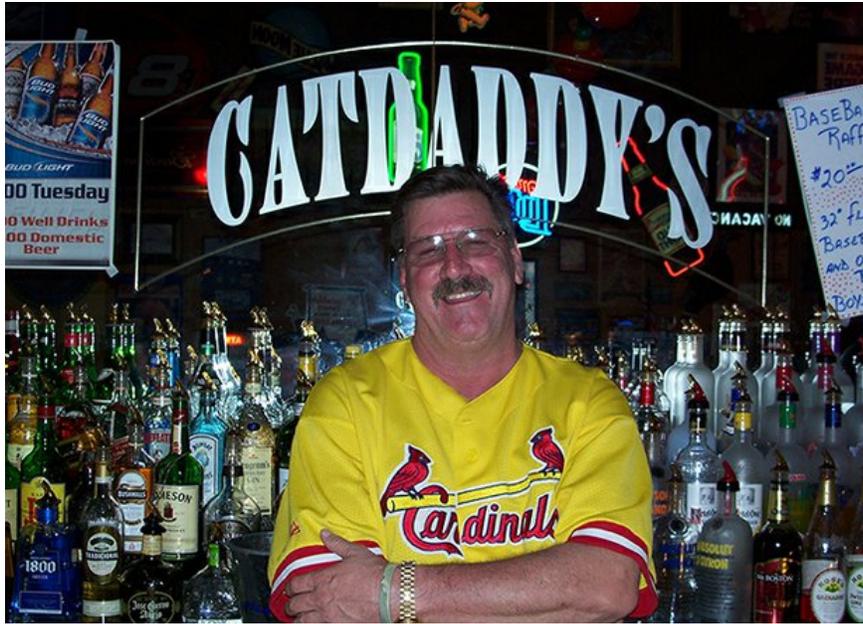


Catdaddy's leaps to the top

By Jess Charlton

AdVantage NEWS



Mark Springman

ALTON — Downtown Alton is home to many bars and taverns, and it's no different for well-known tavern Catdaddy's, the RiverBend Growth Association's Business of the Month.

Owner Mark Springman, who has 35 years' experience in the bar business, has made a home for the tavern for the past 28 years at 203 W. Third St. and has no plans to stop.

"It's quite an honor to be recognized as business of the month by our local peers, fellow businesses and the people in the River Bend area," he said. "It really means a lot."

Springman credits his business' success to his family and friends' support — and luck.

Growing up, Springman did not think he would own a bar, but his plans changed after he graduated from college with a physical education degree.

"I bought a bar from Fast Eddie in 1979 called Franklin's House," he said.

When Franklin's House opened, Springman recalls only a few other bars in the area.

This became a growing opportunity for Springman. After a while at Franklin's House, the answer to his career path literally was just around the corner. Springman found Catdaddy's a block away from his first bar.

"I just saw more opportunity with Catdaddy's," he said.

When Catdaddy's opened, Springman said there were a few other nearby bars. Now, downtown is home to many hangouts.

Springman said he is looking forward to the future with his successful business. Springman said he is hoping to get the final approvals to add a beer garden to his tavern and do more than \$400,000 in renovations.

The beer garden will make the tavern 2 1/2 times bigger. Springman also is waiting for state approval to add video poker machines and plans to put in a new kitchen.

"I can't wait to start the project," Springman said. "I think it will be a great fit for the community and for Alton."

Catdaddy's Tavern is open from 3 p.m. until 2 a.m. Sunday and Tuesday through Thursday, 2 p.m. until 3 a.m. Friday and Saturday and closed Mondays during the summer. For information, call (618) 462-8090.