

Gloucester's Dent Pro selected by GM as show's vendor of choice

BY QUINTON SHEPPARD

Gloucester resident Tom Wilburn, owner of The Dent Pro, has been selected by General Motors Corporation to be its dent repair vendor of choice at the Virginia International Auto Show at the Greater Richmond Convention Center Feb. 16-18.

The honor was "completely unexpected," Wilburn said. "It really puts things into perspective—a multi-billion global company that manufactures products in the U.S. and all across the world debuting their babies, if you will, contacting me saying, 'We want you to be our vendor of choice for the auto show.'"

Wilburn said he believes he was contacted because of his A+ rating with the Better Business Bureau and his more than 100 five-star reviews on Google. He said representatives from the corporations actively search for local vendors when these types of shows are put on.

Wilburn said he will be in Richmond the day before the event begins when the



Tom Wilburn, owner of The Dent Pro, is shown with his wife, Gina Dame, at fundraiser for the Virginia Special Olympics.

inventory is taken off the trucks. He will go around and inventory any damage to the vehicles, document the damage and then it will be up to the company as to whether they want to have the damage repaired. He will also be on hand for the setup of the show.

"The good thing is I'm there for GM, but I'm also there for other companies to see me," Wilburn said. "It's exposure, recognition and acknowledgment of my company, for sure."

Wilburn has been in the dent

repair business for 20 years and had owned The Dent Pro for 10 years. He services dealers and individual customers on the Peninsula, Gloucester and Richmond.

He said he prides himself in providing the highest level of customer service with the highest quality repair. He said it is imperative to him that his customers are satisfied and offers a full refund to any customer who may not be completely satisfied with his work.

MSPT accepting grant applications

The Main Street Preservation Trust has opened grant applications for 2018 for business and property owners along Main Street in Gloucester who wish to improve their facades or interiors of their buildings in the commercial area of the street. Applications are due by March 9 at 3 p.m.

This is the eighth year for the facade improvement grants, according to Jenny Crittenden, director of the MSPT, and is the sixth year for awarding interior and merchandising assistance grants.

She said grants up to \$20,000 are available for facade improvements and the grant is a 50/50, dollar-for-dollar match. General improvements allowed by the program include windows, doors, awnings, landscaping, exterior painting, exterior signage, site work and roofs

where they are seen from Main Street.

For interior improvements, Crittenden said grants are available up to \$15,000 on matching improvements, and is also a dollar-to-dollar match. Improvements could include interior painting, flooring, lighting, and plumbing and electrical upgrades. "Although there are no design guidelines for this portion, any color choices must be presented in the application for approval by the design committee," Crittenden said.

A special component to the interior grant program is the merchandising assistance grant, which caps the grant at \$2,500, she said. Crittenden said this allows for the applicant to utilize interior design services, interior signage, and special effects improvements in their businesses. It also includes

having a pre-approved professional designer work with store owners on window design and display.

No late applications will be accepted, Crittenden said. To apply, visit www.gloucestervillage.com and download the application of stop by the MSPT's office in Main Street Center to pick up an application. For more information, call 804-824-9614.

"This initiative has proven to be a great tool for economic vitality along Main Street with over \$400,000 in grants awarded since 2011," Crittenden said. "Giving property and business owners the opportunity to leverage their investment and improve the customer experience has proven to yield more revenue on the street—not to mention the pride and care it shows to the community by taking care of our assets."

New stylist joins Cutt'n Up Hair Salon

BY QUINTON SHEPPARD

Gloucester resident Laurie Baker started last week as a new stylist at Cutt'n Up Hair Salon, Hayes. Baker, who moved to Gloucester from Hampton in September, said she has been a hairdresser for 13 years.

She specializes in colors, cuts, perms, up-dos, roller sets and waxing. She does hair for men, women and children.

She is working on building up her clientele in Gloucester and said she is accepting walk-ins. She is currently in the shop part-time on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Saturdays and hopes to be there full time in the coming months.

She and her husband Chris have two children and three grandchildren.

Baker joins six other stylists at the shop, which is located in the shopping center along with Chesapeake Marine Training Institute.



Laurie Baker, above, recently started as a stylist inside Cutt'n Up Hair Salon at Hayes.



New Y board members

The Mathews Family YMCA welcomed new members to its Board of Directors in 2018. They are, pictured from left, Pat Daniels, Sheila Crowley, Gene Goin and Tristan Emerson. At the same time, four veteran members have left the board. They are Pete Clendenin, Andy Hantwerker, Jack Kloke, Ron Lambert and Janice Phillips.

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