



Delta Democrat-Times

Greenville, Mississippi

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Something's brewing in Greenville

Mighty Miss. settles
into downtown home / 2

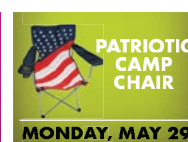


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Washington County welcomes Delta's 1st craft brewery

SARAH OZBUN
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Jon Alverson has brewed a simple creation, or four, that he believes could drive traffic to downtown Greenville — or at least put the Delta on the map when it comes to craft beer.

▲ ▲ ▲

A familiar face in the community as the publisher of the Delta Democrat-Times, Alverson also is the brainchild behind Mighty Miss. Brewing Co., which poured several pints of its Mississippi-brewed beer Saturday as it celebrated its grand opening, officially becoming the Delta's first craft brewery.

And, though he admits "it's scary," the 6-foot, 3-inch red head who rarely leaves his house without a bow-tie is confident in his business, his product and its location.

"There are three big factors. First, the market; second, (there's) no competition locally; and, it's a product that people from outside the area can purchase," he said earlier this week. "We are not carving up a pie that already exists; we're making our own pie."

The 3,500-square-foot mi-



BILL JOHNSON/BILLJOHNSON@DDTONLINE.COM

A familiar face in the community as the publisher of the Delta Democrat-Times, Jon Alverson, above, also is the brainchild behind Mighty Miss. Brewing Co., which poured several pints of its Mississippi-brewed beer Saturday as it celebrated its grand opening, officially becoming the Delta's first craft brewery. **Front:** Mighty Miss. brewmaster Scott Hettig poses by the brewing equipment as its unloaded earlier this week. The brewery, which is housed inside The Lofts at 517 on Washington Avenue, features four beers — all named after Mississippi Delta towns — on tap.

crobrewery is housed inside The Lofts at 517 on Washington Avenue in downtown Greenville. It's one component of Bill Boykin's \$9.1 million redevelopment project of the historic Sears building,

which has, on many occasions, been referred to as a catalyst for downtown revitalization.

Along with Mighty Miss., the project is opening doors to two retail spaces, a boutique

hotel, condominiums and the Downtown Grille.

"I want to give back. I am trying to do something for downtown Greenville because I truly believe that we have something special. ... If we

don't help ourselves, it's not going to take place," Boykin previously said. "It's a matter of all of us pulling together and working together and we have got to support each other. We have to come together as

a community."

To Alverson, a brewery fits in to that equation perfectly.

"We can see opportunity here because of the success of Delta Brewing Supply," he said, referring to the state's first home-brewing supply store, which opened in 2013, just a couple of blocks down the street from his new establishment. "Delta Brewing Supply has shown that craft beer can be successful, too."

And, thus, Alverson is letting it flow.

On tap at Mighty Miss. Brewing Co. will be four base beers, but Alverson said they have room for 10, which more than likely will be special in-house or seasonal flavors.

For \$4 a pint, folks can sip on Mighty Miss. American Pale Ale, which Alverson says is their flagship beer, Pace Porter, Sledge Saison and Onward Amber.

"These are simple beers, well made. They are balanced," he said, adding his beers will appeal to both the novice craft beer drinker and someone who can appreciate a simple beer.

A fun marketing strategy, all of the beers are named after Delta towns.

"I wish I could claim it; I love it," Alverson said, adding it was his marketing team who came up with the idea. "Lots

See **MIGHTY MISS.** on 3

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82nd Annual Meeting

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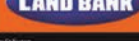
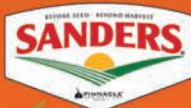


KEYNOTE SPEAKER



U.S. SECRETARY
OF AGRICULTURE
GEORGE ERVIN
"SONNY" PERDUE

9:00 a.m. -
Delta 1000 Event
9:00 a.m. -
Salute to Delta Honor Graduates
10:30 a.m. -
General Session
12:00 p.m. -
Catfish Luncheon on the
Quadrangle



MIGHTY MISS. / From 2

of things in the Delta are named ‘Delta’ and we didn’t want to be that. ... We have a history and a story that people are drawn to in the Delta, so we can never turn our back on that at all; we want to feast on that. So, we decided to name all of our beers almost alliterative names with cities in the Delta. Pace ... Sledge ... Onward ... and APA is for Greenville.”

Melia Christensen, the executive director of the Leland Chamber of Commerce who also is working with the brewery to develop and market its brand, said the beer labels really played into the theme of the business as a whole.

“You can’t tell the story of this brewery and this beer without it being a story about the Delta as well,” she said.

The logo for Mighty Miss. is Imported from the Delta, which Christensen said paired well with naming the beers after area towns.

“The fact all the beers are named after small towns carries with it this authenticity of place and that is really important to us and to the product we are putting out there,” she said.

Keeping with the theme, each of the beer cans — Mighty Miss. manufactures its beer in cans rather than bottles — has a section on the label with basic information about the town the beer is named after and fun facts, including coordinates and elevation.

