

Behind the Business

By Michelle Donati-Grayman

Tony Guido grew up around cars. His father, Anthony, owned an Exxon gas station on the southeast corner of 44th Street and Thomas Road for 30 years.

After graduating from Arizona State University and working in the family business, Guido opened a shop of his own in the late 1980s.

"I didn't go far," Guido says. "We're only 12 blocks away from the original. Arcadia has always been home."

Tony's Auto Service Center has called the northeast corner of 56th Street and Thomas Road home for 26 years. It started as Tony's Texaco, a small two-bay gas station, before being converted into an auto repair facility.

"It's a real community shop," Guido says. "The main thing that's important to us is taking care of people our customers, employees and the community."

One longtime customer who was recently widowed expressed concern to one of Tony's employee's that he didn't have any family to check in on him. After hearing this, manager Scott Petrie made an arrangement with him and his mail carrier. If the daily mail didn't get picked up, the mail carrier would call the shop and alert Petrie to check on the customer.

In addition to loyal customers, the auto shop is full of veteran employees. In fact, many have worked at the shop for more than a decade and one employee came to work for Guido after working in his father's shop.

Community involvement is also a priority to Guido. Each year, the shop performs discounted repairs for several charities, including St. Vincent de Paul, the Salvation Army and St. Mary's Food Bank. They've hosted a Christmas party for a local assisted living facility and sponsor Arcadia High School's football, baseball, soccer and golf teams.



(Top) Tony's in 1970. (Bottom left) A look at Tony's Auto today. (Bottom right) Tony's crew.

Guido's business approach of putting people first has earned his shop an array of prestigious honors, including AAA Arizona's Top Shop award for six years running.

"As an auto resource, the Top Shop award is designed to recognize local shops that exceed our expectations and standards," says John Walter, director of automotive services for AAA Arizona. "When it comes to AAA Approved Auto Repair facilities,

Tony's Auto Service Center represents the best of the best."

In 2013, the shop was one of five local businesses to receive the 2013 Better Business Bureau's Business Ethics Award. This year, Tony's Auto Service Center received the BBB International Torch Awards for Ethics. The award is presented to businesses in four categories, in recognition of their best practices in leadership character and organizational ethics.

"Tony's Auto Service Centers has proven to be a strong leader in our business community," says Erin Harshfield, BBB foundation director. "The company's leadership team is highly committed to developing positive, long-term relationships with its employees, customers and the community around them."

Guido says both the AAA and BBB honors serve as a confirmation of what his business tries to do every day.

"We want to make sure our customers, employees and community are taken care of the way they should."

Michelle Donati-Grayman is an Arcadia resident who works for AAA Arizona, an automotive resource.

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