

OLD FINDS, NEW LIFE

THE **AGORA MARKET** IS ONLY LATEST ADDITION
TO THE **THRIFT** AND VINTAGE CLOTHING
CULTURE DEVELOPING DOWNTOWN. BY **ALYSSA McBETH**



BUDGET BUYS

Downtown H'Burg has become a hub for quality finds and unique experiences, each shop bragging personality.

Savvy shoppers are always on the hunt for a great deal. And with the recent spike in vintage, thrift and local consignment becoming a trend, the market has given way for local shops to make their mark. Heartworn Vintage, The Lady Jane and Whatever Vintage are Harrisonburg's hidden gems. From fashion to home décor, each one is sure to have something for every

visitor to their shops.

So, for students looking for a way to express individuality in a world of mass-production, these stores bring a unique opportunity to play with your style in a non-typical way.

Heartworn Vintage

Nestled in the new Agora Downtown Market lies a blast from the past. Heartworn Vintage, owned by a mother-daughter duo,

opened this June. "As a kid, I went to a lot of flea-markets and yard sales," said Allie Motyka. "My mom has always been collecting and I've been doing the same since I was in high school."

This unique shop sells items ranging from the 1920's to the late 80's: clothing, shoes, accessories, housewares, knick-knacks, furniture, artwork, and more.

Prior to their opening, Motyka said they were sourcing items



for the store from auctions and thrift stores in Virginia and surrounding states.

"Now that we've opened, we're having people bring stuff to us or having us come to their house to look through what they have," said Motyka.

From Motyka's favorite Starburst wall clock to a vintage Ouija

hard time letting them go. But it is fun to circulate the items in-and-out," Motyka says the diversity of items in the store and the location is attracting a wide array of customers.

"Tourists, locals, students, students with their families, there really is something for everyone," said Motyka.

Regardless if you find something to take home or you just exit with a heightened curiosity, Heartworn Vintage will leave you feeling nostalgic.

Motyka says nostalgia surrounds the store as people often tell her stories when an item reminds them of a memory from the past.

The Lady Jane

The Lady Jane is located downtown, specializing in vintage goods, home décor, and gifts. Owner

and JMU alumna, Sara Christensen '08, opened the shop in 2011, drawing inspiration from her favorite author, Jane Austen.

"When we bring things into our home they say a lot about us, and when you walk into somebody's home you see so much about who they are," said Christensen. "I thought that we write the story of who we are and our families are by what we bring and decorate our home with."

Initially, the shop focused primarily on furniture and home accessories. Christensen said their location at the time allowed them to store more pieces.

"I was going to flea-markets, antique dealers," said Christensen. "I was doing a lot of collecting, doing some refinishing myself too....finding some pieces that were

in good shape but just needed a little love."

In 2014, The Lady Jane moved locations. Christensen said this change was great for the store, but she had to change the focus from mainly furniture to diversifying the rest of the inventory.

"We still carry vintage pieces and antique furniture but we also do specialty gifts and a lot of local art," said Christensen. "I went from collecting everything myself to having 30 vendors and artists who I get to work with individually to produce some items for the shop."

Christensen says the relationship she has developed over the years has shaped the store's identity. She gets to order items with specific people in mind, creating an environment where people can come in for inspiration.

"The Lady Jane is, I hope, a place people can come to find things

for people they care about, things that inspire them for their own home, and a place that supports local entrepreneurs."

Whatever Vintage

Located on South Main Street, Whatever Vintage is a thrift and vintage boutique that opened its doors in March of 2015. Owner Jessica Kyger started thrifting at age 16. After collecting for almost five years, she decided to take her hobby to the next level and share her vintage gems with the Harrisonburg community.

"No matter your age, no matter your style, literally whatever you are looking for I want to be able to provide that," said Kyger.

Kyger's shop shares a building with the White Unicorn Hair Salon and is quite a hidden gem; she says you might miss it if you don't pay close enough attention.

Whatever Vintage carries men and women's clothing and accessories that range from the 1950s to the 90s.

"Interest in the clothing spans from children, to older adults and everyone in between," said Kyger.

