



# **NOW OPEN: WOW Furnishings encourages young entrepreneurship in the River Bend**

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**ALTON - WOW furnishings**, located at 513 E. Third St. in Alton, recently opened their doors to their new business and are hitting the ground running with 10 artists contributing their own style and personality to furniture and home décor throughout the store.

Barb and Bryan Brynildsen took on the business, which began as a hobby as their kids got older. **WOW Furnishings** is a unique, fun store showcasing furniture that has been creatively refashioned and also where custom pieces can be personally created specifically for the customer.

Part of the store has finished, ready to move furniture, but you will also find sections with unfinished furniture for those who wish to create their own style.

“There are a lot of people out there that like to do it themselves like I do,” said Barb. “Or you can pick out a piece of furniture and have it customized.”

The Brynildsens had been collecting furniture for quite some time. Starting off at garage sales and moving on to auctions, they quickly found their home, garage and even their storage unit full. That is when they knew it was ready to open their own store.

Shortly after starting their business, proud owners of **WOW furnishings** Barb and Bryan created a program to encourage young entrepreneurship and to educate the youth in business growth and development. With five boys of their own, the Brynildsens know firsthand how important it is to teach kids that things do not come free.

The idea came about one day when Barb was at work and noticed a beautifully-crafted glittery jar sitting on her co-workers desk. When she found out that another co-worker's daughter made it, an idea came to mind.

"I thought it would be great to have a small section in our store where kids can sell their items," said Barb. "They will give up 15 percent of their earnings. They are going to learn the cost of business because we all know it is not free."

Five percent of the sale will cover the cost of business such as credit card fees, bags, etc. and 10 percent will go to [Compassion International](#) in order for participants to see and understand how fortunate and blessed we are in this country, said Barb.

[Compassion International](#) is a global ministry dedicated to sponsoring children to help relieve them from poverty.

"They learn the value of things, life is not free and you have to work for what you want," said Barb.





The Brynildsens are looking for young entrepreneurs between the ages of 7 and 17 who have items they made and would like to display and sell them in the store.

Part of the program involves monthly meetings with local business leaders who will be sharing their experiences and serve as mentors to educate the kids on what it takes to run a business. The Brynildsens are also looking for business leaders who would like to be involved, as well as business major students to help mentor and speak at the monthly gatherings.

“What better way to learn than from people who have already walked that path,” said Barb.

**[For more information, visit WOW Funishings on Facebook!](#)**

