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# DOWNTOWN DIGEST

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Warren, Ohio

January 2015

## Signs of Change

Marty Cohen, owner of Mickey’s Army Navy, hung the sign, “Making Way for Eastern Gateway” in the shop he had owned for decades, after selling his building to the community college. Many know Marty as a local businessman and a partner of Sunrise Entertainment, in which he and Kenny Haidaris bring entertainment to Warren with *Back at the Pack* and *River Rock at the Amp*. However, most don’t know that he graduated from The Ohio State University with a dual degree in business and education and now substitutes at Harding High School and Lincoln K-8 in his newfound semi-retirement. An astute businessman, Marty has always held a high regard for the value of education, which made selling 239 Main Ave. to a college a natural progression. The former Mickey’s will continue to bring value to our community.

It’s important for the citizens of Warren to truly understand the value a community college brings to our area. A community college offers another

alternative to education for residents of all ages; in fact, the average ages of Eastern Gateway Community College (EGCC) students are 28-30 years old. A community college is different than a technical or trade school, or an extension of a larger university. It is a place to pursue affordable higher education and be supported along the way. For the spring 2014 semester, EGCC costs \$117 per semester hour and the college offers a two-year associate degree, training programs and one-year certificates. Additionally, the university offers a Gateway Grant, which is provided to any high school graduate that earned a 2.5+ GPA. The Gateway Grant covers the cost of four semesters, which amounts to an associate degree, or two years towards a bachelor’s degree.

This brings us to the most significant asset to attending the community college— for those who seek a bachelor’s degree, EGCC credits are *transferable*. Eastern Gateway offers a multitude of TAG courses—Transfer Assurance Guides— which denote courses that are widely accepted by accredited universities. Therefore, a student may attend the community college for two years and then transfer to an accredited university to receive a full-time degree— saving thousands of dollars and substantially

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Show Dates: January 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Buy Tickets:

[backatthepack.com](http://backatthepack.com), [packardmusichall.com](http://packardmusichall.com)

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reducing the threat of post-graduation debt. Dante Zambrini, Interim Vice President of the college, shared a story about a student that has decided to pursue a nursing degree at Youngstown State University. The student will attend the community college for two years for free with a Gateway Grant, while working throughout the summer. By living at home and earning additional income, the student will be able to save enough money to pay for most, if not all, of the additional two years education at a state university. His degree will never mention the community college experience, and he will graduate with a four-year degree from YSU.

The college provides an intimate atmosphere where students can feel comfortable and confident in their abilities. For students who do not yet feel

educationally prepared to pursue a degree, the college offers developmental courses at an affordable rate, to ensure a student is on the right path. Tutoring is available and the new site will soon be opening an “information commons”, which will provide additional mentors and a computer learning lab. The mission of the college is to increase the educational attainment level of residents; higher education leads to increased salaries, and a more vibrant economy.

As Eastern Gateway Community College opens its doors on January 12<sup>th</sup>, Marty Cohen has solidified his legacy—fusing his passion for education and the revitalization of Warren.

*For more information visit:*

[www.egcc.edu](http://www.egcc.edu)

[www.backatthepack.com](http://www.backatthepack.com)

[www.riverrockattheamp.com](http://www.riverrockattheamp.com)



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5 Grands Fashions is moving across the street from 367 High Street to 164 High Street in the Hippodrome Building.

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## It's Bridal Season! Check out Couture Gowns Downtown

Most everyone knows that the summer months are “wedding season”, but what many don't know is January is the month for brides to start shopping. Many lucky ladies get engaged during the holidays and bridal shows cater to this new, excited crowd. In downtown Warren, we have two local businesses that beautify the bride and her entourage: Evaline's Bridal and Jolies Femmes. The bridal and lingerie shop both have big events this month, so get ready, ladies!

Lori Dubasik, owner of Evaline's Bridal has been in the business for more than 30 years, ever since she bought the store from little ol' Evaline.

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## Bourbon House 45, 775 Mahoning Ave. NW

Although Bourbon House 45's grand opening is not officially scheduled until March 7<sup>th</sup>, the restaurant is currently in its soft launch— open and ready for business! Bourbon House 45 (the former Brown Derby) is downtown Warren's newest restaurant and the only in the area that offers what they consider "Southern Regional Cuisine". Here at the WBE, we've caught ourselves describing the unique flavors of the Bourbon House as "N'Orleans with a gourmet flair". One thing for certain— you are not going to find anything comparable in the Valley, and we're pretty sure it's also the only place to sample alligator wings. The restaurant has daily lunch and dinner specials, as well as Happy Hour specials including 75 cents off drinks and ½ price appetizers. When dining, you might not realize the back half of the restaurant has a huge dance floor and additional bar— so check out line dancing lessons on Thursdays from 7-9 pm, and enjoy live bands and DJs every Friday and Saturday after 9 pm. Follow Bourbon House 45 on Facebook for most up-to-date information about entertainment, food and drinks.

