



Josephine's Continues to Thrive with Gift Shop, Desserts and the Godfrey Stimulus Voucher Program

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GODFREY - Josephine's Tea Room & Gift Shop in Godfrey was impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic, but thanks to some innovative efforts on the part of the restaurant's owners, staff, and the popular Godfrey Stimulus Voucher Program, the business continues to thrive.



Josephine's is a legendary business in Godfrey that attracts customers from not only the region but St. Louis and even around the Midwest and throughout the country. The elegant tearoom serves lunch and well-known desserts in a historic mansion with landscaped gardens.

Fred Whitworth said the Village of Godfrey Stimulus Voucher Program has been great and it helped the business significantly. Fred praised Godfrey Mayor Mike McCormick, the Godfrey Village Board, Riverbender.com's John Hentrich, and staff for doing such a good job with the innovative voucher program. He also stressed it has been a huge help for many of the businesses and residents of Godfrey.

Fred Whitworth, who owns the business with his wife, Sherry, said COVID-19 has been very hard. The gift shop has remained open and he said that part of the business has remained strong.

“Some may not realize, but we have one of the largest ladies' clothing stores in Illinois,” he said. “The gift shop is also extremely popular. We have great employees and everyone has been able to work and fortunately, we have been able to make it.”

Fred said the desserts at Josephine's are one-of-a-kind and he thinks the very best around.

“We use the very best ingredients,” he said. “Our food is very nice. The inside of the business is beautifully decorated and we take good care of the customers.”

Lobster Bisque soup, salads, and sandwiches are always in high demand at Josephine's.

The business has been open for 41 years and Fred said Sherry, is the driving force behind the business. “I basically pay the bills and she and the crew do all the rest,” he said.

“We have a lot to be proud of,” Fred Whitworth said about Josephine's.

The Godfrey Stimulus Voucher Program has enabled shoppers the ability to purchase half-price vouchers to many restaurants and retail stores and the dollars go directly back into businesses. Funding for the program was made possible through allocations from the Godfrey Business District, established in 2011. Within the business district, retailers collected an additional 1 percent sales tax. The additional sales tax is used to fund economic development initiatives within the business district.

