

Showcasing the Six: Lovett's Snoots, Fish, Chicken and More

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ALTON – When *The Small Business Revolution* expanded its radius for businesses to apply to be on the show's third season from 1.5 miles from the visitor's center on Piasa Street to the entire City of Alton, Merry Lovett had already applied to be showcased.

Her business, Lovett's Snoots, Fish, Chicken and More, is one of six to be showcased on the show, which airs on Hulu, YouTube and the website of its sponsor, the Minneapolis-based Deluxe Corporation. Along with Lovett's, Lighthouse Sounds, Sham Pooches Dog Grooming, Bluff City Outdoors, Morrison's Irish Pub and Today's Beauty Supplies were

chosen. Those businesses will each get their own special episode in season three of the show and will be able to split a sum of \$500,000 between each other and the city itself for business growth and marketing, which is the specialty of Deluxe Corporation.

Lovett said she knew she was being considered for selection when staff from the show arrived in her business on March 14 to discuss it and eat some lunch. She said they discussed the history of the business, which started in her father's garage, and discussed what the business needed.

“Most of all, I want to serve our customers better,” she said. “Whatever we can do for them, we will do.”

In previous interviews with Riverbender.com, Brad Chavours, a manager at the restaurant said they would like to utilize some of the money to refurbish an antique soda fountain left behind from their building's days as a drug store. He said he would like to see people of multiple generations enjoying that old-timey sweetness together. It would be a new experience for the young ones and nostalgia for the elders.

Lovett said that soda fountain was definitely a part of their wishlist for *The Small Business Revolution's* investment into their business.

Originally, what is now a family restaurant started as a fundraiser for family reunions. Lovett said she and her siblings would sell food from the garage, and eventually would have to shut the slow-moving overhead door in order to show everyone they were out of supplies.

“I told Brad (Chavours), 'This is a business. We have to find a building for this, but this is a business.' It was an opportunity.”

That business is now located on College Avenue in Pie Town – a district of Alton Lovett, who grew up downtown, did not even know existed until she went to high school.

“It was like a whole new part of Alton,” she said. “We didn't get out too far. I like the idea of walking from store to store and everyone has something a little different.”

When her restaurant was revealed to be one of the six selected businesses, Lovett said she screamed so loud she scared season three co-host, Ty Pennington, formerly of *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition*.

“Amanda Brinkman is the coolest,” Lovett said. “When Ty Pennington walked through the door, I screamed my head off. I think I scared him. He ran out the door and came right back.”

Being showcased on *The Small Business Revolution* is not the first time Lovett's has been on television. It was featured on the Travel Channel in 2016 because of their fried Kool-Aid. Lovett said she would never reveal the secret to making it, but added the trick was to make Kool-Aid into something other than its usual liquid form in order for it to be fried properly and to add plenty of sugar.

Snoots, another delicacy at Lovett's, is concocted using strips of pig snouts. Lovett said the nostrils and the end of the snout are not used, but long strips from its upper portion are.

“We started this whole business all because of snoots,” she said. “I never thought something they used to throw out years ago would ever be called cuisine, but here we are.”