

# JULY'S BUSINESS OF THE MONTH!



The Savanna Chamber of Commerce is pleased to announce Palisades Golf Course as July's Business of the Month!! In the early 1990's we chose to go from a service business to a recreational business to allow our children to participate and be around "the greatest game and people in the world".... golfers. Rob and (son) Nate were members at Palisades Golf Course and played regularly. One afternoon Rob was playing golf with his friend, Tim James, and in conversation at number four tee, he told Tim that one day he would own this place. When the opportunity arose, the whole family agreed on the decision. At that time, we owned Savanna Auto Body, (1982 until 1999). We purchased Palisades Golf Course in 1995, incorporated the two businesses into TCWC and never looked back. Rob attended Carl Sandburg College for auto body and fender repair, Kishwaukee College for greens keeping and Golfsmith Academy in Austin, Texas for club fitting and custom assembly and repair. Carol attended Highland Community College and Clinton Community College, but the best background and skills necessary to run this type of business is just a good work ethic and a willingness to work hard. The golf course, which was built in 1953 on an apple orchard and melon from small furnace and air conditioner replacements to complete installs from ground up at store chains like Targets, Costco, and Wal-Marts all across the country. River Cities offers a full line of service of all major brands and installation of furnaces, air conditioners, boilers, sheet metal, and refrigeration services for both residential and commercial customers." They have partnered with different manufactures to offer many different warranties and products for not just residential but industrial usage as well. Where do you see your business in the next yefarm, had 675 feet of hoses that had to be pulled out and

rolled up every day to water the greens. Now the whole golf course is completely irrigated to water fairways, tees and greens. After slow and diligent persistence, the conditions of the golf course has steadily improved, with lots of help from family and friends. We have had members over the years who jump in and offer their time and talents for whatever we are doing, from painting yardage marker signs to installing irrigation lines and aerifying fairways and greens. Our members and those who have played here in the past 25 years are like family. They watched our kids grow up and we've watched their families grow. Unfortunately, we have also dealt with many of our friends who have passed away. We have had members who we just knew by their name and over the years have become very close to them. The favorite part of this business is the people we have met. We've had many players who were here when they were young, took a break while raising kids and are back with us, along with their kids. The business has offered a direction for all 3 of our children; Nate moved to Florida and got a job on a golf course, with the goal of returning to PGC. However, he found his way into the service side of the turf business and has stayed. He now is territory manager for Van Wall Equipment, selling John Deere turf equipment to golf courses in the Midwest. Natalie has a BS in biology from University of Dubuque then attended Iowa State and received her master's degree in Ag, with an emphasis on turf grass. She spent ten years in the industry as a superintendent first and then in the service side as a sales rep for a company in the southeast US where she had a successful career as a John Deere turf equipment sales rep and has now moved on to a position as a full-time mom. Amanda has a business degree and her MBA, and works for Webber International University in several capacities. All 3 are an asset to the family business and still lists themselves as owners on resumes, which they are. Nate's oldest son is now working the summer at Davenport Country Club, on the grounds crew which gives us a start on the next generation. We have been blessed with some great young people, especially Matthew Ross, who have come through the door looking for a summer job. We spent some time and energy on them and they have also been assets to our business and have become part of our family and will remain important to us. The advice to anyone starting in a small business would be that it's not easy...."if it was, everyone would do it" There are long hours and long days, but do what makes you happy. We have made our wealth and riches in friendships and relationships which is what we are supposed to do. TCWC has been a Savanna Chamber member since 1982 with Rob serving as president and Carol served on the board several times with great pleasure. It is an honor to be part of the Savanna Chamber and no matter how challenging or trying it may be to live and work in northwest Illinois, we are grateful and proud to call Savanna our home. ar? In the next five years? The next ten years? In the next year we as a company see ourselves expanding another service tech to our already 7-man crew. As we have already began the process but in the next 5 years, we look to have a full sheet metal fabrication shop onsite, and are reaching to have a staff of 12-15 techs and installers. Our goal in the next 10 years is to grow the business and expand our territory to include a second shop location. If you had one piece of advice to someone just starting out, what would it be? Always trust your gut get started and form friendly relationships with even your competitors. on each other to form a plan that works for your company. Take bits

feeling and don't second guess yourself. Use your resources to help you Just because you are in the same business does not mean you can't lean and pieces of every ones advise to form your own business plan.

