

Alton Sports Tap a family affair

By Alex B. Heeb -aheeb@civitasmedia.com



Alton Sports Tap owners Brandie Desherlia and Rick Eveys pose with members of the RiverBend Growth Association after receiving the RBGA's Small Business of the Month award for January.



Brandie Desherlia stands in the Alton Sports Tap, a sports-themed bar and grill she and her father operate as a team.

ALTON — The Alton Sports Tap has been selected as Small Business of the Month, the RiverBend Growth Association announced last week.

The bar and grill, located at the intersection of Homer Adams Parkway and College Avenue, has been managed for three years by father-daughter team Rick Eveys and Brandie Desherlia.

Eveys says when the store came up for sale, he saw it as a perfect way to switch out of his former business, a convenience store in Marion. The two-hour drive, he said, was too much.

Desherlia — who already has her 16-year-old son, potential next generation management, busing tables — says the idea of a sports-themed bar is ideal for her family, all of whom are sports fanatics.

“(I like) the hustle and flow,” Desherlia said. “It keeps you busy on your feet.”

Part of the secret to running a successful business, Desherlia said, is owner involvement.

“I think that it helps that my dad and I are working owners,” she said. “We get out and we bus tables, we refill drinks, we run food, we salt the parking lot. We don’t depend on other people to do it; we are right there with our staff.”

All together the restaurant employs 27 workers — full- and part-time — and serves several hundred patrons daily.

Eveys says the current plan is for him to retire in a few years, and sell the business to his daughter. Were it not for their relationship and involvement, he added, the venture never could have happened.