

Brief History and Overview of the Company

We are truly a family-owned and operated business since 1980. My wife and I have been married 49 years, we both grew up and went to school here in Woodburn, Oregon. I went to the Army for three years and then to college for two years for auto body and painting. I worked in the profession mainly as a painter for four years, got overdosed on polyurethane paint twice, and decided to go partners with my father-in-law in his machine shop. I built up my customer base to match my father-in-law who had the business for 30 years in eleven months and it was mainly because of service.

After three years my father-in-law retired; three years later I diversified and added exhaust and mufflers; we changed the name from HiWay Machine Shop to HiWay Machine & Mufflers. Three years later we took out the lathes and presses and added lube & oil and one technician and then changed the name to Mufflers, Hitches and More, Inc; we also added U-Haul to our business in over 25 years we have stayed at the top 3% out of 50 some independent dealers once again, service.

In 1989 and 1990 we tore down the two-bay shop and built a new four-bay shop with an office and waiting area. In 1992 we bought the property next to us for a total of three acres on the main highway; in 1996 we built our 10 bay automotive repair shop and called it Woodburn Automotive Repair Center, Inc. In 1999 – 2000 we added 24 more bays and offices, a waiting room and upstairs lunch room and private offices. We have Mufflers, Hitches and More, Inc. with four bays, and Woodburn Automotive Repair Center, Inc. with 34 bays, which includes 4 dedicated bays for lube, oil, and filter jobs. We still have one acre of undeveloped land.

Our Woodburn Automotive shop was rated the no.5th or 7th largest auto repair shop in Oregon, including dealerships as per DexWest in 2000. Our Woodburn Automotive shop is the busiest repair shop in our town and surrounding towns. I credit this to service, service, and service; honesty and communication with the customers, and we stand behind our work. We currently have free pick-up and delivery, and free loaner cars.

We work on anything and everything; foreign and domestic; big trucks, all types of recreational vehicles, motorhomes, travel trailers, horse trailers, 5th wheels, tractors, and farm equipment, boats and motorcycles, and all-terrain vehicles (ATVs). Today's vehicles are a lot more complicated than they once were and the customers need to have it explained in layman's terms why we are going to have their vehicle for two or three days, and it's going to cost "x" amount of dollars.

The biggest challenge I see in the automotive industry in the next five years is keeping up and tooling up for the latest technology. A lot of small shops are going away and will be going by the wayside because of the amount of money for new equipment and the volume you have to do to pay for everything. A lot of small shops that I know have just the basic main equipment and knowledge and are picking and choosing what jobs they can work on, the ones that they can't work on they are recommending the customer take their vehicle to the dealer, which is just shooting all of us in the foot. To combat this in our shop we will keep up with the technology, stay current with updates and equipment and keep taking all the updated classes and seminars.

We have a Pot of Gold drawing every month for customers to enter, no purchase necessary, and they win \$100.00 to \$200.00. It's our own idea for the Pot of Gold and we've been doing it since December 1996, we have had several winners win more than once. We have the winner and an employee take a

picture and it's put in the local newspaper and every customer says what they came in for and they all automatically give a testimonial about us. I've always had good public relations with the public, I love to tease and joke and have fun with them.

I put my employees and especially my technicians on a higher pedestal than they would themselves, it's a tough and complicated job they have to do and they get very little respect for it. You're always damned if you do and damned if you don't, and you're only as good as your last job. I feel our industry needs to be more professional and prouder of what we do because we're no different than the doctor that works on us, except for the pay.

Our corporate vision has always been to be a beacon for everyone around to be the best shop in town and surrounding areas. The most positive shop around, the most honest shop around, the busiest shop around, and the shop with the best technicians. Every customer that comes through our doors is our boss and I want them back, their family, and their friends.