

# Crowds flock to Elijah P's for Downtown Alton Chili Cook-Off

by Madelaine Gerard, Staff Writer  
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**ALTON** - On the brisk yet beautiful **Saturday** afternoon, nothing was better than a nice hot bowl of chili to warm up any food enthusiast.

Beginning at noon, the crowd stretched from **Piasa St.** to the warehouse behind **Elijah P's** to get their hands on tickets and spoons to sample some delectable chili at this year's **Downtown Alton Chili Cook-Off**, hosted by **Alton Main Street**.



Newcomers to Alton, **Morrison's Irish Pub**, showcased their delicious chili with an Irish twist. Their chili included lamb, Guinness beer, black and pinto beans, chipotle peppers and much more.

Restaurant owner **George Thayer's** interesting recipe sets him apart from the crowd with his distinct ingredients and classic taste.

"It has a nice spice and perfect smokiness to it," Thayer said.

An Irish restaurant participating in a chili cook-off seemed a bit out of place, however the crowds seemed to be loving his restaurant's chili, titled "The Drunken Lamb."

"A lot of people don't expect an Irish restaurant to make chili," he said, "When Sara McGibbany approached us about it, I thought it sounded like fun and that we could definitely do it!"



**Riverbender.com** even got in on the action of the day with the **Riverbender.com** Community Center Director **Meredith Wright's** southern cajun-inspired chili hitting the ballot. Her recipe had just the right amount of kick with a hint of jalapeño and cajun spices.

**This year's winners were:**

**People's Choice** - Alton Motor Boat Club

**Individual** - Nancy Elliot Pulizos

**Business** - WBGZ Radio

**Restaurant** - La Cantina at Argosy Casino Alton

**Organization** - First Presbyterian Church

**Best Decorated** - Tie - Foxes Grove & Enjoy Church

27 other registrants from around the area brought their best recipes to the cook-off so that the public can have their chance at picking the best chili of the day. For the price of

\$6 per adult and \$3 for children 10 and under, they could put their taste buds to the test in determining and voting upon the best chili of the day.

The registrant with the best chili in their categories, including individual, organizations, businesses and restaurants, will walk away with a \$100 prize. The best chili of the day will receive a “People’s Choice” award of a silver ladle and plaque to commemorate their win. The best-decorated booth winner will also receive a \$100 prize.

[Click here to view a photo gallery from the Downtown Alton Chili Cook-Off:](#)