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Family business helps other families have a fun vacation

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Lindsey Reines, the owner of Reines RV Center in Manassas, grew up around so many recreational vehicles that his love for them almost runs through his blood. He has worked at the company full-time for 31 years and for many years longer part-time. The company that he now owns has been in his family since 1946, and he is proud to carry on the dreams of his family and help fulfill the dreams of other families.

"Recreational vehicles give a family so much freedom to be able to go where they want to go," he said. "I think these are the kind of memories that are going to last a lifetime. No one is going to remember the hotel rooms their parents took them to, but people will remember time spent camping out in an RV with the family."

Lindsey said that he recalls the many times his father took his family on vacations in trailers and motorhomes as he was growing up.

Lindsey's father, "Dusty" Reines, had an interest in RVs, but not from the beginning. When Dusty started the business that was to become Reines RV Center, it was a used car dealership called Reines Motor Company. He started it in 1946 with \$50 after he returned from serving in the Navy during World War II.

The original business was located on rented land in the Georgetown section of Washington, DC. It expanded into two locations not long after its original open-

ing. When Dusty acquired enough capital to purchase his own property, he wasted no time and bought a lot in Arlington, complete with a small office and attached garage.

In the 1960s, Dusty decided to try selling a new product from his dealership – travel trailers. When he bought three and they sold right away, he began to purchase more and saw them sell quickly as well. He decided then to phase out the used cars and go into the recreational vehicle business solely.

"Later, I remember asking him if he was afraid to get out of the car business," Lindsey said. "He told me, 'No, people buying RVs are so much nicer and easier to deal with.'"

It was at this point that Lindsey and his brother Richard started getting involved with the business.

"I sold my first RV when I was 14 years old," Lindsey recalled. They worked on weekends and breaks throughout their schooling.

When Richard and Lindsey finished school, they entered the business,

then called Reines Motor and Trailer Company. In 1982, the Company outgrew its location in Arlington and moved to a larger facility in Fairfax, and Dusty retired shortly thereafter, giving the business to Richard and Lindsey.

Under their leadership, the company continued to expand and hire new employees. They opened a rental department and realized that, yet again, they needed more space.

"The company grew the most under



Lindsey Reines sold his first RV when he was 14, working for Dad, Dusty Reines.



Reines RV Center, now in Manassas, started as a used car dealership in Washington, D. C.

the leadership of my brother [Richard,]" Lindsey said. "He had such an enthusiasm to expand and keep the company growing and getting better."

In 1998, Richard and Lindsey found the space they had been looking for. The ten-acre piece of property they found in Manassas is their present location, including an indoor showroom, service bays, and shared space with Camping World, a supply store for campers and RV enthusiasts.

"Richard worked hard to create a state-of-the-art facility for Reines RV Center,"

said Stacy Reines, his sister. "He worked hand in hand with the professionals to design and plan the building and facilities."

However, just after the successful move to the Manassas location, Richard was diagnosed with cancer. He endured surgery and chemotherapy but passed away on March 5, 1999, only six months after he had been diagnosed. Lindsey was thus left

solely in charge of the business.

"They had been a team all their lives, so of course it was difficult," according to Stacy Reines.

Nevertheless, Lindsey shouldered the challenge and since then has continued to see the business grow. He is now planning to add 16 more service bays to the center, among other changes.

"I think this business will keep going strong for at least the next 20 years," he predicted. "After Sept. 11, a lot of people started reflecting on their lives, deciding to take more time to spend with their families, so we've seen a steady increase in sales since then."

He said that the business has seen an increase in sales by 25 percent each year of the last four.

Besides growing in size, Reines RV Center has also grown in reputation. It is a member of REDEX, an exclusive group of the country's finest RV dealerships. To be invited to join, a dealership must "possess and demonstrate the highest standards of customer dealership," according to its website. Reines RV Center is currently the only REDEX dealer in the state.

Reines RV Center is an illustration of a small family business turned immensely successful thanks to hard work and enthusiasm. It started with three employees on rented land beside a gas station, and is now a ten acre facility with 48 employees, an indoor showroom, and 16 service bays. Despite the success, however, Lindsey still finds most of his enjoyment in helping people.

"The most enjoyable part of this business is dealing with customers," he said. "I feel that, by selling them an RV, I'm giving them an opportunity to treat their families to a great experience."

