

# Local flooring outfit sweeps the competition

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By FRED POLLARD

GODFREY - Laying down the law when it comes to customer satisfaction, Roloff Decorating has been recognized as the RiverBend Growth Association Business of the Month for March.

"The RBGA does so much to promote small businesses in the area," owner Jenni Sands said. "As a small business owner, I really appreciate all they do to keep dollars here in our community. I also take advantage of any educational opportunities that they put out there."

Roloff Decorating opened its doors in Alton in 1953 as a Porter Paint store.

"Maggie (Porter) heard about Hode (Roloff) and asked him to open a paint store in this area, so...he started Roloff Painting," Hode's great-niece, Rhonda Roloff, said.

Rhonda's husband, Dennis, joined Hode in a partnership of the business in 1973. Rhonda joined in 1977, running the business with her husband until he died, then selling the business to Sands in 2010.

Roloff remains active with the company.

Since moving to its current location at 5501 Godfrey Road, Roloff Decorating has expanded into flooring. Sands said its DuPont SmartStrand carpet is an especially popular choice for customers.

"We have been carrying it for at least seven years, and we were the first around here to really believe in it," she said. "It is a 'green carpet,' mostly made of corn, and has natural stain-resistant properties. We installed it in our showroom and after six years, it still looks brand new."

SmartCarpet consists of a polymer fabric that resists most staining compounds, often needing only water or bleach to retain its initial appearance.

"Our customers absolutely love it," Sands said. "They send people to us to check out the SmartStrand Carpet."

Sands also is excited about the luxury vinyl tile her store offers.

"It looks and feels like wood," she said. "It is used for office buildings and grocery stores, is waterproof and holds up to a lot of wear."

"We also keep up-to-date with our inventory. We are always looking for new trends in the flooring industry."

Along with quality materials, Roloff has built a reputation for its expertise and decorating ideas.

"We have been known for years for helping people with color," Sands said. "Bring in your towels, bedding and photos, and we can help you pick out a color and choose the best flooring options."

Roloff also retains a certified interior decorator on staff and does not charge for in-house service.

Although the flooring outfit is proud of the RBGA honor, Sands said the winners actually are the entire network of local business owners and those who work each day to make Alton and Godfrey successful.

"Our biggest challenge is getting customers to buy local and combat the mindset that small business equals more expensive," Sands said. "We have a very good relationship with our competitors; we believe there is enough business to go around. The fight is not with other small businesses, but with the big box stores."

Sands said she is committed to keeping prices competitive and said her prices are comparable to even big box pricing when comparing like products.

"These days, people do not want to spend a lot of money but still want their purchase to last," she said. "We understand how important it is to buy local and keep the money in our community. If you do not buy local, it tears down a community."

Sands draws the line, though, at sacrificing quality to keep prices low.

"Customers want peace of mind, knowing what they buy will last 10 years," she said. "You get what you pay for, so we offer a quality product."

Roloff Decorating shares space with Backyard Dreams, owned by Sands' husband, Greg Sands. Store hours are 9:30 a.m. until 6 p.m. Monday through Friday and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday.

For information, call (618) 466-3359 or visit the website at [www.roloffdecorating.com](http://www.roloffdecorating.com).

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