

A SPECIAL EDITION OF THE KINGSPORT TIMES-NEWS • SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2013

Bill Lawson State Farm..p. 2
Helping you understand life insurance

Rotary Club Valentine Fundraiserp. 2
Helping to eradicate polio

Mended Little Hearts....p. 3
Working to raise awareness about congenital heart defects

Sunday Scrapbook
 pgs. 4, 12
Showcasing reader photos and stories

The Red Shoe Gala.....p. 5
Raising funds for CASA For Kids, Inc.

Sunday Stories Showcasepgs. 6-7
Highlighting local businesses

Scrapbook Flashback
pgs. 10-11
Celebrating 'What Love Looks Like'



Process Supply *Made in Tennessee*

By Debra McCown



Todd Bailey worked 24 years for a large corporation before he decided it was time to do something different.

Sometimes, he explained, as companies grow, they focus far too much on profits and shareholders and far too little on associates, their families, the surrounding community and the customer. Decisions that are made from other cities, states and countries aren't necessarily in the best interest of local communities.

To Bailey, Process Supply, LLC - the company he started 18 months ago at 1509 Riverport Road in Kingsport - is a statement on how business should be done.

The industrial wholesale distributor is employee-owned - a format he said has a positive impact not only on the employees and our customers, but on everything else important to the bottom line.

"It means the employees have a percentage ownership of the company and, because of that ownership, you will see the passion of our team as well as their appreciation of our customers when they walk in the door," he said. "They're not running out the door at 5 (o'clock) when a customer has a need. Our guys answer the phone nights, weekends and holidays as needed, and our customers know that they can count on us."

For example, Bailey said, on a recent Sunday afternoon, a customer in Knoxville had a plant emergency. They called Process Supply at noon and needed three-quarter-inch-thick carbon steel plate to operate the next day. Process Supply delivered 8,000 pounds of steel that afternoon.

Bailey said his company prides itself on selling products made by domestic manufacturers - and, as much as possible, products made in or near the Tri-Cities region. He deals with other locally-owned companies, he said, and encourages customers to buy local because, unlike with many large corporations, a larger percentage of the money stays local.

"When we started this business, the very first check we wrote was to a local charity," he said. "We support local industry. We support local Tennessee companies... Our inventory investment ranges from 60 to 70 percent domestic inventory, and I'm very confident in saying that's more than any of our competition."

In the 18 months since Process Supply opened, he said, the company has spent almost \$700,000 with supplier partners in Tennessee.

"We represent some of the largest manufacturers in the country with the products that we sell," he said. "We also represent some of the smallest manufacturers because they're more personal and they value our business more so than a larger company."

His business model, he said, is based on quality products and excellent service; he chooses not to participate in the race to the bottom that occurs when price competition is the only consideration.

"When you buy from Process Supply and you say you want a delivery at 8 (o'clock)," he said, "we're there at 10 minutes 'til 8, our driver gets out and offloads the products, and he shakes your hand."

Process Supply, whose customer base consists of industries, contractors and do-it-yourselfers in the area, sells pipe, valves, fittings, grating, structural steel, ALGRIP slip-resistant floor plate, sanitary food-grade piping, pumps, gearboxes, mechanical seals and related accessories. The company also offers automated valves, pump, gear box and equipment repair.

The company has a 30,000-square-foot warehouse in Kingsport and is preparing to open a 20,000-square-foot location in Loudon, Tenn., which will add five more employees to the existing staff of 10.

A longtime resident of the Tri-Cities region, Bailey said he offers customers the opportunity - and encouragement - to buy local and support the economy in their community.

"It's a simple plan. It's family guys, everybody's local, most everybody was born and raised here," he said. "It's a statement of our belief that it's the right thing to do."

Process Supply invites you to stop by and say hello or call them at 423-765-9991 - and check them out online at processsupply.us.



Dining Deals of the Week

Lynn Garden Restaurant

Deal of the Week



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