

# LOWER WISCONSIN RIVER VALLEY SENTINEL

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## Reunion Restaurant newest food option for Downtown Spring Green

Housed in a historical downtown building, Reunion seeks to bring food lovers a welcoming, locally-sourced dining experience

Amberly Mae-Cooper, Contributor

Local restaurateurs Kyle Beach and Leah Spicer, founders of Homecoming Restaurant opened their second dining establishment — Reunion — in mid-July. The restaurant has already become a destination restaurant to the River Valley area and beyond.

The history of the Neoclassical Revival-style building that Reunion calls home — The former location for the State Bank of Spring Green— dates back to 1915. The building has been registered with the National Register of Historic Places since July of 2010.

Many elements from the interior of the bank have remained intact, including the vault and the vault doors which Reunion now uses as a part of a unique room that patrons can dine in.

Following the closure of the State Bank of Spring Green in 1962, the building served as a studio for a local artist that



Photo by Amberly Mae-Cooper

**Chef Chance Spivey and co-owner Leah Spicer going over the newest menu at Reunion. Reunion recently opened at 134 W Jefferson St, Spring Green, in the space formerly occupied by Last Leaf Public House.**

called the building The Treasury. Since then, it has been used as a restaurant, formerly Freddy Valentines and Last Leaf Public House.

Spicer and Beach use their collective knowledge, skill and care to continue to share co-management duties for both

Homecoming and Reunion.

Previously of Homecoming, Chance Spivey takes the helm of Reunion's kitchen as lead chef. Spivey grew up in a small town near Myrtle Beach, South Carolina called Loris. Having roots and living in both North Carolina and South

Carolina, Spivey attributes his love for food to his family. His grandmother and grandfather took him to eat at varying area diners and restaurants while growing up. Spivey's mother encouraged him to continue cooking from a young age and he continues to share a close bond with her and his family that remain on the east coast.

Spivey encourages creativity with cuisine and on the colorfully plated meals that leave Reunion's kitchen.

"I love making homemade pasta. I love everything about it; cracking the eggs, making a well of flour, the process of kneading it. The whole process of making food is just so fun," said Spivey. "I love having and allowing for creative freedom within the kitchen for our staff and hope to create a relaxed environment. In the kitchen, I will have our staff come up to me and say, 'Chance, how do we plate this?' I say, 'I don't know, let's find out.'" said Spivey.

Spivey and chef Christian Amador of Homecoming Restaurant met while serving as cooks in the same kitchen,

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## Exit Interview: Closure of Lone Rock Bistro leaves a hole, Q&A with owner

Taylor Scott, Managing Editor

Recently, the Lone Rock Bistro and Taproom (234 S Oak Street, Lone Rock) announced its closure, effective at the end of July. Opening shortly before the New Year in 2021, the Bistro offered different local tap beers and elevated American style food and cocktails. It quickly became an area favorite, winning Best New Restaurant in the Best of the River Valley reader poll, with several other wins in following years. This closure came on the heels of the turnover of Roarin' 20's Dining and Social Club and the closure of

Rocketman Pizza (1170 Main St, Plain), both co-owned and operated by Mike Haight after starting the Bistro.

We asked Haight how he's holding up, what happened and what the future of the food industry looks like in the area.

**Q&A with Mike Haight, co-owner and general manager of Lone Rock Bistro and Taproom**

**Valley Sentinel:** Roarin' 20s, Rocketman Pizza, now Lone Rock Bistro and Taproom — that's a lot in a short time, how are you feeling?

**Mike Haight:** I have mixed feelings. Roarin' 20s was heartbreaking because after closing I found out that David [Moreno], who now runs his restaurant in that space, had been lying to my mother [co-owner Janet Haight] and I for the duration of our relationship and I will always wonder if we could have had a different outcome without him involved. The feeling of his betrayal is real and something that has taken a lot of reflection and work to process. As for the Bistro, my biggest sadness is that the village I live in is losing a good food option that I enjoyed. Sammi [Rose]

and Justin [Scofield] had been running it since I left to do Roarin' 20s and I was more or less just the landlord there for the last 2 years. When Roarin' 20s closed I got more involved and we made some staffing changes and menu adjustments but it was too little too late to save the place. I'll forever be grateful to them for their efforts. We are all moving on with the other positive things in our lives.

**VS:** How directly or indirectly is this closure related to the closure of Roarin' 20s and Rocketman Pizza?

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