

## Brief History of Painting With Pride, Inc.

### Reflections on our 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

My first thought is "How do I keep it brief?" Then I remember because that's how history is, brief. Statistically, by my calculations, less than one in ten of those who will read this can fully understand what its like to have a 30-year career. Maybe half the readers would be old enough to have worked for 30 years. Many may not think a 30 year career is even likely and some may not even be 30 years old. Too much fun!

Anyway, on May 27, 2007 Painting With Pride, Inc. indeed turned 30 years old. Not by stretching out the facts such as helping somebody paint a house years before but by a legitimate license date of May 27, 1977. (See our photo gallery!)

I thank so many of you who have watched us over the years and know the facts.

In April of 1977, I turned nineteen years old. In May, I was licensed by the Maryland Home Improvement Commission (MHIC) and given license # 4300. Today MHIC issues numbers in the 7 or 8 digit range. Also in 1977, I bought my first van, an old 1970 Ford Econoline, which first I tried spray painting then decided to brush and roll it. Believe me when I tell you painting it that way never hurt the book value. I paid \$200.00 for it. It was a 4 speed on the floor, 6 cylinder junk yard bound saved from the crusher all I could afford standard van. That old van was a blessing and launched Painting With Pride, Inc. into its infancy.

My friends were so impressed. Some went off to college and others went into private sector and labor jobs. Others joined the military and served our country. But myself and a few other entrepreneurial spirited youngsters headed off to the world of the self-employed. I've been asked many times over the years how I came up with the name Painting With Pride. I don't know honestly. But I do know that early on I was told by many that Painting With Pride, Inc. is a slogan not a name...is, too! Today, as then, we are Painting With Pride, Inc.

My first business cards were typed out on an old manual typewriter, way 'hi-tech'. Soon after, a buddy of mine made some cards up on a printer. I then adopted green as my letterhead color (the early '80s) before settling in on white, red and black in the mid-80's with our worldwide recognized Painting With Pride, Inc. swale. Okay, *locally* recognized!?

In December of 1978, for a monster sum of \$5,078, tags & title included, I purchased my first new Chevrolet van: green, no air conditioning, 3 speed on the column, 6 cylinder, no extras whatsoever. Myself and 5 other proper and well-behaved young friends promptly drove it to Florida for a much deserved fling. Back in 1978 things were much different than today and many of us now know that the six of us were not alone on that trip. Thank you, Lord!

That van served Painting With Pride, Inc. for almost 17 years until it become like the old 1970 years before. Many other vehicles have been used over the years. In the early '80s when our letterhead went white so did all the trucks. That would never change.

I alone could never claim any measure of success Painting With Pride, Inc. has been blessed with. In the very beginning, I worked out of my parents' house with their full support and assistance. My mother was to type estimates, help with insurance, be an all around encourager. My dad, busy with his own job and still raising 5 boys, actually helped with one of my first jobs, glazing windows. All four of my brothers swung a brush at one time if only briefly. My next younger brother, Jim, basically worked his way through high school and college with Painting With Pride, Inc. My youngest brother, Matthew, worked with Painting With Pride, Inc. from early high school and for 17 years after until he started his own painting company. Jim now owns Anderson Davis & Associates, CPA in Glen Burnie and has been my trusted friend and brother doing all our financial and tax work.

Later on around 1985, my dad actually retired from Bethlehem Steel after 27 years and came to work for Painting With Pride, Inc. He never painted but helped do all the carpentry repairs. He was a good man and our customers loved talking with him and appreciated the care he would take on their homes. He died suddenly on 8/27/1992 at the now very young age of 63. We had a wonderful seven years working together and a lifetime of good memories. God is good - all the time.

My family has always been very supportive and continues to encourage and help in many ways. Many changes have taken place over the years. Great changes allowing growth and wisdom. Heart-breaking changes including deaths and divorce, loss of valuable employees and retired business associates. We have been privileged to watch many young people who worked for Painting With Pride, Inc. through high school and college move on to have successful careers, marry and have children. Many of my competitors today started off as helpers with Painting With Pride, Inc. and stop back to keep in touch.

Our workforce is our strength. I estimate that we have had well over 1,000 employees over the years. At the time of this writing, we have employees with a total of over 50 years experience with Painting With Pride, Inc. That is really incredible in this industry!

Our leader, Jeff, joined us in 1990. I believe him to be the best in the business all in all. Brian and Kim have both been with us since 1997. They are much more than employees; they are the business today and hopefully when I'm done, they will continue.

In 1976 when I started painting, I bought my paint from Sherwin Williams Paint. I still do. We are by any account Severna Park Sherwin Williams' longest and most loyal painting company customer. We trust them to treat us and our customers with reliability and respect. We, along with their paint, have weathered many storms and industry changes. Painting With Pride, Inc. didn't give in easily on the idea of latex enamel, latex stains, quick drying primers and many other products are today standards in the industry.

One thing we won't claim in our history is perfection. We are now and always will be a work in progress. We have always been and always will be above all an honest company with unsurpassed integrity. I wish we could say that we have never had an unhappy customer. That's not true - or possible. The fact is we work for an average of 400 different families each year. In a perfect world, we could make everyone happy all the time. We know our heart's desire is to please. But, even with a 98% success rate, we fall short. We do know that we are the safest bet in town. We always have and plan to forever work without deposit. This is our demonstration of our confidence in our ability to get it right.

Our goal is no longer based on being the *largest* painting company as it once was. One year we had 102 W-2s and as many as 27 paychecks a week. We're very happy today with an average of 10-12 of us throughout the year. Our workforce consists of family-driven individuals who work 40 plus hours per week. We're not done but we're not practicing anymore either. We have a well-oiled machine with many of the holes plugged and wrinkles all ironed out. We are experts in our field with knowledge to know how and the willingness to do what's right.

We're an open book when it comes to our "Buy the Hour" service-marked program and welcome all our competition to see how we do it. We will always love this industry and only hope to continue to serve our community for many years to come.

Sincerely,

All the staff of Painting With Pride, Inc.

PS We'd love to hear your comments. Please email or call us!