“We have a product that stands out on the shelf. There’s a flood of craft beer on the market right now,” Christensen said, noting when it came to developing a brand, they made an effort to create a logo and design that were aesthetically pleasing and different from what’s already out there. “Craft beer labeling is going into this complex, graphic artistry. Can illustrations are complicated murals and pictorials. ... We wanted clean, white space. ... We wanted to say something without saying anything.”

What makes Mighty Miss. differ from existing beer stores is that they manufacture and sell their own beer. And, Mighty Miss. brews are already being poured throughout the Delta as well as in Starkville and Meridian.

Eventually, Mighty Miss. beers will be available for purchase, however, prices have yet to be set, Alverson said.

Sip, see and stay awhile

Originally, Alverson envisioned solely manufacturing beer at Mighty Miss. However, during Mississippi’s most recently legislative session, a law passed allowing small breweries to sell beer onsite. Come July 1, breweries across the Magnolia State that produce less than 60,000 barrels of light beer or wine per year can sell up to two cases of their product per day per



Did you know?

The brewery’s name is Mighty Miss., not Mighty Mississippi

Mighty Miss. manufactures its beers in cans, not bottles

Mighty Miss. is on tap in Starkville and Meridian already

On tap

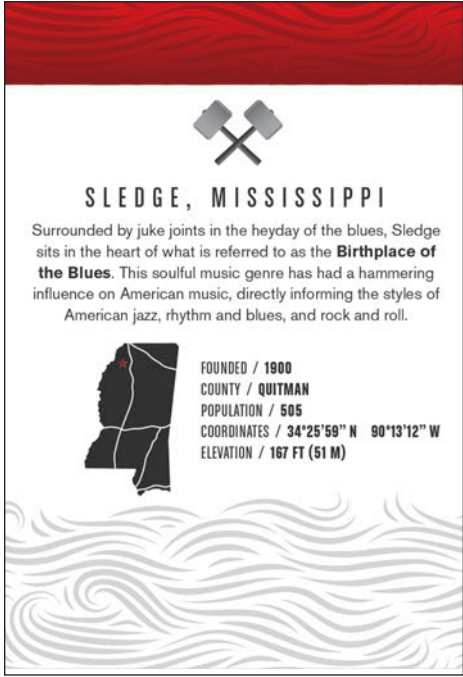
Mighty Miss. American Pale Ale

Sledge Saison

Onward Amber

Pace Porter

Pints will cost \$4 each



customer.

“The law passed and our focus changed,” Alverson said.

Until the first of July, folks will be able to come in and sip on a beer or go on a tour of the brewery, Alverson said. After, Mighty Miss. will transform into a tap room, he said.

“We can sell to-go beer, growlers, six-packs, cases, all these kinds of things,” he said, adding they also will be looking to partner with local restaurateurs to offer a minor food service to give customers something to snack on while they pull up a seat and relax — or watch some SEC football.

Although it could be confusing differentiating between Delta Brewing Supply and Mighty Miss., Alverson clarified saying, “Delta Brewing Supply can sell everybody’s beer and they don’t make their own.”

It’s not a competition with Delta Brewing either, he said.

Actually, he hopes the two compliment each other: “People might come see us for a beer or two and then walk down to Delta Brewing Supply. Or, they might get a beer or two at Delta Brewing and come see us. ... I imagine there will be foot traffic between the two.”

And that is the vision Boykin had for downtown Greenville when he dove headfirst into this project in

2012.

“Bill’s building by itself won’t do it. But, it is the first step that had to happen,” Alverson said. “Someone had to make that first step and making that first step will be the catalyst for the whole thing. Bill can’t do it by himself and that building can’t do it by itself. ... Others are going to have to jump into the fray with us. We’ve all put our hearts on the line, and we are ready for other people to join the group.”

Quitting their day jobs?

When asked if Alverson and Christensen are giving up their jobs as publisher of the newspaper and director of Leland’s Chamber of Commerce, both were adamant they are staying put.

“The newspaper is my number one focus,” Alverson said while sitting at his desk at the DDT.

Both he and Christensen said what they hope to have been their longest days are behind them now that they have a brewmaster in place and the brewery is officially open for business.

“We hired a great brewmaster; he’s been a professional for almost 10 years. I don’t think I’d have the same confidence if it weren’t for that hire,” Alverson said, referring to Scott Hettig, Mighty Miss. Brewing Co.’s brewmaster.

“Hiring the brewmaster the way we did takes great deal of work off all of us.”

Christensen agreed, saying the majority of her work as a marketing professional went into building the brand and launching the company.

“There’s a lot of work involved in building a brand and launching a company that takes time and talent that doesn’t need to be there once things are rolling,” she said. “I’ve been driving this ship from a worker-bee perspective the past couple of months, but it’s not going to take as much as a brand manager to keep this ship going after the grand opening.”

