

Middle East immigrant builds car dealership

City Auto Sales grew from 40 cars to over 100

By ERICK PETERSON
Hermiston Herald

Music, food and prizes were all part of an immigrant business owner's celebration of success Friday, March 25, at City Auto Sales, Hermiston.

Hundreds of balloons adorning the new building at 80857 N. Highway 395. There was a DJ, two food trucks and tables of pastries at the dealership. Some of the cookies had the name and logo of the business on them in icing. There were games and a large pile of prizes.

People aplenty enjoyed the music and food, and the owner was in the middle of it.

"I like this town," dealership owner Mohammed Jaber said. "When I came from my country, I came to this town. The people in this town were very nice, and I'm happy to do business in this town."

Jaber came to this country 14 years ago from Palestine. A Tri-Cities resident, he opened businesses in Hermiston, starting with a stereo shop, selling it and then opening his car dealership.

His wife, Jasmine Jaber, was present at the celebration. "It's exciting, especially



Nathaly Hernandez, office manager, and Mohammed Jaber, City Auto Sales owner, stand next to a Chevy Camaro in the showroom Friday, March 25, 2022.

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for him, and where he came from," she said. "He came to America to build and become successful. It took him a while; it took work."

She added her husband is happy to be enjoying the fruits of his labor, and she said she is excited for him.

Meanwhile, she said, she is busy, too. A full-time mother to their six children, she said they have their hands full.

Employee Alex Wakid described the stunning growth of City Auto Sales. He said the dealership

started "very small" around five years ago. Then, he said, there was only a trailer for two offices and 40 cars for sale. There were five employees when Wakid arrived.

"With hard work and ethic, all of our employees

putting in the work, we have gotten to where we are now."

Now, the dealership has 105 cars for sale on site and 13 employees.

City Auto Sales moved into its new building three months ago while its construction was in the final

stages. Now, with all the work done, management felt the time was right for the party March 25.

Other dealership employees said weather and the coronavirus also delayed the revelry.

Wakid has been with the business through much of the growth. Every day, he said, he commutes from the Tri-Cities. He said he started as a sales manager more than a year-and-a-half ago, before being promoted to general manager.

Around for a bit longer than Wakid, Nathaly Hernandez, office manager, said she was working at City Auto Sales since the very beginning. At the start, she said, the business was just the owner and her.

"When we got here, it was just dirt," she said, as she waved her arm across a parking lot, filled with cars.

"We finally made it," Hernandez said. "We worked really hard for this, and we are so glad that it is here."

Because of City Auto Sales' success, Mohammed Jaber said he is thinking of opening a second dealership, possibly in Washington.

"You never know, you know," he said. "I hope. We'll see how things work here."

New Dollar General adds more jobs, makes donation

Store plans to donate 100 books to local elementary school

Hermiston Herald

Dollar General announced the opening of its store at 1206 W. Highland Ave., Hermiston.

A press release states the store intended to employ approximately six to 10 people, depending on its needs, and that employees were to be given competitive wages and benefits.

Dollar General carries household essentials, including food, cleaning supplies, paper products, over-the-counter medicines, hygiene products and baby items. Also, it sells home decor and an expanded party

preparation selection.

"At Dollar General, we believe the addition of each new store provides positive economic growth for the communities we proudly serve, and the addition of our new Hermiston store highlights our commitment to deliver a pleasant shopping experience that includes great prices on quality products in a convenient location," said Dan Nieser, Dollar General's senior vice president of real estate and store development. "We look forward to welcoming customers to our new store and hope they will enjoy shopping at our new location."

Dollar General stated its plans to donate 100 new books to a nearby elementary school to benefit students ranging from

kindergarten to fifth grade.

Through the partnership with the Kellogg Company, the donation was part of a planned donation of more than 100,000 books across the country to celebrate new Dollar General store openings.

"The addition of the Hermiston store opens the opportunity for schools, nonprofit organizations and libraries within a 15-mile radius of the store to apply for Dollar General Literacy Foundation grants," the press release states. It adds, since 1993, "the Dollar General Literacy Foundation has awarded more than \$203 million in grants to nonprofit organizations, helping more than 14.8 million individuals take their first steps toward literacy or continued education."



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A banner on the front of Dollar General, Monday, March 28, 2022, gives notice to passersby that the store is open.



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