

George's Local Brew Plans Fun Month Before New Owners Step In

by Sydney Sinks, News Reporter
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JERSEYVILLE - Chris Lorton never expected to own George's Local Brew, but he has loved every part of it.

As he prepares to pass the bar to new owners Andy and Betsy Prehn, he plans "to go out with a home run." The Lorton family will finish their tenure at George's with several fun events throughout the month of September.

“There’s no relaxing in the restaurant business,” Chris said. “Doing the business with the kids and meeting all the great people that we’ve met over the years and getting to know them has been the best, the highlight.”

Over the past eight years, Chris and his wife Brenda have operated the business with their four adult children. It’s always been a family-oriented project and a Nashville-style bar, complete with specialty steaks, chilled drafts and hometown charm. Chris explained that his kids were the reason why they opened George’s, and the whole family played a big part in the bar’s success.

“We just spent a lot of time together, and I was the center of attention, which was great,” he joked. “It was fun. We started working on it, they all joined in and it was a family affair. We went strong and had a lot of fun doing it, and I think they learned a lot.”

These days, the Lorton kids are building their own careers. Chris and Brenda have decided it’s time to relax and enjoy their retirement. Andy and Betsy Prehn will take over the restaurant on Oct. 1, and Chris is excited to see them shine.

But until then, George’s Local Brew will be as busy as ever with several events planned over the next few weeks. On Friday, Sept. 8, George’s will help sponsor the City of Jerseyville’s Rock the Block concert. Jon Evans will be on the George’s patio from 5–8 p.m. Then from 8–11 p.m., you can hang out behind George’s in front of the Jerseyville Firehouse and listen to the [Jake Maurer Band](#).

Jon Evans was previously a Nashville-based performer, and the Jake Maurer Band is the house band at [Tootsies Orchid Lounge](#) in Nashville. Ironically, Chris and Brenda modeled George’s Local Brew after Tootsies following a weekend trip to Nashville. They’re excited to welcome both performers to Jerseyville for the night.

“We’ll have a beer wagon out there, and there will be partying in the streets out there in Jerseyville,” Chris promised.

On Sept. 23, Oktoberfest comes early at George’s. The day will feature traditional German beer, food and attire, plus a small keg all the way from Germany. Chris explained that they brew a special Oktoberfest beer every year in Germany. You can have a taste of it in Jerseyville at 2 p.m. that day, when they tap the keg and pass around the beer for everyone to try.

Sept. 30 is the last day for the Lortons, and they’ll commemorate it with “George-apalooza” at the restaurant. You can expect music, karaoke and plenty of drinks and food, including their famous steaks.

“That day is our last day, so we’re going out swinging,” Chris added.

Is he sad about leaving George’s? In some ways, but he also knows it’s going to be in good hands.

“I’d had Andy on my radar for quite a while,” he said. “I knew, someday, he would take over George’s.”

To learn more about the Lorton family and the history of George’s Local Brew, check out [this article](#) on [RiverBender.com](#). You can also visit the [George’s Local Brew website](#) or [Facebook page](#) for information on the upcoming events.