

Alton Business Owners Share Plans for 2024 at "What's Up Downtown" Meeting

by Sydney Sinks, News Reporter
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ALTON - [Alton Main Street](#) hosted its quarterly “What’s Up Downtown” meeting on Feb. 13, 2024, to share information about businesses and happenings in downtown Alton. Business owners spoke about plans for their shops and new businesses coming to downtown Alton.

Fred Pollard spoke about plans to consolidate his shops, [Mississippi Hippy](#) and [Mom Said No](#), into one space. Quint Long with [Picture This and More](#) shared information about his collaboration with [Strangelovely](#). [AP Cigar Company](#) explained their plans to give away gift cards to local businesses at the end of the month. New restaurant [Bentley's Bar and Grill](#) announced their opening dates. Local artist [Kooliverse](#) shared updates about [The Conservatory](#). Caleb Lewis gave opening dates for [Moon Drops + Wellness](#) and [Honeybee Vintage](#). A representative shared information about upcoming cleanups and events sponsored by the [local chapter of the Sierra Club](#).

Fred Pollard announced that his shops, [Mississippi Hippy](#) and [Mom Said No](#), will be moving into one consolidated space at 300 E. Broadway in Alton. These shops are currently located in Mineral Springs Mall, and they sell bohemian clothing and “anything that your parents would not want you to bring in the house growing up,” Pollard said. The shops will have a grand reopening at their new space on March 30, 2024, complete with prizes, discounts, giveaways and more.

“I just encourage everybody to support your neighbors and to shop local because when you do, you get quality that you can’t get and you get experiences that you can’t get and you get variety that you can’t get with Shein or Temu,” Pollard added.

Quint Long with [Picture This and More](#) spoke about the new boutique [Strangelovely](#) and a collaboration between the shops. Strangelovely, owned by Kim Tanner, has opened a new gallery at Picture This and More at 17 E. Broadway and “curated a wonderful collection,” Long said.

Mike Weller with [AP Cigar Company](#) announced a giveaway to mark the end of the first quarter. He said they will have a drawing at the end of the month to give away gift cards to local businesses. He thanked the community for their support and noted that the gift card giveaway is their way of “putting our money where our mouth is.”

“We appreciate everybody in town that says our name when somebody says cigars. We have a lot of tourism here and we’re only busy because of you guys,” Weller said. “So we wanted to put the money back in.”

Weller also announced that [LuciAnna's Pastries](#) will be moving from their location in Alton to 1020 West Delmar in Godfrey, where they will have a bigger dining facility.

New business owner Mike McReynolds spoke about his restaurant, [Bentley's Bar and Grill](#), which will be opening this coming weekend at 204 State Street in Alton. McReynolds said the restaurant plans to be open every day of the week. They are still “throwing around ideas” with tentative plans to serve breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Bentley's will have a soft opening on Feb. 17, 2024, with a grand opening next weekend. More information can be found at their [Facebook page](#).

Michael Snider, also known as [Kooliverse](#), announced that he has taken on a permanent position with [The Conservatory](#). Snider is a local artist with many art pieces around downtown Alton, including over 80 pieces at The Conservatory. He compared the “awe” of the space to the City Museum and invited community members to check out The Conservatory to enjoy art, food specials and bands.

“I want to change your life,” Snider said. “That’s my goal in life, to make your life enriched, better, happier. A moment where you’re having a bad day or you want to forget about your troubles or entertain some folks from out of town — come in.”

Caleb Lewis spoke about his plans to move his business [Moon Drops + Wellness](#) into 112 E. Broadway. Lewis has been rehabbing 112 and 114 E. Broadway, previously known as the Caravan Retail Shop, to house Moon Drops + Wellness and the new store [Honeybee Vintage](#), both of which will open on March 18, 2024. He added that he has plans to rehab the upper level into AirBnB units, which will likely open in the summer.

[Sierra Club](#) representative Christine Favilla announced plans for a citywide clean-up event on April 13, 2024. She added that the club has been replacing the flower beds on Third Street to include native plants. They will meet on April 27 and 28 to continue this maintenance. More information will be available soon about grants offered through the Sierra Club and meetings of the Riverfront Development Commission, which is looking at “what kind of development can occur” along the Alton riverfront, Favilla explained.

As the night wrapped up, the audience passed around the microphone so community members could share about other businesses or upcoming events. “What’s Up Downtown” is a quarterly meeting. Anyone who wants to know more can contact Alton Main Street at their [official website](#).