Also helping them on a day-to-day basis is Joe Paul DeAngelo, the salesman, and several behind-the-scenes folks, including a book keeper and marketing personnel.

Meet the brewmaster

Hettig comes to the Delta with nine years of brewing experience at the St. Francis Brewery in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Although he has been a professional brewer for the last nine years, he got his start in homebrewing almost 30 years ago. He admits those beers he first started brewing weren’t the greatest in the world.

However, they improved as he moved to the ranks of professional brewing as an assistant brewer at Rock Bottom brewing in Cleveland, Ohio. It was there Hettig discovered his love and passion for craft brewing. He then moved to St. Francis Brewery, where he focused on German-style brews with an eye to the palate of his customers.

“Brews on the coasts tend to the over-the-top hoppy beers, while the beer drinkers in the middle of the country aren’t quite there yet,” Hettig said in a press release. “I prefer the traditional German-Style beers that are balanced.”

Hettig’s addition to the Mighty Miss. Brewing Co. team was an easy decision to make, Alverson said.

“Scott comes with a lot of operational knowledge which will be invaluable to a start-up brewery like our operation,” Alverson said. “Our ideas about beer and brewing also mesh well.”

Hettig and his wife, Kelley, together have four grown children. The youngest, Michael, is a student at the University of Wisconsin – Oshkosh. Kelley is a Medical Records Auditor and will be joining Hettig in the Delta soon. Their other three children are Joshua, 36; Joel, 33; and David, 30.

Making the move across the country to be a part of a start-up brewery in the deep South wasn’t a decision Hettig made lightly.

“The sense of civic pride in Greenville impressed me,” he said after his first visit. “The people here are just so kind.”

GPSD to offer free breakfast, lunch this summer

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Although school has dismissed for the summer, the Greenville Public School District is still offering free meals four days a week.

The district’s summer feeding program begins Tuesday and runs through June 29 at Armstrong, Boyd and Weddington elementary schools, McBride Pre-Kindergarten Academy and Lucy Webb Kindergarten Preparatory School. It will continue at T.L. Weston Middle School through July 13.

“This program is helping ensure that all children, regardless of what school district they attend will receive healthy and nutritious meals throughout the summer months,” said Everett Chinn, the district’s public relations specialist. “The main thing we’re asking for is for the participation. We understand that there is a need in our community and we wanted to work together to curbside hunger in our community and the lack of nutritious meals at times in our community for our school age children.”

Students ages 4-18 can receive a free breakfast from 7:15-8:30 a.m. Monday through Thursday at each of the district’s designated sites. Lunch will be served from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at only Armstrong and Boyd elementary schools, Chinn said.

The summer feeding program is overseen by the state’s Department of Education and is funded through the United States Department of Agriculture’s Food and Nutrition Service, which ensures that low-income

Summer feeding program begins Tuesday.

Breakfast will be served from 7:15-8:30 a.m. at Armstrong, Boyd, Lucy Webb, McBride, Weddington and T.L. Weston.

Lunch will be served from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Armstrong and Boyd elementary schools.

children continue to receive meals when school is not in session.

The Department of Agriculture plans to serve more than 200 million free meals to children at approved SFSP sites. At GPSD alone, they expect to serve about 5,000 meals, Chinn said.

Patricia Allen, the district’s food service director, said students will have about five items to choose from daily, including fruit, vegetables, a meat, a grain and milk.

“The purpose of the program is to provide nutritious meals to children while school is out and bring awareness about good nutrition. The only thing I want is for our children to be aware, come out and enjoy our meals. That’s really the purpose of it, feeding the kids of our community,” Allen said.

For more information, call Allen at 662-334-2850, 662-334-7191 or 662-334-7017.

If FBI wants to talk to Kushner, lawyer says he’s ready

WASHINGTON— If the FBI wants to talk to Jared Kushner about his Russian contacts, they won’t have to track down the president’s son-in-law.

Amid reports the FBI is scrutinizing Kushner’s encounters, his lawyer says he stands ready to talk to federal investigators as well as Congress about his contacts and his role in Donald Trump’s 2016 campaign.

Federal investigators and several congressional committees are looking into Russia-Trump campaign connections, including allegations that there may have been collaboration to help Trump and harm his Democratic opponent, Hillary Clinton.

“The FBI tries to be thorough in their investigations,” said defense lawyer Edward

MacMahon, who is not involved in the case.

“If it’s been publicly reported that he met with Russians, and the investigation has to do with administration officials meeting with Russians, well, then, they’ll probably want to talk to everybody.”

Kushner was a trusted Trump adviser last year, overseeing the campaign’s digital strategy, and remains an influential confidant within the White House.

One likely area of interest for investigators would be Kushner’s own meetings with Russians, given that such encounters with a variety of Trump associates are at the root of the sprawling probe, now overseen by former FBI director Robert Mueller.

Associated Press

“The fact all the beers are named after small towns carries with it this authenticity of place and that is really important to us.”

Melia Christensen
Mighty Miss. Brewing Co., marketing director