

# Eppel's named RBGA business of the month

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*Owners Jim and Patty Eppel pose with members of the RiverBend Growth Association. Their business, Eppel's Pantry and Deli, won the association's Business of the Month award in June.*

GODFREY — A popular pit stop on Delmar Avenue has been named the RiverBend Growth Association's business of the month, and award honoring businesses that give back to the community.

Eppel's Pantry and Deli at 1918 W. Delmar Ave. has been serving up convenience to the community for six years. The convenience store and BP-brand gas station is the work of owner Jim Eppel and his wife, Patty, a nurse at Christian Hospital.

This is Eppel's first time winning the award, and he says he is grateful for the honor.

"It's nice to be recognized like that after you put in all the hours and all the hard work," Eppel said.

In addition to providing fuel, the shop that employs 15 or 16 individuals sells BBQ and kettle corn cooked up on site. In the summer, a shaved ice stand serves up cold treats. Eppel says since day one, his business has picked "one lucky person" weekly to win a \$20 gas card. He says "it's all part of giving back."

Eppel partners with other local businesses to do just that. Every summer before school starts back, Eppel's hosts a tie-dye party. He also says he gives what he can afford to other causes.

"You give what you can and a little bit more," Eppel said.

But earning enough to give back is hard work, he added. After he lost his job, Eppel said he was looking for something to do. The convenience store became available, and he and his wife finally decided to take the dive into small business ownership.

"It came down to one thing. If we don't do it, we'll never know, 'what if,'" Eppel said. "We've kept our head afloat for six years. The neighborhood is what keeps us going."

For more information, call Eppel's at 618-466-3009.

The RiverBend Growth Association is both the chamber of commerce and the economic development organization for the communities of the Riverbend. Each month one association business is selected as Small Business of the Month. The monthly winners receive approximately \$3,500 worth of marketing. The association can be reached at 618-467-2280.