

FOREST RIVER FINANCING – FALL 2019 NEWSLETTER

Dealer Spotlight – RV Country

For RV Country, the statement, 'GO BIG OR STAY HOME', seems appropriate, as this dealership has 11 locations located throughout the western United States in Arizona, California, Nevada, Oregon and Washington. It also boasts four owners: Curt Curtis, Paul Evert, Dale Cantrell and Charlie Power and over 300 employees.

Owner, Paul Evert, started the business in 1962. He was in the used car business when the RV dealership next door wanted to move out of California. Paul wound up buying that dealership and was able to grow it. Now retired, Paul still has ownership but leaves the day-to-day running of the dealerships to the other three owners. Each owner has certain roles they focus on, but together they work well. They understand their team effort has expanded the company to 11 locations with a goal of adding more locations in the west.

When asked what advice can be given to others wanting to own an RV dealership, Curt Curtis, owner of over 20 years, said that it's not an easy business to get into, you need capital and you must surround yourself with good people. One horrible incident he hopes no dealership will have to deal with is the serious fire that occurred two year ago at their dealership's headquarters in Fresno, California. The fire started in the refrigerator of a vehicle they took in on trade, and it jumped from one RV to another. They have been rebuilding and dealing with insurance since then, but thankfully nobody got hurt. While Curt hopes that nobody has to deal with this kind of extreme hardship, the point of mentioning this story, is to reiterate it's not easy to own a dealership, and it is very important to surround yourself with good people.

One way the company surrounds itself with good people is by offering employee incentives based on performance to every department in the dealership to show their gratitude. They give out monthly prizes, have 'roll the dice' days where qualifying employees can earn \$100 for the number showing up on the rolled dice, and special enticements on certain collateral they need to move fast.

Other ways the company stays successful and continues to develop is through TV, radio, trade magazines, digital advertising (SEO, Geofencing and Facebook has been really strong for the last 1 ½ years), using the Forest River Consumer Credit Card and community involvement. RV Country attends the Family Motor Coach Association (FMCA) events twice a year and is the exclusive RV dealer for the Escapee's RV Club, which are full-time RVer's. In this organization, RV Country helps support their events and brings RVs to display and sell.

When the owners find time to get away from work, they enjoy traveling by RV to the beach or wine country or just staying at home to relax from managing 11 sites. So, 'GO BIG OR STAY HOME' definitely seems to fit!