

https://www.beloitdailynews.com/news/covid-19/fridays-in-the-park-ing-lot-to-begin-friday/article_7c30b288-4fa2-54c9-a658-f70bb443ab74.html

FEATURED

Fridays in the Park-ing Lot to begin Friday

By HILLARY GAVAN Senior staff writer
May 18, 2020



Liane and David Elliott stand outside their business Pig Iron Pub and Grub. They will be offering \$7 meals at the Downtown Beloit Association's Fridays in the Park-ing lot event on May 22.

Hillary Gavan

BELOIT—The Downtown Beloit Association (DBA) is inviting everyone to Fridays in the Park-ing Lot starting on Friday.

The event, set for 11:30 a.m.—1:30 p.m., is designed to comply with safety regulations due to COVID-19. Normally in spring and summer, the Fridays in the Park event features live music and a lunch served at First National Bank Plaza at the corner of State Street and Grand Avenue.

In this new, improvised version, diners will drive through a different featured restaurant parking lot each week, according to DBA Executive Director Shauna El-Amin.

“We are excited because it’s an opportunity to highlight our restaurants and get people to enjoy the event. Hopefully, this is only temporary and we can get back to Fridays in the Park with live music at First National Bank Plaza,” El-Amin said.

The inaugural parking lot event will be held at Pig Iron Pub and Grub, 614 Broad St., the former Mike’s Roadhouse located behind the Atrium Apartment Homes behind Bryden Motors.

It will be a big day for Pig Iron Pub and Grub owners David and Liane Elliott who had to shut down their beloved bar and restaurant on March 17.

At the event Friday, the Elliotts will be serving a turkey club wrap, chips, chocolate chip cookie and drink. Customers are asked to bring cash and the exact change to cut down on contact. It costs \$7. Pig Iron can make a maximum of 240 meals.

El-Amin encourages those from a workplace to send one driver to pick up multiple meals. Although live music can’t be performed, people are encouraged to turn on the radio and sing if they like.

The Elliotts have missed their loyal and growing customer base and will be overjoyed to see them again. They opened the business, a mixture of an Irish pub and a biker bar, on May 1, 2019 with a fresh new look.

David, a former welder, and Liane, who worked at Kerry Ingredients, thought it would be the perfect retirement business as they love spending time together and socializing. Set up on a blind date 13 years ago, the two say they like being together. Between Liane, the self-described “soccer mom” and “biker” David, all types of customers find themselves at home at the bar. From teachers and white collar workers to bikers, the bar was building up an eclectic following.

“I’m a good listener and somebody to talk to,” David said.

“I love the food part of it,” Liane said.

Foods include hits such as the slag burger, a third pound burger with pulled pork, bacon and grilled onions with Swiss cheese, or the restaurant’s pulled pork with a signature sauce and rub. The sloppy pig is a big hit, Italian beef, melted mozzarella, grilled green peppers and onions, topped with bacon and served on Texas toast.

Things were going well for the bar, and the couple was planning a one year anniversary celebration with bands and a radio event as well as pig roasts and live music throughout the summer.

Having to close down their bar was a devastating blow, although they understood the reasoning behind it.

The Elliotts are planning on reopening May 26 if allowed. To keep everyone safe and to comply with social distancing, they have separated video games 6 feet, removed some bar stools and spaced out tables.

They have an air filtration system and plan to either wipe down menus with sanitizer in between usage or use chalkboard menu. There will no longer be sauce caddies on the tables, but instead having individual disposable packets of sauces. The bathrooms and door handles will be cleaned hourly with pens sanitized in between usage.

El-Amin said the DBA will be announcing the next restaurants to be featured on Fridays in the Park-ing lot soon.

“Each event will be held in their adjacent parking lot,” El-Amin said.

The DBA is still planning the Beloit Farmers Market on June 6, although it’s waiting to see what changes are needed.

“It will be essential businesses only—produce, meats, cheeses, seafood and soap,” El-Amin said.

Hillary Gavan