

Business Pulse

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Added Kayla, “People have been so excited it’s pumped us up.”
For more information or to place an order, Vanilla Bean can be reached at 507-CAKE.

SPAR GAS TURNS 50

America has just celebrated another birthday and so has Spar Gas, located on the corner of the bypass and Red Road. Spar Gas is now 50 years old and the business looks great for its age.
“For my parents, this was their dream,” said Sabrina Tolbert, who now operates the business with her brother, Steven Catron. Sabrina says her parents, Lyle and Mary Ann Catron, started Spar Gas in Sparta. McMinnville was the second location. There are now six Spar Gas locations with Crossville, Livingston, Shelbyville and Carthage being the other four.
“A lot of companies just



Pictured during the 50-year celebration at Spar Gas on Friday are, front row, from left, Lori Catron, Sabrina Tolbert, Judy Haston, Dale Maynard and Penny King. Back row, Tim Crawford, Steve Marsh, Danny Seals, Brandon Ogle and Mark White.

want to sell you the gas,” said Sabrina. “They’re not a full-service company like we are. We do installation and we offer 24-hour emergency service.”
Spar Gas sells propane

to residential and commercial customers. The company can install a tank as large as 1,000 gal-

lons, which can hold 800 gallons of propane due to the space that needs to be left for expansion.

Accessories such as heaters and stoves are also sold and installed.
“Our biggest thing is

customer service because we’re small and we believe in taking care of people,” said Sabrina. “We want to know our customers on a personal basis.”

To celebrate 50 years, Spar Gas held a cookout Friday. The event was well attended and included satisfied customers like Larry Flatt.

“We really enjoy the service,” said Larry, who estimates he’s been a Spar Gas customer for 25 years. “When we call, they are there. That’s the kind of service we like.”

Spar Gas can be reached at 473-3067.

THAT’S ALL FOLKS

I hope your Fourth of July was explosive, yet safe. I’m always eager for business news, be it rain, sleet or federal holiday. Give me a call with your business achievements at 473-2191.



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Sullens Transport got its start in 1978 and has grown to a 25-truck operation. The business has operated from its facility on Hennessee Avenue for the past 13 years.



Pictured with Diane and Troy Sullens are their grandchildren, from left, Siena Mullican, London Sullens, Knox Mullican and Lexi Sullens.

Sullens Transport keeps on truckin’

BY EMMA HOLMES
Southern Standard intern
(McMinnville, Tennessee)

Sullens Transport employees are no stranger to hard work. They have stood the test of time, been in business 40 years, and have made their company successful

in many ways.
Troy Sullens, 64, started his business on July 4, 1978 and has skyrocketed from there. Before Troy started his business, he worked at Powermatic here in McMinnville. He was on the picket line for \$20 a day when Powermatic workers went on strike.
With their young son Chris and bills coming in, Troy thought it was time to make a change. One day, the cousin of

Troy’s wife Diane asked Troy if he knew anyone who would want to haul milk part time. Troy jumped right in, said he would take the position, and ran the milk route that same day. At night he would work at Powermatic.
Soon after, Troy was offered the opportunity to buy his own truck and he happily said yes thinking he would make a better living and eventually own his own trans-

portation business. When he first got started, Troy did all the work from his home.
His son, Chris, says, “I remember changing tires in the driveway. I used to never want to come home from school because I knew when I got home I would have to work for my dad.”
For the first two years, Troy had two trucks. Now he runs 25. The business grew with much speed when they bought out Hawkins Corporation in 1996 and then bought out Weaver Transport in 1997.
It was 13 years ago when they moved to their current location on Hennessee Avenue in Smartt Station.
Along the way, Sullens Transport has expanded its operation. Now, not a day passes that they don’t pick up from a dairy farm and deliver the milk to plants all over the Southeast. Their deliveries are mainly food-grade products. In short, if they can put it in a bottle to drink, they transport it.
Besides their products, they make their own bio-diesel and use an estimated 400,000 gallons a year. They also work on their own equipment and other equipment as well. There is nothing they don’t do in-house and nothing is subcontracted out.
So how does a person develop a huge successful business from scratch? Troy says, “You have to out work your competition. Whatever you put into it, it’s what you’re going to get out of it. God has blessed us.”
Chris talks about his father and says he is the hardest working man he knows. His family has figured Troy has maybe taken 30 vacation days in the 40-year span he has run the business.
Chris says, “Cows don’t know when Christmas Day is,” meaning every day is a working day for Sullens Transport.
Plans for the future are to take it day by day. They don’t expect any changes in their work ethic. They say quality employees and the support of Warren County have kept them striving to do their best.

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