

POLICYHOLDER EDITION

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BUILDING A BUSINESS ON HELPING OTHERS, ONE MILE AT A TIME

RoadRunner Towing & Recovery's owner Judy Smart sits in her office surrounded by photographs of her family.

HOW ONE BUSINESS FOUND SUCCESS BY GIVING BACK

When you work at a towing company, you are always dealing with individuals going through a very difficult time. People typically come in on a bad day and they're seldom happy. But one towing company is aiming to make those bad days a little better.

"Every day is different and we do our very best to put ourselves in the individual's

shoes when they come to our office or when we go out on a call," said Judy Smart, owner of RoadRunner Towing & Recovery in Baton Rouge, La. "This business is always about serving the individual we are called to help."

Smart and her late husband James started the company in 1969. With a laugh, Smart recalled a time in those early years when



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Find out how on page 8

► *continued on page 3*

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► *continued from page 1*

they were so hungry for business they were nicknamed “roadrunners” because of how fast they responded to calls and arrived at the location. “We only had two trucks at the time and we made sure we answered every single call we received,” said Smart.

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Once, she and her husband received a call while at a Christmas party and headed straight to the customer. Arriving at the scene wearing a floor-length red gown and her husband in a suit, the person they helped said, “This is without a doubt the best dressed wrecker company in town!”

Although the name stuck, the company has grown tremendously throughout the years, going from two trucks to 17, two employees to about 50, and a combined total of nearly 14 acres of land. In 1995, the company became the official storage company for the city of Baton Rouge. Today RoadRunner is known to be the most efficient dispatching system in the state of Louisiana and drives an average of 650,000 to 700,000 miles per year.

As much as the drivers are on the road, Smart and her team are proud of their good safety record. “We have had some accidents happen,”

said Kent Simon, driver supervisor. “Fortunately they’ve been minor, and we do our best to keep safety at the forefront of everyone’s mind.”

In this business, there is no such thing as a typical day and there is always a lot going on. “Between helping all the people at the front office, handling all the calls that come in, escorting people in and out of the lots safely, and whatever situation that comes in — like a flat tire — there’s a lot of juggling,” said Simon. “It’s rarely a quick in and out situation, and every day is a new day.”

It might be a roller coaster ride, but this business is near and dear to Smart — who is no stranger to loss herself — because it gives her a chance to give something back. To be there when people need someone. Through this business, she has the opportunity to help individuals during a tragedy. “We have people that come in that may have been in a car accident where they lost a loved one,”



Two of RoadRunner Towing & Recovery's wrecker trucks at their storage lot in Baton Rouge, La.



RoadRunner Towing & Recovery's owner Judy with her son and general manager Bill, granddaughter Anna-Grace, and great-granddaughter Scarlett.

said Smart. "They're always going to be very emotional, but our staff is always empathetic to them. Being able to help those families makes it all worth it."

"Those individuals have a hard time focusing on themselves during a tragic loss, and I just wanted to be able to do and give what I can to them."

That extra layer of care that Smart and her team provide to their customers continues in her personal life. Two years ago she was watching the local news and came across a story about a young boy that lost his life in a drive-by shooting. She wasn't sure why the story stuck with her so much, but she couldn't help but be concerned for the family. "What are these parents going to do

now?" thought Smart. "They most likely did not have life insurance on such a young child."

It was tragedies like this that compelled her to start a nonprofit organization, Baton Rouge Area Victims Empowered. Their mission: help innocent victims of crime by connecting them with places and people that can aid them. It provides Smart and others a way to reach out to individuals and families during their time of need, providing everything from short-term monetary help to counseling. "Those individuals have a hard time focusing on themselves during a tragic loss, and I just wanted to be able to do and give what I can to them," said Smart. "It's only been two years, but it has been such a blessing to be a part of these victims' recovery."

Helping others has become Smart's true calling, but she relies on Simon's help to make sure RoadRunners' employees are being taken care of daily. "We've had a

number of employees, Smart included, that lost their homes during the recent flooding in Baton Rouge," said Simon. "We do what we can to help our employees with their personal situation and make sure we provide a safe environment when they come to work." They do this by adhering to all OSHA guidelines, conducting regular safety meetings, and enforcing a no-phone use policy in the trucks at all times.

"LUBA has come out a number of times to talk to our drivers during our safety meetings"

Simon also relies on the loss control team at LUBA Workers' Comp to come in with a second pair of eyes and go over things they may have missed. "LUBA has come out a number of times to talk to our drivers during our safety meetings and they walk through the offices and the car lots to make sure nothing is overlooked," said Simon. He said they've been a LUBA policyholder for as long as he can remember and believes they're one of the best companies to work with when it comes to protecting their employees.

"It's a pleasure working with them and I know that they will do whatever needs to be done to help. Kindness, hard work, and being a helping hand is what RoadRunner was built on, and it's a great feeling to work with a company with those shared values." 

CONTEST QUESTION #2

What can be found on the homepage of the new LUBA website at lubawc.com?

- (a) our LUBA Difference video
- (b) online claims reporting
- (c) access to our safety video library
- (d) all of the above



LUBA Workers' Comp Named One of the Best Places to Work in Baton Rouge

This year, LUBA was named one of the Best Places to Work in Baton Rouge by *Greater Baton Rouge Business Report*. The awards program recognizes the best places of employment by grading companies on their corporate culture, communications, work environment, pay and benefits program, and overall employee engagement and satisfaction. LUBA was the only casualty insurance company to receive this honor.

Thank you to our policyholders who continue to trust us with your business and help our company grow. We understand the important role that you play in the success of our business and culture. We work hard to create a sense of family not only among our coworkers but also with you, the clients we serve!

