

Morrell’s Scooters celebrates ribbon cutting

By Sean Douglas

After three years of hard work and dedication, Ronald Morrell’s dream of providing a big city feature to his hometown was finally realized, as Morrell’s Scooters celebrated its official christening with a ribbon cutting event in downtown Marion.

The dream began in 2018, when Morrell and his wife were visiting Nashville, Tenn. As he was walking from Vanderbilt University to his destination in Nashville’s downtown center, he noticed hundreds of people getting around on motorized scooters rather than walking or using other kinds of public transportation, and immediately, he wanted to bring a service like that to Marion and other towns in the area.

“I got back home, and I thought it would be really cool to bring something like this to small town Indiana,” Morrell said. “We often get overlooked for new inventions and new, cool things. One of my passions is trying to bring big city amenities to small town Indiana.”

Morrell began the planning process in 2018, and by the end of the 2019, the business began to take shape before being shut down during the winter months. The plan was to launch Morrell’s Scooters in both Marion and Gas City in the early stages of



Ronald Morrell rides through ribbon at Morrell’s Scooters Ribbon Cutting Ceremony in downtown Marion.
Photo by Sean Douglas.

2020, but the COVID-19 pandemic put a hitch in those plans. However, by the end of 2020, the plan was back on track, and business has skyrocketed, according to Morrell, in the early stages of 2021. Morrell’s Scooters in Marion was the first location, but Morrell also has other locations in Upland, Wabash, and Warsaw, along with Gas City. The Marion, Gas City, and

Wabash locations are fully operational, while the Warsaw and Upland locations will be fully operational in two weeks time. “I wanted to make something that was for Marion by somebody that was from Marion,” Morrell said. “That’s really the heart behind it – just bringing something to Marion that people can say, ‘This is something that one of our own has brought here,

this is for us, and we can enjoy this.’” Morrell’s Scooters offer two different models. The newer version, which Morrell called the “Mercedes S” class, is a big, bodied scooter designed for comfort and luxury. The older models, which Morrell compared to a corvette, are smaller, black scooters, which are built more for speed. To use the scooters, pa-

trons must download the app Goat – Scooter Rental and set up an account. Once that is complete, all of the Morrell scooters, which are all equipped with GPS, will show on the screen. Then, patrons are able to walk up to a scooter of their choice, scan the QR code, and be on their way. After riding to their destination, patrons park in any of the designated blue zones, such as

Indiana Wesleyan, downtown Marion, Sender Café, and the Kingdom, and pay for their trip. The cost is by the minute — \$1 to start the trip and 40 cents with each subsequent minute. “It’s been a lot of work, but I would say that the process has been fun – that’s the simple thing, it’s been fun,” Morrell said. “Oftentimes, entrepreneurs are always moving so fast, we don’t take the time to sit back and what has actually happened. Events like this, make it a [reality.] It’s been fun, making this dream into a reality.” With his business officially up and running, Morrell is excited to serve the city of Marion, Grant County, and many other small towns in Indiana in the years to come.

“Our vision is to provide a fun and exciting transportation,” Morell said. “What that means to me is people can get on these scooters and have fun, but [these scooters] also have a practicality to them. If people don’t own a car, they can travel from downtown to south [Marion], or students from Indiana Wesleyan can ride from the campus to downtown Marion to experience some of the restaurants that we have opening or some of the arts classes they have meeting downtown at the square. “I want to provide fun, affordable transportation for everybody.”

Rosie’s

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Along with the Italian menu came a beer and wine license, which they had not had at the original site. And for 62 years, Rosie’s became a Marion tradition for Italian dining and pre-franchise pizzas, just as Emley’s Restaurant north on the Bypass and Miller’s Supper Club at Fifth and Adams streets downtown had done with their clientele. The supper club burned in the late 1950s and Emley’s faded from the scene in the late 1960s. Rosie Pavlick, divorced and later married to Jack Oradat, decided she wanted to keep the south location and return with a new restaurant at the original Charles Street address. It had since become the ‘Movin’ Up disco in the mid-1970s. Thus was born Rosie’s North, an ill-fated venture which survived only a couple of years, just long enough for Marion artist Larry Banghart to complete a wall-sized mural

of an Italian mountain village, a scene that was painted over when the restaurant building was sold. Columbus, who with his wife, Judy, has run the restaurant for more than 30 years, said the secret to longevity was consistency. “People liked the idea that they could come in after a few years away and know that their menu favorites had not changed one bit. We worked hard at making sure the recipes were followed exactly,” he said. “The only time I couldn’t control that was when one of our vendors would change something in their product and we’d have to figure it out.” The Facebook announcement of the family’s intentions brought a flood of reminiscences on social media. “My first restaurant after marrying and moving here in 1966 was to Rosie’s! Nothing has ever compared.

So many families dinners-out were there. One year on Valentine’s Day, six of us took on a snow storm to keep our reservations,” wrote Mary Griffis-McClellan. Shelly Gilmore confided “I have most of the recipes.

My grandma was related to the Oradats and of course I am, too. Big Rosie gave them all to my grandma. Lucky us! And the recollection of a former employee, Lecia Thompson: “I worked at Rosie’s for 12 years and

loved my work. Rosie and Jack were so good to me. It was a fun place to work. Loved the cheese dip. I stop by when I am in town. Glad they are still in business.” The future is flexible, Columbus said. “Yes, the restaurant and property are

for sale. However we will retain all recipes and will move to another part of town as soon as we do sell. We will now be catering or carry out only.” “We’re not planning on leaving town; just eventually to another location.”

Puzzle answers

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5	7	1	3	8	6	4	2	9
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8	5	9	6	4	1	7	3	2
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7	3	2	4	1	8	5	9	6
1	6	8	5	3	9	2	7	4

S	I	N	A	I		E	L	O	N		E	L	A	N
E	D	A	M		A	D	A	G	E		L	E	N	O
C	E	R	E	B	R	U	M	S		S	I	B	I	U
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