

Designer Balloon Boutique offering balloons, party supplies

By **NICK ULANOWSKI**
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April Steele and her husband, Jon Steele, opened Designer Balloon Boutique, a party supply store that specializes in balloons, to help fill a void.

The couple opened the business at 18109 Dixie Highway in Homewood on Jan. 31. Steele said her store provides less expensive options than what could be offered by a party planner, but classier options than doing everything yourself.

Steele said she's been working as a wedding coordinator for the past six years, and for the past four years she's gotten really into balloon design. She hopes Designer Balloon Boutique can fill the void left after a party store on Halsted Street closed.

"We don't live in Homewood. We live in Park Forest. But we are fans of Homewood, especially the downtown Homewood area," said Steele. "We love how walkable it is."

Designer Balloon Boutique will always have a display of balloons visible from outside of the store, Steele said. On the inside, there are various balloons of different sizes, shapes and colors on display.

Steele said her shop can provide custom



Jon and April Steele are the creative force behind Designer Balloon Boutique in Homewood.

balloons for parties and other events. This includes balloon garland arches and other "affordable balloon arrangements." Simple \$1 latex balloons are also available. The store also has a Dancing Dozens promotion that's \$9.99 for a dozen balloons.

"The good thing about our latex balloons

is that they all come with helium and high float. So, they'll last you for days," Steele said. The store uses "high-grade helium tanks" to blow up the balloons.

In March the store is expected to have promotional items related to Saint Patrick's Day. Steele said throughout the year, there

will be decorations and other items for sale related to the season and holidays.


The store will carry decorations year-round for birthday parties, including paper plates, tablecloths and different backdrops for sale.

"Those items are coming in. So, you'll be able to pretty much do your whole event with us and not have to pay an expensive cost," Steele noted.

Steele knows not everyone can afford a party planner. Designer Balloon Boutique should be able to serve as a happy middle ground between hiring a party planner and doing everything yourself. She said her balloons and other products can help make people in Homewood and the surrounding area have "Instagramable moments" at their events.

"We try to be really affordable and cost-effective for everyday families who are looking to have nice events," said Steele.

Designer Balloon Boutique has a website for orders for local delivery or in-store pickup. Business hours are Tuesday through Thursday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Friday from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Saturday from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.; and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. The store is closed on Monday.



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