

New vinyl record store opens in downtown Muskegon

By Justine McGuire - *Associated Press* - Monday, October 31, 2016

MUSKEGON, Mich. (AP) - The renaissance of downtown Muskegon's Third Street corridor is well underway with the addition of a vinyl record store.

Third Coast Vinyl opened on Wednesday, Oct. 12, at 1115 Third St. The store stocks new and used records and other music-related items, MLive (<http://bit.ly/2epg4KL>) reported.

"Contrary to what a lot of people might think, they do make new records," said Paul Pretzer, owner of Third Coast Vinyl.

Record sales have been on the rise since about 2008, and reached a 28-year high in 2015 when revenues hit \$416 million, according a Fortune Magazine article.

Pretzer chose the Third Street location because he sees potential in the neighborhood.

"I wanted to be part of something that I thought was growing," he said.

As a young adult, Pretzer frequented the Ice Pick, a punk rock club on Third Street in the 1980s. That location will soon be home to Hamburger Mikey, a takeout burger joint.

"I've seen the changes over the years, and wanted to be part of that," Pretzer said. "I wanted to be part of the solution in renovating the neighborhood. I like that we're still part of the downtown, but this end has a neighborhood feel."

As for Third Coast Vinyl, it's doing well so far, he said.

"It's been a little busier than I thought it would be," Pretzer said. "The first week was beyond what I could have ever hoped. ... People have been so gracious. I can't tell you how many people have thanked me for doing this up here."

Although Pretzer, 49, has lived in Grand Haven since the 1980s, he said he's always felt like part of the community in Muskegon.

He taught at Fruitport Community Schools, and then at Muskegon Community College where he remains an adjunct English professor. Over the past 30 years, he's been part of multiple bands, all of which played in Muskegon, and has had various jobs in the Muskegon area.

As a musician, he's best known for playing guitar in the punk rock band "Jim Jones and the Kool-Ade Kids" during the 1980s.

The band's name was reference to the mass murder-suicide of more than 900 members of the People's Temple, which was led by James Warren "Jim" Jones. The November 1978 tragedy inspired the term "drinking the Kool-Aid."

Pretzer said he's embarrassed of the band's name now, but thought it was funny as a teenager.

Now, Pretzer helps organize the Muskegon Writers Series, and is involved in the Muskegon-area in many ways.

The store is located on a block of Third Street that has undergone a transformation in recent years. It includes the Curry Kitchen restaurant, an Asian market, tattoo shop and the new location for the Muskegon Family YMCA.

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Information from: The Grand Rapids Press:MLive.com, <http://www.mlive.com>

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