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LOCAL SEEN

Got Dents?

Jeff Cox leads Conway-based company with national presence

Following the entrepreneur's age-old axiom "find a need and meet it," Colors On Parade founder Robert Lowery started his mobile auto body repair business in 1987 with one van, some paint and a dream. Twenty-five years later current CEO and President Jeff Cox is at the helm of the Conway-based business Lowery still owns, which now boasts franchise partners in 32 states—and that number is growing.

Cox carries on the tradition of Lowery's simple plan to offer something that brick-and-mortar body shops can't—fast, affordable, mobile service using revolutionary techniques to fix dings and dents more cost-effectively than traditional methods. Colors on Parade charges up to 40 percent less for typical repairs. In two-and-a-half decades the privately owned corporation has grown slowly and methodically, garnering awards for business innovation and patents in automotive restoration. They have also managed to do so, most recently, in a troubled economy.

"We just had five new franchisees graduate in November (2011)," said Cox, "and we're on track to add six new area developers and 15 to 20 new franchises in 2012." Business is very good, but it takes an expert to do the work. "Doing repairs on a guy's brand new Lamborghini or Mercedes in his driveway requires a high level of skill," Cox said. "I've been through the training, but boy, you've got to do it every day to be good at it." The company's franchisees have to pass certification, so they come from around the nation to Conway for the classes.

Cox, originally from Florida's Space Coast, has lived in Conway for 17 years. He and his wife have two teenage children who attend area schools. "My wife's family is from the area. We moved here to take advantage of the [family] babysitters," he laughed. "Grandma, Great Grandma...everybody is in Myrtle Beach." The opportunity to lead a growing national corporation means Cox and his family are here to stay.

"It's a little cold for me in South Carolina occasionally," laughed the former Floridian, "but we really like it." —Paul Grimsbaw

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