



Treasures in store

Businesses along Barret near Hepburn include The Nitty Gritty consignment store and Speier Ace Hardware.

By Mary Ann Gerth, The C-J

Barret Avenue's independent shops appeal to art, food lovers

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Chocolate addicts beware: Nuts N Stuff's "Double Dip Malted Milk Balls" — its biggest seller — are now within easy walking distance of Germantown and the Original Highlands.

The 25-year-old bulk food store recently moved from Preston Highway to leased space in a 100-year-old, renovated building at 1000 Barret Avenue in Germantown — a few doors from where the Barret Bar will reopen next month.

Both businesses are along a stretch of Barret that's becoming

an artsy and foodsy alternative to Bardstown Road. It's populated with a growing number of small, independently owned stores and shops.

"We thought we would benefit from more foot traffic," said Paul Pfister of Schmitzelburg, who co-owns Nuts N Stuff with his wife, Mel. "People were passing by at

50 miles an hour" on Preston.

The Barret site is a "far better spot," said Colleen Reasor, who lives off Poplar Level Road and had stopped by for some chocolates.

Barret between Winter and Morton avenues was designated in the Original Highlands Neighborhood Plan from 2006 as a

"proposed arts district," and that's what it's becoming, neighborhood association president Chuck Burke said.

It's attractive and "about halfway to what we imagined," he said.

The concept is born out in such new spots as Revelry boutique and gallery at 980 Barret;

and Mueble Etc. jewelry, furniture and gifts at 976 Barret. They join such mainstays as Speier Ace Hardware, 992 Barret, and Lynn's Paradise Cafe, 984 Barret.

The 8-year-old Regalo gift store, at 982 Barret, moved to that bigger space in August, making way for Revelry next door. Revelry's Mary Le said she and business partner Paula Weyler George had wanted to be on Bardstown Road but what little space that was available was too expensive. Barret turned out to be their "dream space," Le said.

Diana Nolden of Germantown recently stopped at Revelry with family members to shop. "It has great, locally made crafts," she said.

The Barret Bar will reopen under the same ownership — Rick and Brenda Wessling. It closed in 2009, and this time it will go by its original name from 1946, the Barret Bar and Grill.

The Barret Bar was for sale last year, but the Wesslings couldn't work out a satisfactory deal, in part because of the "weak economy," Rick Wessling said.

He had run it for more than 30 years, after taking over from his father. "You get tired after a while," he said. But he said he and his wife are ready to give it another try. They're making plans to update the equipment and furnishings.

Nearby, Callahan's Catering, which changed its name from O'Callahan's under new ownership, is sharing a kitchen space at 1006 Barret with two other relatively new businesses. They're Pretzel Baker, owned by chef and baker Klaus Riedeisheimer, and Rudy Green's doggy cuisine, billed as "People Food for Dogs!"

"This area is revitalized," said Karla Haas, Rudy Green's president. Her products are sold at www.rudygreens.com and locally at Kroger, ValuMarket, Whole Foods and



By Martha Elson, The Courier-Journal

Diana Nolden, her father, Greg, and nephew Leo, 8 months, are outside Revelry boutique and gallery.



By Bill Luster, The Courier-Journal

Vivian Brown shops at Nuts N Stuff.

Fresh Start Growers Supply.

Riedeisheimer's pretzels and pretzel bread are sold at Baxter Station bar and restaurant in Irish Hill and have been served at KFC Yum! Center events, and he's looking for other outlets, he said.

Other businesses along Barret include Nitty Gritty clothing shop; The Deal, which buys and sells 20th-century furniture, art and accessories; Artist & Craftsman Supply; Acorn Apparel; and The Herb Import Co., selling teas, coffees, incense and candles.

"It's getting really artsy over here," said Sarah Bridges, who works at Herb Import. "It's a nice community." Another potential space for a new business, the former Barkstown building, is for lease.

Nearby on Barret, but outside of the neighborhood plan's arts district, the 30-seat Joe Davola's

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sandwich shop (www.crazyjoedavolas.com) has been operating for about 1½ years in a storefront at Breckinridge Street. The owners are "Seinfeld" fans, and it's named for a character on the TV series, "Crazy" Joe Davola.

Co-owner Christopher Stockton, who previously owned Jackson Organic Coffee but sold it to Red Hot Roasters, said the restaurant has a good lunch business and delivers anywhere. It plans to add a coffee roastery.

Barret is "really hopping," he said.

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► COVER PHOTO: Paul Pfister is outside Nuts N Stuff.