Kyger is currently a one-woman show. She runs the shop and does all of the inventory collection as well. Her main goal is to provide people with reliable, long-lasting, and stylish pieces without breaking the bank.

"Not a lot of people have the patience to dig through hundreds of mediocre garments to find that,"

"I'm the middle man here," said Kyger. "I'll go out into the thrift realm and find the best of the best stuff there is to offer and bring it back."



FUNKY FRESH

Each thrift store, vintage boutique and secondhand store downtown is original, authentic and color ful.

WE WRITE THE STORY OF WHO WE ARE

Board, each piece in Heartworn is special.

"A lot of the things in here have at one time been mine, or my mom's," said Motyka. "And we have a



Photo by Megan Toomey

For Caioimhe O'Sullivan Roche, a trip to Cartagena, Colombia, in 2016 inspired her to pioneer a virtual reality and 3-D modeling company. Roche was working on a project for a cross-collaborative course through JMU X-Labs. Roche and her team members used a drone to take pictures of deteriorating limestone walls that posed a threat to the community. With these photos, the team created three-dimensional models of the walls to be used for a restoration project.

"That was the catalyst for starting the business," said Roche, senior WRIC and Industrial Design major. "We got back, and people were saying 'You know, you can do this as a career!'"

Thus Canvex LLC was born.

Roche and JMU alumnus Nicholas Sipes cofounded the company in April 2017.

"Our focus is to become the sole virtual reality and 3-D touring and modeling company,"

Roche said.

Sipes says the chemistry he and Roche have makes them ideal partners.

"We're like minded-enough to where we can finish each others sentences and know what the next move is going to be," Sipes said, "but different thinkers enough that we're approaching problems with creative mindsets."

They had the opportunity to grow Canvex when participating in the JMU Center for Entrepreneurship fellowship program during the summer of 2017.

During the fellowship, they began working on the "Picturing Harrisonburg" exhibit, which raced the city's history since 1828.

Roche and her business partner worked on a 3-D model of the city municipal building for the exhibit. The finished product was a model of the building from the late 1800s, early 1900's and one within the last two years.

"Symbolically, it's this representation of how

Harrisonburg has developed and how we categorize our history," Roche said.

She explained that the new City Hall adjoins a Bluestone building that used to be a schoolhouse, which the city council talked about knocking down for several years.

"That's the story of Harrisonburg and that's the story of that exhibit," Roche said. "We knocked down a lot of buildings that would now be so incredible to have and we turned them into parking lots."

Roche has grown fond of Harrisonburg. She says she has become fascinated with the preservation and historical relevancy of the city. She is writing her senior thesis on urban planning in Harrisonburg.

When she was a sophomore, she began helping JMU Alumna Louise Whitmer ('43) write a memoir.

"It was the biggest part of college for me for a really long time," Roche said.

Over the two years she helped Whitmer with the memoir the two developed an incredible relationship.

"I learned so much about the town," said Roche. "I think that's why I became so passionate about Harrisonburg."

When she's not running her business, she can be seen practicing with her fellow JMU women's rugby players — in which she previously served as captain. She has dabbled in freelance web writing, historical conservation and was a designer for the non-profit Local Environmental Agricultural Project Inc., which provides fresh produce to areas in the greater Roanoke area.

"She is out there in everything she does, she just goes for it," said Roshna Wunderlich, women's rugby head coach. "She's the lead-by-example type."

Roche graduated in December.

"Building a startup at the end of my college career and having something to go into is this really incredible thing," Roche said. "Autonomy gives me the ability to craft my life the way I desire."

Roche says she is lucky to have found her niche.

"There's something to be said about having a feeling of purpose in what you're doing."

O'SULLIVAN

By Alyssa McBeth

"I learned so much about [Harrisonburg]. ...That's why I became so passionate about Harrisonburg."

https://www.breezejmu.org/news/jmu-drops-g-prefix-from-gen-ed-classes/article_5e67564c-d653-11e4-8532-6b664de90006.html



JMU drops "G" prefix from Gen-ed classes

Alyssa McBeth | contributing writer Mar 29, 2015

JMU is kissing the “G” goodbye. Starting this summer, the “G” prefix will no longer be listed in the titles of general education courses. No longer will students refer to their classes as GWRTC or GSOCI — now they’ll simply call them WRTC and SOCI. What most are wondering, however, is if this changes the overall aim of the GenEd program, which began in the spring of 2014.

