

Iconic restaurant CLOSES ... again



The Red Barn Restaurant on East Main Street in Montrose has closed its doors again. It is now listed for sale through Renfrow Realty for \$449,888, including the building, name and equipment, according to real estate agent John Renfrow. (Matt Lindberg/Montrose Daily Press)

Co-owner cites health reasons for shutting down

- Montrose mayor, former employee reflect on restaurant’s history
- Sisters purchased restaurant in 2015
- Business listed for sale

By KATHARHYNN HEIDELBERG AND MATT LINDBERG
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A “Montrose icon” is again up for sale, with one owner opting for retirement, while the other has moved on to another opportunity.
Carolyn Etheridge-Taggart, who with her sister, Barbara Jackson, owns The Red Barn, decided to close

the East Main Street restaurant last week.
It is now listed for sale through Renfrow Realty for \$449,888, including the building, name and equipment, according to real estate agent John Renfrow.
“I closed it Tuesday (Aug. 1),” Etheridge-Taggart said. “It was more because of my health situation. It wasn’t financial. It was just more employees. ... I lost all of my kitchen help. I only had four employees and you can’t run (a restaurant) with

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‘A lot of people had great meals there and great fellowships, good times and made long-lasting friendships.’

Bruce Grigsby
Resident/former Red Barn employee

DOC inmates drain jail resources

- Sheriff wants state to chip in more
- Testifies before Coram-led committee
- Other jails in 7th JD not seeing same issues

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The reimbursements the Montrose County Jail receives from the state for holding Department of Corrections detainees simply is not enough, Sheriff Rick Dunlap said.
‘The longer they stay here, the more money the citizens of Montrose (pay).’
Alan Miller
Jail administrator

“The bad part is, this fiscal year, we get \$54.39 a day after the first three days. They don’t pay anything the first three days,” Dunlap said last week, fresh back from testimony before the state’s County Courthouse and County Jail Funding and Overcrowding Solutions Interim Study Committee.
Further, what the state pays after three days in no way covers the costs of keeping its inmates, which Dunlap said is about \$131 per day.
In addition to those detained on local allegations, charges and/or convictions, the Montrose County Jail is also where those who violate their parole or conditions of community corrections sentences are held for transport to DOC.
The state, said Dunlap, is not always prompt in collecting its inmates.
“I don’t have a contract with the state to house DOC inmates,” he said. “We’ve got people who have been sitting there for 75 days, 78 days. The newest ones have been there 15 days. I understand they have to have a place to take those people, but I don’t feel it’s fair, because we have to house those people and our taxpayers have to foot the majority of the bill for housing.”
The reimbursement paid

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ICONIC

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four. It was a really hard decision, but it is what it is.”

Etheridge-Taggart and Jackson bought The Red Barn, a long-time Montrose staple, in 2015.

The restaurant had also undergone a change of ownership, followed by closure, in 2014.

Montrose Mayor Judy Ann Files on Monday night said she was disappointed to hear the restaurant had closed its doors again, noting she and her family patronized it a lot over the decades, specifically in the 1970s and '80s.

“It gave you a warm, fuzzy feeling. That used to be the place to go,” Files said, recalling stories of John Wayne visiting the restaurant while filming ‘True Grit.’ “The Red Barn was important to a lot of us at one time.”

For Files, The Red Barn is a good representation of Montrose’s past.

“It’s historic a bit, but there’s also some nostalgia,” she said.

Longtime resident Bruce Grigsby washed dishes, cooked and tended bar when he worked at The Red Barn from 1980-1996. He said it was a place where a lot of wonderful memories were created.

“It was a long-standing great community institution,” said Grigsby, who now writes a biweekly opinion column for the Montrose Daily Press. “A lot of people had great meals there and great fellowships, good times and made long-lasting friendships.”

Grigsby said The Red Barn had a great atmosphere when he worked there.

“It didn’t matter if you were a million-dollar celebrity or just a working guy, you got treated like you were very special,” he said.

The Red Barn has changed hands throughout the years. Fritz Hanna opened it in the 1960s. He eventually sold it to Montrose’s Ted Nelson (now of Ted Nelson’s Steak House), who later sold it to now legendary



The Red Barn co-owner Carolyn Etheridge-Taggart, right, talks to Teri, left, and Richard Alford during the restaurant’s opening in 2015. The restaurant recently closed again. (Montrose Daily Press file photo)

local retired radio personality Jim Kerschner. It was then sold to Chuck and Leslie Presby in the early 2000s. The restaurant closed in late 2014, but in 2015 was bought by Etheridge-Taggart and Jackson, who previously operated 2 Sisters Gastro Pub in Montrose.

Jackson left The Red Barn about five months ago for a different work opportunity, Etheridge-Taggart said, but remains half-owner of the property.

“It’s still two sisters. It always will be,” she said.

They had intended to give the Red Barn new life, making it “a new statement, a new Red Barn,” she added.

“It was wonderful. The Red Barn is such an icon of Montrose and the community was very, very supportive. I’m going to miss a lot of our customers, I really am,” Etheridge-Taggart said.

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