



CLAYCOMB EXCAVATING BUILT FROM THE GROUND UP

A multi-million dollar company is not created with ease and lack of dedication. Instead, a company can only flourish when core values such as hard work, quality performance and integrity are implemented.

After growing up on farms and beginning his career as a dairy farmer, Jon Claycomb learned these values from a young age, and has since created his own business, instilling these same values. Being familiar in the farming industry as well as the contracting industry, Claycomb took his skills to start something new.

And just like that, Claycomb started his own contracting and excavating company, from the ground up, called Claycomb Excavating. Established in 2001 and nestled in New Enterprise, Pa., Claycomb started from humble beginnings with two employees and his wife, Lois, who co-owns the company.

Today, Claycomb Excavating staffs nine employees, including the Claycombs' son Parker. While Claycomb could easily expand his staff, he knows the meaning and importance of a family-type setting, and treats his team as such. In fact, Claycomb's very first three hires are still employed today. Claycomb simply believes he should treat people as he would like to be treated. When it comes time to perform a job, Claycomb knows he can trust his staff and his equipment with just about anything. Nearly 20 years later, he continues to build upon his company with the help of his family, staff and Cat equipment.

EQUIPMENT YOU CAN COUNT ON

Although Claycomb started his business completing mostly residential jobs, he quickly grew the business into a highly respected provider of commercial, residential, agricultural and wildlife habitat services. With expansion and a commitment to perform a quality job to his customers, he knew the right choice of machinery greatly impacted his business.

With its 25 locations, endless maintenance and repair options and reliable, durable equipment, Claycomb chose to work with Cleveland Brothers and Cat equipment. His fleet is almost exclusively Cat, anchored by seven excavators, including 320s, 315s, a 316 and a 305. Claycomb completes the lineup with several dozers and skid steers, as well as a track loader and backhoe.

Claycomb understands the importance of reliable equipment and appreciates the role that Cat and Cleveland Brothers have played over the years. "Caterpillar equipment has been there for me since



Jon Claycomb, of Claycomb Excavating, was presented as a Contractor of the Year Finalist to fellow finalists and contractors at The Wynn in Las Vegas.

the beginning. Cleveland Brothers takes care of our needs," he said. "They take care of me."

From the beginning, Claycomb has always used Cat equipment with pride. With more than 25 years of experience, he concludes that Cat was the most reliable, offered the best service and has the highest resale value.

Claycomb also takes advantage of service packages, such as filter Customer Support Agreements, and the parts department at Cleveland Brothers for his equipment. Claycomb notes, "Cleveland Brothers offers awesome service and parts delivery. Problems are rare, and when they occur, they are handled immediately." He recalls once having a skid loader with electrical troubles, and couldn't spare the downtime. "I needed a skid loader the next day. And the next day, I had a skid loader sitting there, while they took the other one," he said. With the support of Cleveland Brothers in mind, Claycomb refuses to seek any other brand.

JOBS WITH PURPOSE

With an exceptional team, service and equipment behind him, Claycomb has endeavored in jobs of all sizes and industries. Some of his larger projects include site development, earthmoving, laying utilities and excavation for two retirement community developments for a ministry, as well as a seven million gallon manure pit excavation for a local dairy farmer, and even a planting contract involving wildlife habitat work.

While not typically viewed as an everyday contracting job, the wildlife habitat work has included forest regeneration plantings and a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers vegetation study, under the supervision of Lois Claycomb. Lois handles and obtains the company's wetland contracts, where she utilizes her degree in Wildlife Technology from Penn State.

With the help of her expertise, Claycomb Excavating performs wetland restorations and other water conservation practices for the USDA Natural Resources Conservation



Service (NRCS), an organization dedicated to providing America's farmers and ranchers with financial and technical assistance to conserve their land.

These wetland mitigation jobs start by stripping the topsoil and end by building a shallow pond with the help of their Cat dozers and excavators, like the D4K and 320. This is done in an effort to restore the topsoil, natural vegetation and wildlife to its natural state.

Claycomb Excavating enjoys combining their contracting skills with their knowledge in wetland mitigation. "That's our cup of tea," Claycomb said. "You're doing something somebody appreciates. The wildlife really appreciates it. When you're there and a bald eagle flies overhead, you feel proud of what you've done."

GIVING BACK LOCALLY

While a farming career is in the past for the Claycomb family, the love for farm life remains. Created in 2008, the Claycombs operate Bedford County Therapeutic Riding Program on their

farm. This nonprofit organization helps children and adults with physical and mental needs, including autism, Down syndrome, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and grief, from local counties, including Bedford, Blair and Cambria.

The program remains financially self-sufficient through donations so any services offered are free of charge. Even in this endeavor, Cat equipment plays a role.

Lois explained the importance of using their Cat track loader and backhoe to haul the bales of hay, which is used to feed the horses. She laughed as she said, "We're probably the only local farm that uses heavy equipment to put in our hay."

CONTRACTOR OF THE YEAR NOMINATION

When you consider the success of the company, the values instilled, the sustainability efforts put forth and even the nonprofit work contributed, Claycomb Excavating fit all of the criteria to be considered for Equipment World's Contractor of the Year, sponsored by Caterpillar.

Once Cleveland Brothers Account Manager Ryan Enck had the chance, he didn't hesitate to nominate Claycomb Excavating for consideration.

Only 12 businesses are selected nationwide to receive the elite nomination. References, equipment management practices, attention to detail, community involvement and business acumen are all factors for nominees to be considered. All 12 nominees were treated to a trip to Las Vegas, Nev., to gather for roundtable discussions and seminars with fellow contractors.

On the third day of the trip, *Equipment World* hosted a banquet and the winner was announced. While Claycomb didn't place first in the program, he was a finalist and felt humbled for the opportunity to be considered.

While planting contracts and nonprofit programs on the family farm aren't performed by your average contractor, Claycomb Excavating continues to exhibit that they are far from the average business. The sustainability efforts made in addition to the community involvement and hard work they perform are just a few things that distinguish Claycomb Excavating as contractors and business owners. >>

This article was originally published in The Link, a Cleveland Brothers Publication

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