

Teterboro Chrysler Jeep prospers with partnership

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When Alan Graf, Sr. broke into the automobile business in 1970, he assumed that it would merely be a temporary gig.

"I was getting married and I didn't have a job," he said. "I wasn't sure what I wanted to do. I decided to give the car business a shot, but I told my wife it was only until I found another job. That was 40 years ago and I'm still doing essentially the same thing."

Today, he is a partner with Teterboro Chrysler Jeep, the largest Chrysler Jeep dealer in the metropolitan area. He joined the dealership in 1981 as the general sales manager and became a partner in 1988.

"I got hooked on the business when I joined Teterboro," he said.

The dealership was founded in 1965 as Turnpike Chrysler in Ridgefield Park. In 1968, it moved to its present location at 469 Route 46 East in Little Ferry and became Teterboro Chrysler.

"Early on in my career it was apparent that the dealership's reputation for conducting business with fairness and integrity was well deserved," Graf said. "I wanted to be a part of it."

While breaking into the automobile business, a soon-to-be colleague, Salvatore Anicito, was working his way through the service department, eventually becoming the service director. Anicito joined the dealership '65, but left in '87 to become a partner at Ridgefield Park Chrysler Jeep.

During this time, Graf and Anicito developed a tremendous level of respect for each other and, in 1992, their parallel careers crossed when the two dealerships merged and Graf and Anicito became co-owners. The new partners retained the Teterboro name and location for their new joint enterprise.



A landmark in Little Ferry, Teterboro Chrysler (now Chrysler Jeep) has been a fixture on Route 46 East since 1968. The present dealership evolved from a merger in 1992 and is owned by two long-time business associates.

Today, the dealership offers an extensive and up-to-date inventory of new and pre-owned Chrysler and Jeep vehicles. It offers buyers a variety of financing options and its parts and service departments are professionally managed. The dealership's website further enhances the customer buying experience, offering easy vehicle search options and research information.

"Partnering with Sal made good business sense," Graf said. "We came from different parts of the business – I was in sales and he was in service. But the entire organization basically followed the same blueprint for success.

"We were both taught that the best way to conduct business is to

do whatever it takes to take care of the customer. That means, treating them with the utmost respect and making sure they are completely satisfied with the entire sales and service experience. Because we approach business the same way, we have developed a high level of respect for each other's talents."

With Graf and Anicito at the helm, the dealership has earned the Chrysler Award of Excellence for 20 consecutive years and has maintained its status as Bergen County's only Elite Chrysler Jeep Five Star Dealership.

"We continue to earn Five Star Certification because we adhere to a strict set of training, facility and process requirements," Graf said.



Alan Graf Jr. and Dave Anicito represent the next generation in the Graf/Anicito partnership at Teterboro Chrysler Jeep.

"Chrysler vigorously monitors us. It is a constantly recurring process. To keep up, we have to conduct steady self-evaluations and make sure we are adhering to these requirements. We welcome the process because it helps us maintain our high level of customer satisfaction."

The Graf/Anicito partnership is now extending to the next generation. Graf's son, Alan Jr. is the dealership's office manager and comptroller. While Anicito's son, Dave, is

the sales manager.

"Alan and Dave have a relationship that is very similar to the relationship that I've always had with Sal," Graf said. "They work in different parts of the business, but they have a lot of respect for each other because they go about their day-to-day activities in a very similar manner. Sal and I are very proud that our sons have become such integral parts of our operation. The future is bright."

PHOTOS BY GREG PALLANTE