Despite this change, the clusters will stay intact, as well as the content of each course.

"We had a lot of negative comments about 'G' classes," Georgia Polacek, cluster five coordinator and one of the leaders of the project, said. "So to try to get to a more realistic view for the program, since removing the 'G' kept coming up, we were trying to make the program look more uniform with your other classes."

There was also a question as to what these GenEd classes would look like as students continue their post-college career with further schooling and jobs in the future.

"We had a lot of students, as they move on to master's degrees and etcetera, [where] those 'G's' on their transcript[s] were confusing to those other schools," Polacek said.

The reason these "G's" on the transcript might be questionable to other schools is because a "G" in front of a course title may be viewed as easy. According to Polacek, there is a lack of uniformity when the "G" is present.

Cluster one coordinator and GCOM professor Gretchen Hazard explained how she sees various advantages from this program transformation.

"A huge benefit is the transferability of these courses," Hazard said. "Oftentimes when letters are added to the beginning of a disciplinary identifier, such as the 'G,' they are viewed by other institutions as somehow remedial. And none of our general education coursework is remedial, and we want to prevent that perception from occurring."

Additionally, Hazard hopes that students, as well as professors, will now take the courses more seriously.

"This [dropping of the 'G'] may elevate the value of the courses in the eyes of students, and perhaps faculty, who recognize they are coming out of a single discipline and are highly appropriate for students that are interested and curious about that disciplinary way of thinking," Hazard said.

This transformation has been in the works for two years. Throughout this process, the Office of General Education has received input from professors and students alike.

"We talked to faculty, students [and the student government association] several times to just get more input from everyone around campus to make sure we were getting a broad voice," Polacek said. "We met with SGA two years ago and really had a nice conversation about

dropping the 'G' and what they thought about it. They were so enthusiastic and supportive that it really made it easier for us to say, 'Yes, this is something we need to do.'"

Mike Cugliari, a freshman finance major, added that students are more likely to be interested and take the GenEd courses more seriously if they relate to their major.

"My [macro] economics class was very important to me because it was important for my major," Cugliari said. "But I felt that some of the other classes, like God, Meaning and Morality was too much work and took away from my time from studying things that were important to my major."

It seems the biggest problem for students will be getting used to saying the names of these courses and searching the catalog without the 'G.' So far, there's been positive feedback from students and professors.

Sophomore communication major Allison Mabry is excited for the removal of the "G."

"I think it is going to create consistency among our courses," Mabry said. "People don't take the 'G' classes as seriously as they should. I think this is going to be good for our campus."

https://www.breezejmu.org/news/comic-strips-survive-as-print-media-declines/article_fd98200c-bd21-11e4-8291-ff8dcb8442b3.html

Comic strips survive as print media declines

Alyssa McBeth | contributing writer Feb 25, 2015



Cartoonist and JMU alumnus John Rose ('86) works in his home studio.

Danielle Epifanio | The Breeze

They make us laugh and they make us think. They're familiar friends when we need a pick-me-up, and the beloved characters we have grown up with.

Comic strips are something many people look forward to in the Sunday paper. However, as we move into a digital age, newspaper subscriptions are in decline. Various cartoon strips have fallen by the wayside, yet some continue to thrive. Comics are still flourishing and are as

popular as ever according to Guy Gilchrist, an award-winning cartoonist and author of the iconic “Nancy and Sluggo” comic strip.

Gilchrist has an extensive background in the comic strip industry. In 1981, he was hand-selected by Jim Henson to illustrate the “The Muppets.” He has seen comics transform and also seen the fans of these comics remain dedicated.

“They still buy our [“Nancy and Sluggo”] anthologies, various collections [by way of] print where I am signing them, and we even sell the comics on iTunes and Amazon,” Gilchrist said. “We, and the fans, adapt. That’s what we do.”

The fans of these comic strips have grown and changed with them. Comics are a way for people to escape their daily lives, just for a few seconds. Gilchrist believes this is one of the main reasons comic strips are preserving their popularity.

