



# **Riverbend Area Says Goodbye to State Street Market's Nikki Buehlman**

by Dan Brannan, Content Director  
November 19 2019 4:39 PM



ALTON – The Riverbend area will be saying goodbye to one of their most trusted business resources in Downtown Alton over the past decade – Nikki Buehlman – on Wednesday at State Street Market. Nikki's going away celebration will be from 4 to 6 p. m. Wednesday at the restaurant.

Nikki's last official day will be Saturday for customers who want to come that day.

Nikki has been the face of State Street Market for years, the owners Terri and Glen (Beau) Beaubien, said.

It was a twist of fate that Terri & Glenn (Beau) Beaubien found State Street Market four and a half years ago....but that fate would never have happened without meeting Nicole (Nikki) Buehlman on a cold February day at Hammerstones in Soulard. What a “find” Nikki was for them.

Nikki had been working for State Street Market for almost five years under the previous owner and introduced Terri and Beau to the opportunity of ownership of the popular lunch spot.

“It goes without saying that after the purchase was complete, she would stay with the business and continue to serve her friends and customers. Nikki has been serving in the Alton community for over 12 years (but has worked in the industry for over 40 years!) She’s worked for Ropers, Macs, Elijah P’s; but her heart, home, and loyal guests have been at State Street Market. Nikki has been the face of the restaurant from 11 AM-2 PM for nine years!

“Even tourists that have stopped in only periodically remember her vibrant red hair. However, it’s the relationships that she has formed with her loyal guests and current owners that have made her never dread the 30-minute drive to work (since marrying John Buehlman in 2014 and moving to Soulard.) Her guests have turned into friends who not only frequent the restaurant but also recognize her and socialize with her in the community.”

Nikki said: “Terri and Beau have become much more than employers to me. They are dear friends and it’s hard to imagine not seeing each other every day.”

Terri added that one of the most difficult things in the restaurant business is being able to trust employees when the owners aren’t around. It’s not only with the money but with the customer service as well."

“We’ve been lucky with our team here and it started with Nikki,” Terri Beaubien said. “She set an example as we continued to grow. From the beginning, it’s been peace of mind having Nikki here. She watches over the restaurant as if it’s her own business.”

In the first few years, there were many days that it was only Beau, Terri and Nikki running the entire operation. When things got crazy, they would joke that “it was only lunch! We aren’t saving lives here!”

But as opportunities came up to grow the business, changes were implemented.

“Change is never easy in any industry and Nikki has had to experience many changes since we purchased the business in June of 2015,” Beaubien said. “The restaurant started as a lunch bistro, added breakfast on Saturdays, then six months later, added a wine retail store a month after that before adding a full bar in February of 2018. In January of 2019, Chef Patrick Kelly was brought in for evening dining service.

“Nikki never batted an eye at the changes and did what she could to support the growth,” the owners said. “Her vast knowledge in the industry and astute leadership qualities have been beneficial in all areas of the restaurant.

“With Nikki’s long-time dedication to the service industry, it’s only fitting that it’s now her turn to relax and be pampered. She and her husband John have purchased a home and are retiring to Ocala, Florida, to enjoy the good life in a wonderful new community filled with every amenity you can imagine. “This is an exciting new venture for sure, but I’d be remiss if I didn’t thank all the generous people that have supported me over the years. It is with a tear in my eye that I leave State Street Market and so many friends and family.”