

New Podcast “According to Jama and Nikki” Brings Candid Conversations to RiverBender

by Sydney Sinks, News Reporter
June 22 2026 11:05 AM



ALTON - A new podcast is bringing connection to the Riverbend community.

“According to Jama and Nikki,” premiering at 10 a.m. every Saturday on [RiverBender.com](https://www.riverbender.com), brings together two local friends to chat about anything and everything while supporting the local area. Jama Fabry and Nikki Fiedler truly believe that a rising tide lifts all ships, and they are working hard to share that philosophy through the podcast.

“Our friends are listening, a community is listening, and we care about our community, so the goal is to always hope that you walk away with something good,” Fiedler said. “You should hope that the people in the community outdo you, because that means we're all doing really well. I think being that supportive is what the community needs.”

Fiedler and Fabry met in high school and became “instant friends.” As adults, they both joined the Junior League of Greater Alton, which led to them volunteering at the RiverBender Community Center, where they met RiverBender owner John Hentrich.

Over the years, Fabry, Fiedler and Hentrich have stayed in touch. When the two women expressed an interest in starting a podcast, Hentrich was happy to host them on the RiverBender platform. He encouraged them to jump in right away. Fabry noted that “RiverBender has been amazingly supportive” since they started recording in March 2026.

“According to Jama and Nikki” covers a variety of ideas. They regularly profile local business owners or talk about general topics of interest, like traveling and volunteerism. They plan to welcome a death doula on the podcast soon for an episode about grief.

“We’ve had a couple people send in topic ideas, like, ‘Here’s an issue I’m dealing with. What’s your advice for this?’” Fabry explained. “That has prompted us to say, hey, let’s get an expert in this area and bring them in, so we can have a third-party conversation about what we would recommend or how to proceed. We’ve had some fun with it.”

Fabry and Fiedler don’t underestimate the power of these conversations, especially between two women. They noted that talking about fertility and hormonal shifts, for example, led to “lobotomies and sterilization” for many women just a few decades ago. To be able to talk about these topics on the air is a huge change from the world they grew up in.

To this day, both are aware of “the boxes society puts us in” as women. Their grandmothers were born in an era where women weren’t allowed to vote. Fabry and Fiedler highlighted the importance of talking about these topics and reminding people that they aren’t alone in what they experience.

“We wear so many labels. We carry so many things that nobody sees,” Fabry said. “It’s important, I think, to talk about these things freely.”

The two friends are the first to admit that they aren’t perfect, which they believe is actually a strength. Especially as AI gains traction and perfection becomes uncanny, they are passionate about remaining human.

“It’s very hard to know what is real, what is true,” Fiedler said. “I think it’s very important, especially in this time where everything is so flawless, because I am a mess. I make mistakes. I’ve learned the hard way. I’ve misspoken or gone in the wrong direction and had to turn around and find my way. So I think it’s important, especially for the younger generations coming up, to know that failure is only feedback. You have the opportunity for growth. I firmly believe people can continue to grow.”

With this mindset, the podcast is both a responsibility and a hobby for the two friends. They don’t take lightly the opportunity to share their experiences online, and they are eager to help other people through their conversations and by spotlighting local professionals and business owners.

They hope “According to Jama and Nikki” continues to bring people together and inspire more connection throughout the community.

“Allowing that space is huge and a great responsibility and a blessing,” Fiedler concluded. “Sometimes it’s very easy to get in the muck of things, in the deepest pothole you can find in Alton, and just hang out there and throw a party of sadness and woe. You don’t want to get stuck in the muck. So here we are, cheering you on. We’ll help you get out of the muck. We’ll fill that hole with fun and excitement, and we’ll just figure out how to make stuff happen. Happiness also likes company, so let’s step out of misery.”

[Click here](#) to stream “According to Jama and Nikki” on RiverBender.com. New episodes are available at 10 a.m. every Saturday morning.

