

Phoenix tire company gives back locally

Auto specialist lends support to Valley charities

By Susie Steckner
 SPECIAL FOR THE ABG

Community Tire and Automotive Service Specialists has a simple philosophy about the company's charitable giving: Make the money locally, give back locally.

"We believe in locally-grown business and we believe that you spend money where you make money," said Howard Fleischmann Sr., one of the company's partners.

"One of the ways to do that is to pick charities that you believe in and help to support them."

That means golf fundraisers for a group that helps families of Valley public-safety officers. Promotions benefiting a Phoenix youth organization. Volunteer work for local neighborhoods.

Sometimes the charitable work is tied to company marketing, but it doesn't have to be. And, as Fleischmann said, "Even if the promotion fails, somebody wins."

Community Tire has grown from one store in Phoenix, opened in 1995, to seven stores around the state offering a range of automotive services.

It started as a family business and now, in addition to Fleischmann, has three other partners including Kim Sigman, John Culbert and Howard Fleischmann Jr.

Over the years, the company has been approached by its share of national non-profit organizations seeking assistance.

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Howard Fleischmann Sr

Partner of Community Tire and Automotive Service Specialists

While they represent worthy causes, the elder Fleischmann said, the company always has looked for groups nearby that really touch a nerve.

The company held its first fundraising golf tournament for Homeward Bound on the suggestion of a business partner who was a passionate supporter of the non-profit group's work helping homeless families around metro Phoenix.

It decided to support another group, the 100 Club of Arizona, when Fleischmann Sr. heard a story at a luncheon about its work helping families of public-safety officers killed or hurt in the line of duty.

"It was so heartwarming, I fell in love with the 100 Club," he said.

Since then, the company has done everything from benefits featuring the popular monster truck Bigfoot and racing legend Mario Andretti to a golf fundraiser that brought in more than \$4,000 this year. One of the benefits led to an unexpected \$10,000 gift for the 100 Club.

Also this year, Community Tire decided to support In10, a non-profit support organization for gay, lesbian and other Arizona youth.

The group was particularly appealing to the Fleischmann family, who lost a gay family member to suicide.

The company came up with a travel promotion that raised about \$4,000 for the organization.

The company also supports efforts by its managers to help

the neighborhoods surrounding their stores.

The philosophy has led to company-hosted career day events for school children, neighborhood clean-ups and more.

The director of In10, Beck, who goes by only one name, praises Community Tire for more than just the company's financial assistance.

"They are truly sincere in not only wanting to give back but wanting to support us," she said.

The \$4,000 donation will be used for a range of services provided by the organization, from support groups to HIV-prevention education to a theater program.

"That will really support our programs with 100 kids a week," Beck said.



MARK W. LIPCZYNSKI
 /ARIZONA BUSINESS GAZETTE

