



RELIABLE AUTO PARTS

ON THE COVER
LOCATOR
Late-Model Specialists

▶ Family-Owned For Three Generations

Reliable Auto Parts, located in Yuma, Ariz., has undergone several changes since it opened more than 40 years ago. It ran a salvage pool for a short time and received its first major insurance contract in 1973.

"We were the first to handle Farmers Insurance contracts for the west coast," stated Garrett Marks, the general manager. "We used to go all the way up the coast to just south of Sacramento."

Although the salvage pool is gone, along with the salvage insurance contract side of the business, one thing that has remained constant is the company's dedication to being a family-owned and operated business.

The business is currently owned by Jim Marks, Garrett's father. But it was his grandfather, Marvin Marks, who started it on a little more than 2 acres in 1964. About four years later, Marvin moved it to its current 10-acre location. Jim officially took possession in 1983. Today, Garrett's mom, Judi Marks, does the bookkeeping and sister Andrea Bacon handles accounts payable and receivable. Jim and Judi are still very involved in all aspects of the business but are edging towards retirement.

"We're a family business," added Garrett. "We care and take pride in our reputation. We're not a corporate stock company, concerned only with the big picture. Every sale matters."

High Quality

Reliable Auto Parts does a good volume for having only 12 employees, according to Garrett. It has about 7500-square-feet of warehouse and office space, three dismantling bays and 750 vehicles. Garrett buys all of the vehicles through online auctions, which is a big change from how they were acquired over the previous 30 years. Jim and Marvin traveled up to 1,000 miles to purchase salvage from adjusters and other facilities.

"When I came back to the business after graduating from college in 2001,

we closed down the towing side of the business and focused more of our attention on the auto parts industry."

Today, Reliable Auto Parts buys late-model autos, trucks and SUVs, both foreign and domestic makes.

Garrett also initiated a change from the Hollander inventory system to the Pinnacle system in 2003.

"My family was very upset with me when I wanted to switch over to Pinnacle," laughed Garrett. "They had been doing Hollander since 1983 and were actually one of the first yards in the Southwest to have a computerized inventory. But, I had learned Pinnacle from working at a few different yards

do a lot of online sales. A customer can look at our inventory online and put in an order request."

The company makes sure every part shipped is in excellent condition when it reaches the customer. Quality control is key. Two people check the part before it leaves to make sure that it is correct and that it is clean and ready

FAST FACTS
Owner:

Jim Marks

Location: Yuma, Ariz.

Years In Business: 48

Number Of Employees: 12

URL:
www.reliableautoparts.com


Reliable Auto Parts, Yuma, Arizona

By Erin Sandage

while I was in college. I feel like that decision had a lot to do with our present success. "

Web Presence

The change to Pinnacle was just one positive for the company. It renovated its web site three years ago and approximately 40 percent of its sales are from out-of-town.

"The web site is a great billboard for the business," admitted Garrett. "We

for delivery to the end user. Reliable Auto Parts is a member of ARA, the United Recyclers Group (URG) and the Arizona Automotive Recyclers Association (AARA). Garrett said there is a definite value to belonging to industry associations.

"Belonging is essential for lobbying," he said. "The groups help us with the law and regulations surrounding the auto recycling industry. Membership is a definite plus for us." ☒