



'So much potential'

Grand opening for Salem taproom Saturday

BY RILEY MORNINGSTAR
THE JOURNAL

SALEM — Two locals with ties to the town of Salem are working to revitalize the area, and that effort will get a major boost Saturday when the pair officially open a taproom in the heart of Main Street.

Colt Burton and Randall Goins have partnered to open Twice a Town Taproom, a family-friendly joint right in the main thoroughfare of town at 165 E. Main St. A ribbon cutting is scheduled for noon, with music, games, the Fud-druckers food truck and televisions on the outdoor patio ready for guests want-

HOURS

Twice a Town Taproom in Salem will be open seven days a week after it officially opens its doors on Saturday.

Saturday: 11 a.m.-9:30 p.m.
Sunday: 12:30-9 p.m.
Monday-Wednesday: 4-9 p.m.
Thursday: 3-9 p.m.
Friday: 3-9:30 p.m.



PHOTOS BY CALEB GILBERT | THE JOURNAL

Top: Randall Goins, left, and Cole Burton pose next to the book "Salem, Twice a Town" by Joseph Gauzens, the inspiration for the name of their new taproom, set to officially open on Main Street on Saturday. **Above:** The building features a "Greetings from Salem" mural painted on its wall, and the owners are hoping to help kickstart a revitalization of the town.

ing to soak in the experience of a rare new business opening in a town with an estimated population of 132 people.

'SALEM, TWICE A TOWN'

The name of the taproom is a tribute to a 1993 book written by Joseph Gauzens called "Salem, Twice a

Town." The book touches on the history, social life and customs of Oconee's northernmost town.

Burton, owner of a grading business who has also invested in vacation rentals, and Goins, an executive chef at a country club in Cashiers,

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TAPROOM: 'Every dollar I've made has been

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N.C., jumped headfirst into opening a taproom earlier this year.

"We first started talking in February — we were very ambitious," Goins said. "We've been friends for a few years, but everybody knows everybody here, pretty much."

But the new taproom means more to the two than the usual entrepreneur — they want to see Salem become vibrant because of their own personal ties.

"I've cut my teeth here and built my life here," Burton said. "Every dollar I've made has been reinvested in Salem."

While Burton grew up in Salem, Goins attended Tamassee-Salem High School. "This is perfect," Goins said last week of the location, which was formerly the site of Blue Ridge Mountain Cloggers classes. "When I first moved here in '86, it was a clothing store.

... There was actually stuff in town back then. Now it's kind of deserted, but we're hoping that's going to change."

Burton said no one in Salem has "tapped into" the growth of communities on Lake Keowee and near Lake Jocassee.

He also wants to end any



PHOTOS BY CALEB GILBERT | THE JOURNAL

Left: Twice a Town Taproom has plenty of outdoor seating and views of Main Street in Salem. Above: A photo of late Salem mayor Diane Head riding her motorcycle hangs near the main entrance of the business.

divide between locals and the lake community and said the taproom looks to end the stigma of businesses not being able to thrive in Salem.

"It's going to happen," he said. "It's got to happen."

WHAT'S OFFERED

There will be 10 craft beers on tap for Saturday's special event, and domestic beer and wine will be available. Inside, customers will find games littered

throughout the taproom for all ages to enjoy. Liquor isn't in any plans for the business, the owners said, and for a reason.

"We don't want a honky-tonk here," Goins said. "We don't want a beer joint bar. We want it to be a taproom."

Rotating food trucks will also regularly visit the taproom.

"We feel like we nailed it," Burton said. "We feel like it is an anomaly in the town of Salem. Hopefully that's a sign

of things to come. ... There's so much potential here."

The taproom isn't limited to just four walls, either. There is no fence because liquor isn't being sold, allowing guests to drink outside and walk up a set of stairs to an open area that will eventually play host to musical acts.

There are also intentional tributes to the town placed throughout the building, like one to late mayor Diane Head.

When leaving through the

reinvested in Salem'

main entrance, guests will see a picture of Head riding a motorcycle. Mayor since 2007, she died at the age of 54 in 2018.

TOWN RESPONSE

Both men praised town officials with compliments for their willingness to help the project come to fruition.

Mayor Lynn Towe said the new business was "fulfilling our dreams and goals."

"It's just a blessing to see this come about and how nice it is," he said.

Towe said he went to last week's soft opening and saw plenty of kids and families in attendance.

"It's going to be oriented to that," he said of the atmosphere that offers games for everyone. "I guess cornhole has taken the place of horseshoes."

Town clerk Marti Jennings, who has lived in the town for more than 50 years, said people around the area were "very excited."

"It is the start of our town beginning to be revitalized for the third time," Jennings said. "Randall and Colt had a vision. They want to see Salem grow."

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