

behindthebiz



Continuing the family tradition

CARVILLE'S AUTO MART



Penny Stine

Sentinel Special Sections

With a name like Royce Carville, it's a wonder that he wasn't selling luxury cars in grade school. In spite of the name, however, Carville's parents owned a sporting goods store in Texas, so Carville's first sales experience was with sporting goods, not cars.

Because of a hunting trip he had taken when he was younger to Colorado, when he was ready to leave Texas and the family business, Carville headed to Paonia in 1978, where he worked in the construction industry. The struggling energy economy of the 1980s killed the construction and remodeling industry in Paonia.

"I wanted to stay with something big-ticket," said Carville, adding that although he started his used car dealership in Paonia, he moved it from there to Hotchkiss, then to Delta and finally to Grand Junction in 1994. He had been in a former Dodge dealership in Delta, and in a strange coincidence, his first Grand Junction location was also the location of a former Dodge dealership.

Carville's Auto Mart was a mainstay on

North Avenue for almost 20 years, and while on North Avenue, it developed an independent finance company in order to help customers who have poor credit purchase a car when they've run out of options elsewhere.

In 2011, the company built a second location on Highway 6 & 50. Rather than abandon the old location on North Avenue, Carville made the decision to add RVs to the dealership.

"North Avenue had been a great location for us for 20 years, we didn't want to let it go," said Carville, adding that he enjoys RVs, many of the dealership's longterm customers like camping and RVs, and it made financial sense for the company. On top of that, he had a sense of civic duty.

"North Avenue didn't need a big, empty lot," he said. Carville's carries three different new RV lines, Apex, Prime Time and Wolf Pack, and also has a selection of used RVs. Thanks to its finance company, it can finance about a third to half of the RVs it sells.

"People have a hard time getting a loan on an RV that's eight to 10 years old," Carville said.

Both of Carville's sons, Kevin and Darin, are involved in running the business, and because the company has been in business for so long, it has many customers (as well as customers' friends and family) who have purchased multiple vehicles from the Carville family.

Because Carville's is the largest independent used car dealer and has been in business for so long, it should come as no surprise that it has sold more than 40,000 vehicles. Right now, it sells about 100 cars per month. To sell that many cars, Carville's has to have a steady, persistent presence at regional car auctions in Utah, the Front Range and across the Rocky Mountain region. Kevin Carville has been in charge of inventory for the last 10 years, and finding the right vehicles remains a constant goal.

"We safety check everything," Carville said. "We wholesale a lot of vehicles that don't meet our standards."

COMPANY STATS

Established: **1989 as**

North Fork Motors

1992 as Carville's Auto Mart

1994 moved to Grand Junction

Founder: **Royce Carville**

Employees: **31**



2507 Highway 6 & 50

2122 North Ave.

Grand Junction, CO

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