

New Lewiston businesses SPRING FORWARD (cont.): **ALFONSO MARRA BAX BUILDING**

- √Brewed and Bottled Craft Beer Shop
- √Sgt. Peppers Hot Sauces
- √Mad Hatter Tea House
- √Battle Flag Tavern

A foodie's paradise will soon open in the Village of Lewiston – an area already nationally known for its culinary offerings (thank you, USA Today and “Man Vs. Food”).

Town of Lewiston Attorney Alfonso Marra Bax is developing a multistory building at 442-444 Center St. The first floor will feature the return of Brewed and Bottled, Sgt. Peppers and The Mad Hatter – former neighbors at Fourth and Center – plus the debut of Battle Flag Tavern.

Though units are expected to open individually as they are finished, tenants plan to work together in promoting their offerings.

Speaking of those tenants, Bax said, “All really great people. We are so excited to finally be neighbors after all this time.”

•At **BREWED AND BOTTLED**, “Things are speeding up over there very rapidly, which is great news,” owner Chris Budde said. “Within the past maybe week-and-a-half, we went from just having insulation to being mostly drywall, which is extremely exciting.”

He said the expectation is a late-spring or early-summer re-opening.

“Since we did make the move to a new building, we have to relicense with the New York State Liquor Authority, and they might be running on a little bit of a delay right now,” Budde said.

The craft beer shop is, as he explained, “a hybrid of a beer bar and a retail shop. You can buy beer to take home, whether it’s from a can, bottle, or even a growler can, which is a 32-ounce can that we fill that replaces the growler. Or, you can hang out and have a drink and enjoy yourself there. If you’re feeling like you really want to, you can have a drink and you can shop at the same time, which offers a very unique experience you can’t find in many places. ...

“With our beer store portion, you don’t have to buy six-packs, you can buy singles of anything. You can get one, two, three – how many you want – you’re not required to get a make-your-own six pack or a pack of beer. You can just go and get singles.”

At this new location, “I would say 99% of all packaged beer to go will be cold. At our old location, we had some warm shelves with room-temp beer. But as of now, the plan is everything will be cold,” Budde said. “We are increasing the amount of taps that we have in store. And we have a nice, private area in the back where you can drink, separated from the retail store.

“In our first location, we felt like everything was kind of compressed on top of itself. So, to shop, you had to kind of mingle around the people hanging out; and to enjoy yourself, you had to deal with the shoppers coming in and out through where you were sitting. So now both spots are separated, giving it a little bit



more comfort and privacy.

“We also have the back area of the building, as our patio, that we’re going to be finishing out. And I think that adds a nice layer of almost like an oasis in Lewiston. You’re on Center Street, but you’re off Center Street. So, you’re still around all the other amazing businesses and restaurants, but you’ve got your own little, private area to enjoy yourself – maybe a little bit more quietly and relaxed than being on the hustle and bustle of Center Street.”

Brewed and Bottled will be located on the “Brickyard side” of the building.

“On the front of the building, there’s a vestibule. You’ll enter through there,” Budde said. “Our front main entrance is a

shared entrance with the upstairs units. So, you’ll walk up to the front of the building, take a left through some shared doors, and you’ll see our business in that vestibule. Or, you’ll be able to enter from the back beer garden area. And so that makes us – from facing the front of the building – we’re the left side on Center Street.”

Budde said customers are excited to return to his popular hangout.

“People are getting extremely antsy, including myself (laughs),” he said. “It’s great. I’ll be outside, you know, playing with my son in the front yard, or doing yard work, and neighbors – and also people I didn’t realize who live near me, who are customers – will pull their car over and ask

about when we’re opening, or they’ll just give me a shout and say, ‘When you opening!’

“Everybody seems to be very excited. The biggest compliment that I’ve received is some of the folks saying that they’ve been saving up to help us out and spend money when we re-open. And also, a lot of people are telling us that, due to COVID, they haven’t really been going out, and they’re just waiting and waiting and waiting until we reopen to come to our place. And that’s very humbling, that we can offer that kind of comforting, comfortable, fun experience, that people are just wanting and needing it.”

•Like Brewed and Bottled, “We’re getting very close,” **SGT. PEPPERS** owner Neil Garfinkel said. “We have our drywall up and my drywall has all been spackled, so it’s all nice. ... I just ordered some slatwall. I’m going to put up a beautiful wall of hot sauce with like a rustic slatwall and shelving. And I got a new sign design. ...

“I should have stock coming in (this week). It’s coming to my house, because the store is not quite ready. But I want to be able to go in with a boom, not with just a little bit of stuff. We want to open with a bang.”

Garfinkel said, “It’s a better-looking store. It’s a little smaller, but we’re going to do things

more compact with a larger selection. We’re going to actually go up higher on the walls than we did in the other place.

“We sold a lot of bacon. We have like 10 different flavors of bacon, which we sold at the summer market, the farmers markets. So, we’re going to really do a lot of that. And we’re going to get back into Wisconsin cheeses, and River Rat cheese, which is from New York. They’re out in 1000 Islands. And we’re also going to do cheese from the Cuba Cheese Shoppe.

“We’re gonna go big into the cheese again, and the bacon, and anything for the barbecue and cooking spices. And, of course, hot sauce. We’re not gonna have anything that grocery stores have, really, and lots of different jams and things, too. People cook with jams and mustards and we do a lot with that, too.”

In terms of location, “My front door looks at the Frontier House,” Garfinkel said.

He noted, “Looks like my store’s probably gonna be the first one to open. ... I’m gonna probably get the keys in a week or so. It’ll be closer to May when we actually open.”

Garfinkel said, “I’m excited to be in Al Bax’s building. He’s a great landlord to work with, and making things easy for us.”

SEE NEW, continued on Page 6

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