

# ALEX LEE INK

*a magazine for alex lee employees*



**Alex Lee**

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GOT A STORY OR  
PICTURE IDEA FOR **INK**?

Whether it's an interesting angle on your job, an illuminating look at what your department does, a profile of an interesting co-worker, or something else you think *INK* readers would appreciate, we'd like to hear about it. Please contact the *INK* journalist for your company and share your ideas.

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# A MESSAGE FROM BOYD

BOYD L. GEORGE, CHAIRMAN OF ALEX LEE, INC.



**“TO ACCOMPLISH GREAT THINGS,  
WE MUST NOT ONLY ACT, BUT ALSO DREAM;  
NOT ONLY PLAN, BUT ALSO BELIEVE.”**

*— Anatole France*

**S**UCCESS IN OUR INDUSTRY is defined by increasing revenues year after year. This has proven to be a difficult objective in the past year. Increasing competition in our market continues to challenge the growth of our independent customers and corporate stores. We have two simple choices available for this circumstance: we can allow our competition to siphon off our growth, or we can find new ways to resist and succeed in spite of this new competition. In reality, we have no choice. Growth is our only option.

**MOST OF THE PRODUCTS THAT WE SELL ARE NOT UNIQUE.** They can be found at the nearest drug store, supercenter, convenience store, warehouse club, or online. **Our challenge, therefore, is to provide superior service for our customers and guests.** Whether a cashier in a store, a driver delivering to a customer, or a customer sales representative: our engagement with our customers and guests is critical to the success of our company.

**OUR PATH TO SUCCESS IS SIMPLE IN CONCEPT,** but difficult in its execution. Each and every one of us must continually engage and relate with our customers and guests. We must create an atmosphere of excitement in our stores and make a compelling reason for them to return on a regular basis. We must offer services to our independent customers that are unique and help them grow. Although this is a challenge, I am confident that each of our employees and hosts has the ability and commitment to succeed in their efforts to engage with all of our customers and guests. Despite any new competition, we will prevail and continue to grow our revenues.



# A MESSAGE FROM BRIAN

**BRIAN GEORGE, PRESIDENT & CEO OF ALEX LEE, INC.**

*“If you don’t like something, change it. If you can’t change it, change your attitude.”*

— MAYA ANGELOU

**CHANGE IMPACTS EVERYONE**, and we are experiencing change faster than ever. At our 2017 Alex Lee Annual Meeting, we discussed the changes we face in our industry today and how we change our attitude to address these changes.

Four key changes impacting our industry today are intense competition, changing demographics, changing consumer demands, and technology. Everyone sees the number of grocery competitors not only in our markets, but also entering our markets. We have our traditional competitors like Harris Teeter and Food Lion. We also have disruptive competitors such as Amazon and Blue Apron. Notice the new competitors like Blue Apron and Plated that offer meal solutions by delivering ingredients and a recipe for consumers to make a great meal at home. They target traditional supermarket shoppers, and we have to compete with them not just Food Lion and Harris Teeter. And we can’t forget the impact Amazon has on our industry with quick delivery of grocery, including fresh items. We have to change our attitude when it comes to our beliefs about who our competition is.

Changing demographics in the U.S. also impact how we meet our customers’ needs. By 2020, minorities will account for over 50% of the U.S. population according to IRI. The population growth in our markets is Hispanic and Asian. We already know that in some of our markets minorities make up the majority of the population. Are we targeting our customer and the customer of the future, or are we relying on traditional beliefs about grocery? And how many of you still think of our consumer as female? 50% of all grocery shoppers are now male. We also know that millennials are becoming the largest consumer group. How we target millennials versus baby boomers differs in the item, delivery method, and messaging. We have learned a lot about our consumers through visiting consumers in their homes and talking to them. We must continue that kind of research and adapt our offerings and marketing to address what our guests want. We have

to be willing to change our attitude about our consumers’ wants and needs.

We have learned in home visits and through other market research that the demands of consumers have changed and continue to change. They want inspiration to create meals at home and the tools to make that quick and easy. We see companies like Blue Apron growing rapidly by offering this type of meal kit for easy, made-at-home meals. The digital shopper has different expectations for speed and simplicity of ordering. They use Amazon Now for delivery within two hours and shop in subway stations through pictures on their phones. People have a growing concern for their health and look for fresh foods. They also expect transparency. They want to know where their food comes from and if possible who grew it. We have to change our attitude and adapt to the ever changing demands of our consumers. They use digital to purchase items all of the time, and this segment will only grow in our industry.

