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Agora Downtown Market's Grand Opening: Bringing Several Small Businesses to One Large Retail Space

HARRISONBURG, VA (May 31, 2017) – Agora Downtown Market, downtown Harrisonburg's first nano-retail hub, will open its doors on Thursday, June 1, at 11 a.m. at the Wine Brothers building at 165 S. Main Street Suite 101. A dozen small businesses will be housed under one roof to create a unique retail destination and exciting shopping experience.

The inaugural Agora Downtown Market retail community includes:

8Bit Oasis Gaming – A locally owned hobby and retro shop that features trading cards, board games, retro toys, novelty items, and other “nerd needs.” Customers can find the latest games and expansions or rekindle their love of an old hobby.

Broad Porch Coffee Co. – This coffee spot makes espresso beverages using organic and fair-trade beans from small, family farms from all over the world. The coffee is roasted in small batches several times a week so it is always fresh.

Heartworn Vintage - This mother-daughter team sells vintage treasures from the 1940s to the 1980s. One-of-a-kind finds include vintage clothing, accessories, housewares, furniture, and odds and ends. Shoppers take home a piece of the past.

The Isle Co. - This family-owned and operated business offers signature soy lotion candles, which burn clean and cool but let you use the warm, melted soy oil as a luxurious body lotion.

Mandy's Candy – A candy shop that specializes in old-time sweets and treats.

New Creation – This second location for New Creation, a nonprofit organization dedicated to counteracting human trafficking, features survivor-made and fair trade jewelry, accessories, and more. Proceeds will fund rescue and restoration efforts across the globe.

The owners of the first six businesses to share the Agora are excited to become part of the downtown merchant community. Retailers like Becca Slye and Kathy Miller, owners of The Isle Co., have been selling their products to Harrisonburg customers for several years but are thrilled to be downtown. “This new location is fun, accessible, and just has a really cool vibe,” say Slye and Miller. “We believe that locals and tourists alike will come to love and appreciate this new, unique shopping experience found at the Agora Downtown Market.”

The market will also showcase temporary pop-up vendors during each weekend in June while

the six remaining vendor stalls are being filled with full-time businesses. Pop-ups at the grand opening will include Derek Niver's original art, Chris Fulmer's novelty toys and collectibles, and more.

"Agora will give people even more reasons to come downtown by growing the retail community that proves every day that shopping with independent businesses is just a better experience," says Andrea Dono, executive director of Harrisonburg Downtown Renaissance. "It is also creating opportunities for entrepreneurs who have been interested in being downtown, but couldn't find spaces small enough. Agora fills that void while creating a cool shopping atmosphere that will complement other downtown boutiques."

Hours of operation are Tuesday – Saturday 11 a.m. - 6 p.m. and 11 a.m. – 7 p.m. every first Friday of each month. Hours will vary on holidays and events. Watch for more pop-up vendors, special events, and new retailer announcements at www.facebook.com/agoradowntownmarket. Agora has room to grow and expects to sign five more retailers in the coming months. Entrepreneurs interested in joining Agora are encouraged to contact Operations Manager Allie Motyka to learn more.

About Agora Downtown Market

Agora is a retail community that brings together several small businesses under one roof in the heart of downtown Harrisonburg. It offers small retail spaces to artisans, crafters, and entrepreneurs and provides a unique shopping destination for residents and tourists alike in the historic Wine Brothers Building. Originally built as a Dodge Plymouth dealership in 1920, this building has been transformed into a hip nano-retail hub. Agora is located between Clementine and Ten Thousand Villages on Main Street just a block away from a free parking deck and a free municipal lot. It is across the street from the visitor center, library, and children's museum and around the corner from Ruby's Arcade, downtown's hottest recreation and entertainment space.

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