

# CARPET'S PLUS

## Past & Present

written by Tracy Douglas



The fabric of Carpets Plus is woven with a close-knit family that has a deep love of Janesville and a passion for the work that they do. While originally from Madison, Michael Peters' family lived in Janesville for a period of five years and formed many strong bonds here while raising their daughters. They grew an especial fondness for many of the Janesville parks, and an appreciation for the people in this community. "I think overall though the people are outstanding individuals, citizens, employees and great customers. The pride they take in their homes is very apparent" said Mr. Peters.

When recalling how Carpets Plus came to Janesville, Mr. Peters said, "You might say Janesville and Rock County picked us. In the 1970's we gained a nice following in Rock County from our Madison East store and we had developed strong installation contractor relationships from the area." Carpets Plus, then known as Carpetland USA, opened up in Janesville in 1979 on Refset Drive across from the Janesville Mall. In 1997 they moved to a 9,000 square foot establishment on Pontiac Drive and in 1998, changed their name to Carpets Plus to reflect the wider range of products they came to offer.

Back in the 1970's there was a saying that "Carpet is King," Back then carpet represented 100% of sales made at Carpets Plus. As the decades evolved, Carpets Plus also changed and diversified. Today, carpets represent about 50% of sales and ceramics, tiles, hardwoods, laminates, and vinyl flooring make up the other half of their product assortment to meet the evolving needs of their customers.

While Carpets Plus has an eye to the future, they also have a profound respect for the past and the history of Janesville. One of Mr. Peters highlights in his company's existence was the honor of being chosen to help with the restoration of the Tallman House.

"The thought that there we were measuring and cutting carpeting where Abe Lincoln once visited Wisconsin made a profound and lasting impression," said Mr. Peters. "As a matter of fact, the carpet was recreated by the same British company the Tallman family had worked with a century and a half earlier, so it was an exact replica. It was amazing to be in the 1990's with the ability to make the same pattern."

Another aspect of the business in which Mr. Peters takes pride is all of those who work with him side by side at Carpets Plus. Currently, Mr. Peters owns Carpets Plus with his wife, Regan, two daughters, and a sister and brother-in-law. As a matter of fact, over the

past forty years, twenty family members have worked at the family trade. The personal pride they take in their work, and their dedication to the smooth operations of their enterprise has been integral to their business' success.

Supporting the family framework, other employees play an equally important role at Carpets Plus. "We believe that personal growth of all of our employees is what drives the business." said Mr. Peters. " Thus our longstanding objective has been to retain the staff and the longest possible employee tenure." Strong ethics and a desire to grow with the company in responsibility are essential for team members. Having such a strong work force has allowed Carpets Plus to increase their presence to include shops in Madison West (1986) Stevens Point (Plover-1989) and Wausau (Rib Mountain-2000)

Carpets Plus couples a commitment to employee growth with a desire to provide their customers with the highest quality products and services.

"Our customers are our reason for being," said Mr. Peters. "We look forward to the day when their confidence and spending levels return. Until then we are servicing past customers and pointing out to the current shoppers what an advantageous time this is to purchase flooring."

