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Weathers Auto Supply has accessorized rides for 25 years

Ben Bagwell , Staff Writer

DINWIDDIE - Weathers Auto Supply is celebrating its 25th anniversary in the Tri-Cities.

More than 275 stores in three states purchase their truck, van, car, SUV and performance accessories from Weathers, which services customers from a 46,000 square foot facility at the Dinwiddie Airport Industrial Park.

The company was founded in 1957 by the late W. D. Weathers in Tupelo, Miss. In 1980 Van Woodell convinced Weathers to have a warehouse operation in Virginia. As its owner, Woodell operated the Weathers store for 12 years in Colonial Heights and then 13 years in Dinwiddie. The outside sales staffers work with the phone sales office staff to handle next-day deliveries to the customers in Virginia, southern Maryland and eastern North Carolina.

"We specialize mostly in any accessories for pickup trucks and SUVs," Woodell says.

"We are the wholesale distributor. We help our customers get the part they need," he says.

Most of the business is wholesale, but Weathers also accepts walk-in customers at the Dinwiddie site. Every evening the company's delivery trucks are loaded for next-day delivery.

Woodell admits the SUV enthusiasm in the market has boosted business. "We hope to be able to double our sales in the next five years, and we intend to do this without cutting back on our service," Woodell says.

Even as a young adult, he says, "This business was my hobby in Durham, N.C. I ran a small four-wheel drive shop. I was in a local Jeep club. I was an enthusiast.

"Our business is pretty much year-round, but spring and summer are our best times," he says.

Twenty-eight employees work for Weathers out of the Dinwiddie site.

"Our customers can count on us for fast, friendly and dependable service," he says.

Westin is one of the manufacturers that serves Weathers, which markets front guards, bull bar, fatboy, safari light bar, side steps, running boards, sport tubes, roof racks, bed X-tenders, billet grille, tail light guard and driving lights.

Woodell says he may need additional warehouse space in the future.

* Ben Bagwell may be reached at 732-3456, ext. 260.

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