

The Fresno Bee



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Word on the Street: Missouri native runs Fresno Rocky Mountain chocolate store



LaTricia Adkins spends a lot of time at the Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory store near Fashion Fair mall. In fact, she is there about 96 hours a week.

As the store's new owner, Adkins, 25, is learning a lot about running her own business. And despite the long hours, she wouldn't have it any other way.

"I always say that among all the chaos, there is still lots of chocolate," Adkins said.

Adkins earned the opportunity to run her own candy store after winning a business plan-writing competition sponsored by Missouri Western State University, Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory and entrepreneur Steven L. Craig.

The competition was part of an applied entrepreneurship class at Missouri Western. Adkins, a 2011 graduate of the college, enrolled in the class after being laid off from her job.

"My dream was really to work for myself," she said. "I did not want to be in the same position I was in before."

Adkins was one of two winners who earned the opportunity for the store franchise. The winners were provided training and a loan by the company to pay the franchise fee.

So far, businesses has been good, said Adkins, a native of Missouri. This is her first time living out of the state.

"Customers have been really positive and I am starting to get used to the heat," Adkins said. "I think we will get along just fine."

Peeve's Place

Craig Scharton has taken over a popular Fulton Mall drinking hole and has named it after his dog, Peeve.

The former Fresno Brewing Company at 1243 Fulton Mall, just south of CVS, is now called Peeve's Public House and Local Market. Scharton is the owner and has kept the brewing company's manager, Michelle Wong, on board to help out.

The new restaurant, bar and market expects to open during Arthop on Sept. 5.

Scharton plans to renovate the kitchen so he can serve breakfast, lunch and dinner to patrons with a limited menu. He will continue serving coffee and drinks.

"The menu will highlight locally grown and locally made foods," Scharton said.

Many of the ingredients will come from a public market that Scharton plans to open in a small retail space connected to the restaurant. People can buy local products like bread, ice cream and vegetables there.

But don't fret: many of the things that made the brewing company a popular hangout will remain. Scharton will keep the live music, games, events and crazy stuff, he said.

And you may see his boxer and shepherd-mix dog, Peeve, from time to time.

Welcoming Walmart

Walmart made its latest entry into the San Joaquin Valley's retail community last week with the grand opening of its Kerman supercenter store.

The new 154,648-square-foot Walmart Supercenter is at 14601 W. Whitesbridge Road, about a mile east of Highway 145.

The store, however, was fraught with controversy since Walmart announced its plans in 2009 as city leaders wrangled over whether to allow the retail giant to come to town. Construction of the store began last fall.

The new store, managed by Emilio Baca, has about 300 full- and part-time employees and is open 24 hours, seven days a week. It opened its doors on Wednesday and held an opening celebration for the community on Saturday.

The supercenter includes Walmart's traditional low-price range of general merchandise such as clothing, electronics, sporting goods and toys, a pharmacy and a full line of grocery products, including meat, produce and frozen foods.

<http://www.fresnobee.com/2013/08/18/3448645/sweet-deal-in-fresno.html>