



Rib City's first Illinois location to open June 22

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Coast to coast barbecue chain expands to Alton

FORT MYERS, Fla. (June 17, 2011) – The prairie state will have its first Rib City barbecue franchise Wednesday, June 22.

According to company President Craig Peden, Rib City's first Illinois franchise will be located at 201 East Center Drive in Alton across from Alton Square Mall. The free-standing building was previously occupied by Alfie's restaurant, which closed in January.

Beginning hours of operation are Wednesday and Thursday, 4 to 9 p.m.; Friday and Saturday, 4 to 10 p.m.; and Tuesday through Monday, 4 to 9 p.m.

The restaurant will begin serving lunch at 11 a.m. at a later date.

The new franchise location is owned and operated by family members Brooke Miller, Jean Geiger, Gary Bellm, Ashley Knight, Shannon Knight and Dean Schmitt. Miller, Geiger and Bellm first learned about Rib City while dining at the barbecue chain's corporately owned location in South Fort Myers.

"They loved the food and found out the company was franchising into other states," said Schmitt.

Schmitt will serve as general manager and his wife Shannon Knight will serve as business manager. Schmitt and Knight previously worked in the restaurant business including positions with Lettuce Entertain You Enterprises Inc. in Chicago before moving to Alton.

“We have missed the restaurant business and are very excited to bring Rib City’s famous fall-off-the-bone baby back ribs to Alton,” said Schmitt.

Rib City is a family owned national barbecue chain. Founded in Fort Myers in 1989, there are currently 13 corporate restaurants in Florida and 16 franchise restaurants across the country including Washington, Utah, Colorado, Missouri, Tennessee, Ohio and Maryland.

Rib City offers a menu of barbecued meats, specialized sauces and complementary side dishes such as made-from-scratch baked beans and coleslaw. Rib City achieves authentic backyard barbecue flavor by slowly cooking baby back ribs and chicken over selected hardwoods - including Red Oak - carefully balancing heat and cooking time to seal in the distinctive Rib City BBQ taste. Meats can be topped with one of four secret recipe sauces: brown sugar-based sweet sauce, vinegar-based tangy sauce, Carolina mustard sauce or hot sauce. Additional menu items include fried okra, three-cheese fries, fried shrimp, coconut cream and southern pecan pies and more.

Rib City’s complete menu is available online at www.ribcity.com.

Rib City is listed with the Franchise Registry, a list of franchise systems whose franchisees have the benefits of a streamlined review process for U.S. Small Business Administration financings. For franchise information, contact Jack Burges, director of franchise sales, at jburges@ribcity.com.