### Staff Picks at Bourbon House 45

#### **Shrimp and Grits, \$18**

*Sautéed shrimp and asparagus in a sweet and tangy bourbon brown butter sauce w/ a tabasco kick, draped over a bed of grits flavored with goat cheese and basil, served with a house salad.*

Let's be honest- the fusion of goat cheese and basil is not what one typically considers pairing with grits. However, even the non-grits lovers at the table agreed that these might actually be the best grits in Ohio (We don't want to take it too far and offend our southern folk). Spicy but not *too* spicy, the shrimp was succulent and veggies fresh in this unique interpretation of a southern classic.

#### **Bourbon House Top Sirloin, \$18**

*Ten ounce top sirloin cap well-seasoned and grilled, topped with smoke mushrooms, and smothered in Gruyere, smoked Gouda Cheese Fondue and crispy onions.*

Tony decided to "play it safe" with a steak, and the house specialty did not disappoint. The thick-cut sirloin was perfectly tender and there was just enough cheese on top to add a unique flavor, but not so much the steak was overwhelmed. Paired with sweet potato waffle fries, there just might not be enough room saved for dessert.

#### **Kentucky Bourbon Barrel Ale, \$5**

Dr. Robertson can't wait to try the Kentucky Bourbon Barrel Ale, because Melissa won't stop raving about the craft brew.

Makers of the ale describe. "Our Kentucky Ale is aged for at least six weeks in freshly decanted bourbon barrels from some of Kentucky's finest distilleries. Subtle yet familiar flavors of vanilla and oak are imparted to this special ale as it rests in the charred barrels." It is *so smooth*, the 8.2% ABV comes as a surprise. The beer comes in its own special glass, but we'd be surprised if you only have one.

#### **Hot Brown Chicken and Waffles, \$10**

*Our house smoked chicken amassed atop a homemade waffle, drizzled with bourbon maple syrup, smothered in Mornay sauce (white cheese sauce), broiled until brown and bubbling, garnished with sliced peaches and candied peppered bacon.*

We haven't actually tried this yet...but doesn't it just make your mouth water?

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(Evaline's portrait still hangs in the store under the mirror in the front of the store, as if giving her blessing to ladies when they find what Lori calls "the dress of all dress!") The shop hosts an annual bridal show, and dozens of area vendors come out to offer their

services and give away tons of door prizes. Evaline's even gives one lucky lady a free wedding dress!

What many people don't know is that Evaline's receives dozens of couture wedding gowns from London for the bridal show's premier event, a fashion show starring local ladies. For a few weeks in January, Evaline's receives the *entire collection* from some of the industry's most coveted designers. Even if you miss the bridal show, book an appointment this month!

If that wasn't enough incentive, just across the street from Evaline's is our newest retail store in the downtown area, Jolies Femmes (Pretty Women). Owner Kelly Franko's passion is to make women look and feel their best. On Saturday, January 24<sup>th</sup> from 10-4 pm, the shop will be hosting "Here Comes the...Bra", and will assist brides, her maids and mothers of the wedding to find the perfect undergarments for the big day.

All brides in attendance will receive a gift bag and special coupons, as well as the chance to win a free bridal bra!

Call (877) 424-9655 to schedule an appointment.

## Warren Business Exchange, a resource for local entrepreneurs

Warren Business Exchange, a program of Warren Redevelopment and Planning Corporation, recognizes that small businesses are the economic driver within the city and offers free business-support services to local entrepreneurs. Although established as an in-house business incubator, recently we have expanded our advising and evaluation services to include existing businesses in the Warren area. If you are an area business owner or employee and need assistance with finances, marketing, needs assessment or just have a general question, call (330)841-2566 or email [info@thewarrenbusinessexchange.com](mailto:info@thewarrenbusinessexchange.com).

Additionally, we would appreciate any feedback you may have to improve information sharing within our new monthly Downtown Digest series.

The Downtown Digest is written and produced by WBE staff member Melissa Holmes, edited by Tony Iannucci and Dr. John Robertson.

