

Eppel's Pantry and Deli gets to know their customers with Nametag Thursdays

by Madelaine Gerard, Staff Writer
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GODFREY – The lyrics sang during the chorus of the Cheers television show theme song comes to mind when you enter **Eppel's Pantry & Deli**, located at **1918 W Delmar Ave in Godfrey**, on the last Thursday of the month. Sometimes, you want to go where everybody knows your name.

Owner **Jim Eppel** has made it his goal to introduce himself and his customers to those around them at his friendly neighborhood convenience store with the store's new **Nametag Thursdays** tradition.

Customers who come into the store on this special day are gifted a personalized nametag and invited to speak with the owners, employees and other customers and get to know one another. Nametags will be handed out all day long and thanks to this week's Nametag Thursday sponsor, Lendhardt Tree & Lawn Service, guests will be able to dine on free chili dogs as well.

"It's just an idea that we came up with to help people get to know each other that come in the store who have been seeing each other for the past seven years, including myself," Eppel said. "You get a chance to find out their first names. It's been fun."



The idea came to Eppel after brainstorming several other options to help his business stand out from his other local competitors, such as Quik Trip and Casey's General Store. Support from local businesses around the community have been rolling in and because of their generosity, each Nametag Thursday from now until March has a special sponsor.

Nametag Thursdays is just another step in Eppel's Pantry strategy to engage their customers in conversations and also as a simple way to say, "thank you." Each day until Thanksgiving, Eppel's Pantry will be giving away a free turkey to one lucky customer.

"Anyone that comes in the door can sign up with their name and phone number," Eppel said. "Every day at 5 p.m., we draw for a free turkey. It's just another event sponsored by multiple businesses that come in and say that they want to be a part of the giveaway."

Today's turkey was sponsored by **CNB Bank & Trust of Alton**. **Macias Insurance**, **Gent Funeral Home** and **Carrollton Bank** have sponsored the turkeys that were given away early this week.

"When my wife and I decided to open up, we wanted it to be a business that was a little bit different in giving back to the community," he said. "We're only able to give back to the community because of these people that come through the front door."

Since opening his store, Eppel has consistently given away \$20 worth of free gas each week.

“I do it because it’s my way of saying thank you,” he said.

Eppel’s Pantry & Pantry is open from **5 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 5 a.m. to 11 p.m. on Friday, 6 a.m. to 11 p.m. on Saturday and 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. on Sunday.** The store can be reached by phone at **(618) 466-3009.**



