

Son working to carry on father's legacy at decades-old business in Fairfield



Jason Campbell runs Classic Carpets and Flooring on Industrial Drive in Fairfield. Campbell's dad, Gene, who died last October, started the business over four decades ago. NICK GRAHAM/STAFF

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By Eric Schwartzberg, Staff Writer

FAIRFIELD —

A family-owned Fairfield business with more than four decades of history is working to continue the legacy of its founder.

Gene and Pam Campbell started Classic Carpets & Flooring in April 1977. It offers solid and engineered hardwood, laminate, luxury vinyl planks, vinyl sheet goods, carpet/padding, rubber flooring, commercial carpet, carpet tiles/squares and ceramic tile, including backsplashes and shower pans. It also performs installation and repairs for those products.

But Gene Campbell suffered a massive stroke in October and died five days later, according to a son, Jason Campbell, who now runs the business and has worked there for 19 years.

The store's longevity is a result of how his father treated people, Campbell said.

"He was a kind soul wanting to see people smile, and when you did a nice job for people, they smiled, then he smiled," he said. "It was important to him that people walked away with a good experience."

The business employs three people, including secretary Cathy McQueen, who has been with the business for 42 years. It also has more than 10 subcontractors.

Campbell said the heart and soul of the store's 42-year success are "the people of Hamilton, Fairfield, West Chester and Mason."

"We're doing work for second generations of our original customers," he said. "Their kids now have homes, and they call us because their parents tell them to."

The Fairfield location at 4750 Industry Drive is Classic Carpet's fourth. It's been in Hamilton twice and at another Fairfield location once. The current store has been its home since 2002 and is the first place the Campbells owned. It includes a showroom with displays of new products on their way.

While online competition has been "a little tough" for the business to withstand, the more people purchase flooring online, the more stories about bad experiences start to circulate, Campbell said. Flooring "just isn't one of those items made to be purchased over the internet," he said.

"Once that product has landed off the truck, it's yours no matter what," Campbell said. "Most people want a professional to be able to talk to about their flooring purchases. Our installation crews are top notch, we have an awesome showroom and you can trust what we say as truths."

"I want to be able to say 'hello' to a past customer out in public. I don't want to go diving behind cars and hide."