



Riverbender Tech Center – A Hidden Gem In Our Community

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ALTON - Nearly two years ago, retired school district administrator Cathie Hentrich purchased the [Riverbender Tech Center](#) from her husband John Hentrich, owner of [Riverbender.com](#).



The Riverbender Tech Center is located at 312 Belle Street in Alton in the Riverbender.com building (directly across the street from Mac's Timeout.) The business has its own entrance into the building right on Belle Street and parking is on the street or behind the store in the building parking lot. Cathie and her two technicians, Cody and David, will even come out to your car and carry your device into the store for you.

"Now some might think it crazy that someone who has worked 35 years and is finally retired would take on the responsibilities of a small business, but that's exactly what I did," she said. "Retirement didn't sit well with me. It was a huge adjustment to go from a daily speed of 150 mph to 0 and I needed a worthwhile project to keep me busy."

Cathie walked into a well-established business - The Tech Center - but it was the teacher in her that brought a twist to this local small business and makes it stand out among others.

“During my time in education, I witnessed the expectations for the use of technology in the classroom explode,” she said. “I saw teachers and administrators move from using a chalkboard to smart boards, textbooks to digital subscriptions, and manage 30 student computers at a time. With those changes came apprehension and fear among many staff members. So I wanted to try to alleviate some of that apprehension for my customers by being the type of shop where people could come in and get their questions answered and walk out feeling confident and comfortable using the technology they own, whether that is a laptop, desktop, or even a cell phone.

“It’s important to me that our customers feel comfortable with the technology they are using – that they aren’t afraid to use it - and so each time a customer comes in, we help them to understand their device, we explain the repair that was completed and we answer their questions, no matter how small. It’s like having a technician at your fingertips.”

For those customers who would like a one-on-one tutor, customers can even schedule a private session to learn how to do almost anything on their device.

“One of the sweetest sessions I’ve witnessed was when two grandparents came into the store and had us set up Facebook accounts for them so they could use Facetime, making it easier for them to communicate with their out-of-town grandchildren,” Cathie shared, “We practiced back and forth using their account and my personal account for almost 30 minutes until they had it down and were ready to talk with their grandchildren.”

The Riverbender Tech Center team offers a plethora of services – data transfers, virus removals, computer upgrades making computers faster and more efficient, and much more. In addition to computers, they also work on cell phones – fixing cracked screens, speakers, resetting passwords, etc. saving customers hundreds of dollars over purchasing a new phone and saving them the headache of having to learn a new one.

And if that wasn’t enough, they fix all gaming systems like Xbox and PlayStation consoles and even sell refurbished computers for hundreds less than a new computer.

“One of the services that I am most proud of, though, is our Build Your Own Computer program,” Cathie said. “Our technicians will work within your budget and help you purchase all parts needed to build a new computer to your specs. Once the parts arrive, the customer makes an appointment with the technician and is able to sit side by side

with that technician learning all components of their computer and how to put it all together. This service is especially popular with kids who are just starting to show a budding interest in computer science.

“We are honored to be serving the Riverbend area and take pride in our work. That’s why we offer a 30-day warranty on all of our repairs.”

The Riverbender Tech Center is open from 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. throughout the week. You can reach this dynamic team at 618-433-8989. Check them out the next time you need help with your home technology.