

THE CHICAGO MARKET: LIVING AND GIVING™ ANNOUNCES
June 2009 RETAILER OF THE MONTH, CYNTHIA SUTTON OF THE SILVER BARN, COLUMBUS, TX
Program Recognizes Outstanding Retailers Each Month

CHICAGO, IL (June 1, 2009) – The Chicago Market: Living and Giving™ is proud to announce the June 2009 Retailer of the Month honoree. The ROTM program is designed to acknowledge exceptional retailers who are making a difference in the gift industry, as well as to provide inspiration to other retailers who can benefit from the winners' stories.

Congratulations to the June 2009 Retailer of the Month, Cynthia Sutton of The Silver Barn, Columbus, TX.

Retailer of the Month: June 2009

Store Name: The Silver Barn

Owner: Cynthia Sutton

Website: www.silverbarnantiques.com

Location: Columbus, TX

Years in Business: 1 year

For more Inspiration visit The Silver Barn–Online

- **Blog:** <http://thesilverbarn.wordpress.com/>
- **Twitter:** www.twitter.com/thesilverbarn



Cynthia Sutton, co-owner of The Silver Barn, says it is a historic outpost in Columbus Texas. The building has gone from a mercantile to saloon to hardware and undertaker's establishment; add in a stint as a plumber's supply and antique store too. Now The Silver Barn has added a new chapter: Gift Store. But the store, as Cynthia will tell you, is more than just a building.



When the The Silver Barn launched last year Cynthia and her business partner, Rebecca Edmiston, also launched an online store featuring product selections that could be purchased around the country. They also launged a blog and more recently Cynthia also started a Twitter site. "Twitter, the blog and other social networking sources give us the opportunity to expand our sales nationwide at a much faster rate," said Cynthia adding, " we live in such a mobile society, you never know when someone is just going to drop in – and already feel at home because they know us [from our online presence]."

Aside from Twitter and Blogging Cynthia is also involved with a National "Shop Local" group called the 3/50 Project (www.the350project.net) which encourages consumers to spend \$50 a month (total) at their 3 favorite independent shops. "We've teamed up with 3/50 Project to promote all independent retailers and plan on doing whatever we can to promote it when I do TV appearances and newspaper interviews," Cynthia said. "This all came about because of my connections on Twitter," she added.



Enticing store displays also play a major role in the success of The Silver Barn, which is currently set for expansion this month. Cynthia's strategy includes taking antique display pieces and mixing them with product she buys at wholesale markets. She explains, "The display comes together to tell its own story. For example, we did a window at Christmas using an upside down tree with crystal drops hanging. The drops that didn't sell I saved and used with our Spring display of ducks in rubber boots holding umbrellas."

With a mix of fabulous in store displays and ingenious online marketing Cynthia and her business partner Rebecca have started a successful store that catches the eye and imagination of local customers in Columbus, and online, customers around the country.

Each month a different retailer is to be featured. To nominate someone you know for Retailer of the Month e-mail Sara Hall, buyer relations manager, at shall@mmart.com.

For more information on Merchandise Mart Properties, Inc. (MMPI) or The Chicago Market: Living and Giving, please visit www.shopchicagomarket.com or call 800.677.6278 (MART).

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