

# Brewing Up Good Times

Mica Town Brewery / 25 Brown Drive / Marion, NC 28752

*Behind Crooked Door Coffee House*

June 19, 2017

Jason Snyder & Emily Causey



What began as a mutual affection for the world of craft beer has blossomed into a personal and professional relationship for Jason Snyder and Emily Causey, who first met online in 2014. Lucky for us, their passion for craft brew and Marion will ultimately benefit our community! Jason and Emily are working hard to create Marion's very first hometown brewery, aptly named, [Mica Town Brewery](#).

[Mica Town](#) is scheduled to open by the end of 2017 and will be housed in an historic downtown building off Main Street at 25 Brown Drive (behind the [Crooked Door Coffee House](#)). The couple, who moved to Marion in July of 2016, had no long-term plans to stay—and certainly no plans to open a brewery. In fact, says Jason, they were hoping to make a quick 5-year-investment in real estate and off to the next adventure they would go.

“We came for the investment,” says Jason. “But fell in love with its small-town charm and saw its potential as the next big town.” Getting settled in and feeling at home didn't take long for the two as they became involved and “plugged” in to the community. Learning that the town was looking for a brewery to call their own, Emily and Jason didn't waste time making the right connections.

“When we heard about the city's desire to have its own brewery, we immediately contacted Bob (Boyette, city manager) and followed up with a meeting,” says Emily.

The [City](#), [Chamber](#), and [Marion Business Association](#) had been working to recruit a brewery to Marion for some time, explains Boyette. “We were thrilled to hear of their interest. As we got to know Jason and Emily, we quickly saw that they had their act together and knew what they were doing, so we thought that it would be a great fit for Marion.”

Jason's engineering background and homebrewing experience were a good start, as was Emily's event management experience at the [Montreat Conference Center](#). [Marion Business Association](#) director Freddie Killough was impressed with their dedication and assisted them through the [Growing Entrepreneurs Marion \(GEM\)](#) program.

"Emily and Jason were very committed to the brewpub," says Killough. "They were willing to plan, to listen to wise business council, and invest personal equity into their dream. With those qualities, anything is possible."

Chamber Director Steve Bush, Killough, and Boyette also helped the couple secure a \$25K loan from the [City of Marion Revolving Loan Program](#). This program is designated for those opening or owning a business in the downtown area and is funded by a grant from the [NC Rural Center](#).

"We couldn't have gotten this far without the support of the people in this town," says Emily.

Killough saw that Emily & Jason were not only good students of the business curriculum, but they embraced the community awareness focus of the class. She went on to explain that [GEM](#) is about business principals and understanding the character of the community.

Both felt drawn to the character of our small-town community, and the helpful and friendly people. Emily says that she immediately felt connected and loved the many opportunities for young professionals to get involved.

With business plan in hand and location secured, Jason and Emily now worked on getting funding for the equipment and interior buildout. Even with their personal investment, they were coming up a little

short. That's when they got creative. The couple used [Go Fund Me](#) (business) to create not just a fundraising campaign for the business, but a co-op where donors are more like investors. They opened 100 donation/investment slots and have already sold more than 50 of them. "We really wanted the community to have ownership of their local brewery," says Emily. Each investor becomes a member with special perks, their own mug, membership card, and invites to special members-only events.

Plans for the Brewery include 4-8 different beer styles with plans to increase to an average of 10-12 styles with seasonal options. The goal is for Mica Town to become a community gathering place





where all are welcome, even those that don't drink beer! They will offer non-beer options for families and have outdoor seating to allow for four-legged family members to visit as well.

What began as an online attraction has truly become a gift to Marion in the form of great new neighbors and a brick-and-mortar place for us to gather and make new friends—and of course enjoy a cool beverage!

Cheers! If you would like to become a member of the Mica Town Brewery "Club" visit their [Go Fund Me Page!](#)

## NC BEER FACTS NC NORTH CAROLINA CRAFT BEERERS GUILD

- North Carolina currently has 130 craft breweries and brewpubs, more than any other state in the South.
- North Carolina ranks 11th nationally in number of breweries, more than doubling since 2010, from 45 to 130.
- The annual economic impact of North Carolina-produced craft beer is estimated at \$791 million, which supports more than 10,000 jobs in the state.
- Three major craft breweries (Oskar Blues, Sierra Nevada and New Belgium) all chose Western North Carolina sites for major expansions announced in 2012.
- North Carolina currently has more than 45 breweries-in-planning set to open in 2015 and beyond.
- In 2014, North Carolina craft breweries produced 372,473 barrels, ranking 15<sup>th</sup>. Production is expected to increase dramatically over the next several years.
- Nationally, craft beer sales were up 18% by volume in 2014. Despite this rapid growth, craft makes up only 11% of the U.S. market share for beer.
- North Carolina's craft beer industry reflects the state's rich agricultural heritage by sourcing local ingredients, a fact reflected by the State Fair's addition of the North Carolina Brewers' Cup to its competitions.
- The state's creative brewers have received national recognition for brews that use a range of locally produced ingredients from barley, wheat and hops to sweet potatoes, blueberries, blackberries, kumquats, sorghum and even persimmons.