have their niche in society, whether they are for casual play and fun or for learning in a classroom setting.

Nadolsky and Macklay have lived in parts of the United States like Eastern Pennsylvania, Charlotte, NC., and central Virginia. They even spent five months in Europe learning abroad as part of a Workaway campaign. Workaway's website defines a workawayer "as a traveler who wants to give back to the communities and places they visit." Originating from Waseca, Minn., the couple decided to make Alton home and give back to the perse and welcoming city. They noticed the vibrant downtown area of their new community did not have a toy store, so they took it upon themselves and opened one. "We wanted to make our store and toys accessible to everyone," said Macklay.



Walking into the newly set up toy store is a magical experience. With over 80 suppliers, the retail store has plenty of variety for all ages, even for the adults with throwback toys like Woolly Willy that was initially launched in 1955, where you can use a magnetic wand to move the iron powder around to create hairstyles or facial hair on the cartoon face.

The store is covered wall-to-wall with such a wide selection of toys, it is hard to decide which ones to purchase. One fantastic feature Funky Planet Toys & Gifts has that big box stores don't is kids can play with many of the toys in an area called the Playcade. Using Plus-Plus Big construction toys in the Playcade kids can build anything their minds can create as part of their shopping experience. According to Plus-Plus' website, "Plus-Plus is a construction toy for hours of creative play."

Funky Planet Toys & Gifts has developed more than a toy store. Nadolsky and Macklay have created a memorable experience, and through their love for toys, sense of community, and creativity, this is a store that strongly embodies the term “shop local.” With Christmas right around the corner, children can create a Christmas list of toys they would like, and parents, friends, and family can fulfill that order one gift at a time. “We even have something called the Birthday Bucket where kids can fill up a bucket with toys they want and get 10 percent off whatever they can fit in it,” said Nadolsky.



Funky Planet Toys & Gifts is hosting a game night on Nov. 5 from 5-9 pm. The game night will host the card game Tic-Tac Match and will be joined by the game’s creator, Larry Ashlock. Tic-Tac Match “is a wildly unpredictable card game variation of the classic game tic-tac-toe,” according to the game’s closed crowdfunding support page.

Funky Planet encourages kids to come in and write a letter to Santa with a wishlist of what they want. Then family, friends, and the Big Man himself can check the list to know what presents to buy for Christmas.

Whether you are a kid, or a kid at heart, visit Funky Planet Toys & Gifts at 10 E. Broadway in Alton. For more information visit www.funkyplanettoys.com or find them on Facebook.

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