“You’re telling stories that make a difference,” Gilchrist said. “You’re telling jokes that light up people’s lives. It’s been an incredible opportunity to be able to speak to [people] through those little panels.”

But to combat the decline of printed comics, comic strips have adapted to the digital age in their own way. Through the use of websites and various apps, fans can access their favorite comics in a matter of seconds.

“You can type in GoComics on your iPhone, or any device really, and you can read ‘Nancy,’ ‘Peanuts,’ ‘Calvin and Hobbes,’ whatever your favorite strips are, all on your phone,” Gilchrist said. “And that’s huge, it’s just huge for the industry.”

John Rose, a JMU (’86) alumnus and cartoonist for the “Barney Google and Snuffy Smith” comic strip, experienced the shift to online comics. He worked with King Features Syndicate, Inc., a comic producer, to develop a website where individuals can see daily samples of Rose’s work. They can also check out his blog, which has event updates for his readers.

Despite the growing trend to online comics, Rose doesn’t prefer one mode (digital or print) over the other. The rate at which comics are gaining exposure and maintaining popularity is appealing not only to producers and readers, but to the comic artists. It’s a way for their work to be recognized and also allows them to spread their happiness and humor with others.

"It's still neat to open the paper and see your comics there," Rose said. "But I like it just as much either way because then, on the other hand, it's online and in color all the time. And these days if people like your comic, they share it on Facebook."

And it's not only comic strips that have seen this change, but comic books as well. Traditional comic books such as "Superman" and "Batman" are being transformed to on-screen blockbusters.

Richard Hilliard, an associate professor in JMU's School of Art, Design and Art History, noted his own wariness about the digital shift for comics.

"I can tell you I was initially very skeptical and then got one of my favorite graphic novels [online]," Hilliard said. "I was amazed at what an unusual and pleasurable reading experience it was."

Our generation may move to only viewing comics digitally, but many fans think that print copies are here to stay. People such as Hilliard will continue to buy hard copies of comics simply because of a personal preference.

Even the demise of newspapers won't prevent many fans from viewing the comics they've grown to love.



It's Time We Stop Glorifying Mental Illnesses

There is nothing beautiful or appealing about them.



You see it everywhere. Media, celebrities, TV shows, movies, models, etc. glamorizing mental illness. I can't go on Tumblr without seeing black and white photos of a person self-harming themselves that are made to look artistic and appealing. You see the quizzes and articles on Facebook and other social media sites that help determine which mental illness might fit you the best. This trend is dangerous. I'm sure it started out as a way to raise awareness and educate people about these illnesses that are affecting millions of people, but somewhere we got confused. Yes, it's de-stigmatizing mental illness, but it's doing so in a way that It's making it seem cool, hip, and even desirable.

It's something that is happening. It's something that needs to be talked about.

I have struggled with anxiety and depression since I was a freshman in high school. I used to be ashamed of myself. I didn't like talking to anyone about what I was struggling with because I was embarrassed and felt like it made be different from everyone else - and not in a good way. It took some time but I came to terms with the fact that my mental disorders did not define me or own me. But that was a long, intense, and difficult journey that I am still struggling to control to this day. That is why I, along with many others, find frustration in this trend toward making our mental illnesses seem casual and cute.

There is *nothing* cute or mysterious or poetic or beautiful or charming about mental illnesses.

Mental illness is becoming a lighter topic to discuss when it shouldn't be treated as such. People are bothered when someone makes comments like "Yeah, I have to have my pens and pencils organized and straight, I'm totally OCD like that." or "I'm just a little depressed/bipolar feeling today."

I do not wish the pain and suffering of my disorder on anyone. Because it's not beautiful and it shouldn't be treated like it's beautiful. Mental illness should be treated as it is - an awful, painful, intense disease that consumes every fiber of your being.

So let's educate ourselves and others about the dangers of mental illnesses and continue to de-stigmatize them without glorifying them.

"Anyone who has actually been that sad can tell you that there's nothing beautiful or literary or mysterious about depression"— Author Jasmine Warga

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Alyssa McBeth

Feb 29, 2016

👤 At James Madison