And finally, technology. Technology drives rapid and significant change in almost everything we do. Alexa can order product, answer questions, and schedule meetings, and soon she will predict what you want or need before you even ask. And Alexa is just one of many products already available that can provide that kind of service. We also see innovations in food like baking pizza in the delivery truck on the way to the home in order to speed up delivery. And those pizzas are made by robots. Google “Zume Pizza” if you want to see how this is done. Technology makes things we dream about become reality. We can’t change how these shifts impact our industry, but we must change our attitude and embrace these technological advances that make all things possible.

Understanding the changes happening opens up opportunities for us to better serve our customers and grow sales. By changing our attitude from one of resistance to one of acceptance, we will be a leader in our industry.



# BLAZE YOUR OWN TRAIL

Now you can take your career to the next level, your way.

In November, Alex Lee unveiled its new People Strategy. As part of that work, we have explored many options on what we can do to provide you with the tools and resources you need to GROW your career. With that in mind, we're excited to launch a whole new way to take charge of your career. **The Alex Lee Career Hub**. A powerful new online career toolbox that has been created to empower you to take the steps you need to successfully steer your career in the direction you choose.

Visit [csi-thecareerhub-alexlee.careerinnovation.com/en-us/welcome.aspx](http://csi-thecareerhub-alexlee.careerinnovation.com/en-us/welcome.aspx) and start with a career health check.

#### HOW TO LOG IN:

- Click 'Create your account' below the sign in fields, and then fill in the fields.
- If you have a company email address, you can use that as your 'Username'. If you do not have a company email address, you can use the personal email address you listed in our employee portal as your 'Username', then create a password and continue as above.



SCAN TO  
START NOW!



# The 2017 Chairman's Award Winner and Doug Vaughan Award Winners



## Chairman's Award

### DWAYNE REECE

**Dwayne Reece**, our 2017 Chairman's Award winner, began his career with MDI as a selector in 1994 and transitioned to the Transportation Department as a driver in 2003. Throughout the years, he has excelled at each and every task to which he's been assigned. One of these tasks is training new drivers. He takes this role very seriously and ensures that all trainees are not only shown the proper procedures, but also the importance of how to handle themselves in front of our customers. He realizes that the example he sets with training is a direct reflection on how these new employees will represent MDI when released on their own.

Dwayne is open and honest with the management team by bringing concerns about as well as offering suggestions for improving processes. He is one of our drivers trusted to be assigned

to new accounts. At one of these new accounts, La Unica in Greenville, SC, Dwayne made a point to introduce himself to the manager and members of the receiving department on his first delivery. He explained what we could do for them and offered his help in any way that he could. In turn, he advised MDI on La Unica's needs, and over time we have steadily seen an increase in La Unica's orders.

He recently advised MDI of a customer that needed assistance with loading; he requested a small electric jack to prevent damage and to expedite unload times. These jacks have since served as a great addition to the tools that drivers need to satisfy the customers' needs.

Dwayne demonstrates frugality and innovation by sharing with managers more efficient ways to serve our customers. He saw the need for a stop-bar to be placed on the lift gate of trailers that has aided not only in keeping our drivers safe, but also in preventing the loss of property when unloading.

From the warehouse to his role as a driver, Dwayne has always traveled the extra mile for his customers. While

servicing an account, he uncovered a pallet of eggs that was delivered incorrectly. Instead of leaving them, he made the extra effort to call dispatch and return the eggs to MDI intact, so they could be sent to the proper customer. He understands the need to be efficient and always looks for the quickest and safest route to stores. He relays this information to management, so it can be shared with other drivers.

He has earned respect from both co-workers and customers through his strong work ethic and values. He provides the same service to all his accounts and gives of his time with a caring and positive attitude — a willingness to help anyone. He constantly puts others before himself.

Last but not least, Dwayne is a leader. David Long, Assistant Manager of Tri-County Quality Foods stated, "Dwayne is always professional, helpful, knowledgeable, and day in and out is one of the best drivers if not the best driver at MDI." Chris Carter, Store Manager with Food Country, states that Dwayne not only helps unload, but jokes with the help and "fits in with the staff" as if he were a store employee. When given a challenging situation recently, Dwayne said, "The smaller customers are what made MDI what it is today." He said that he would do his best to service the smallest account with the same respect as the large ones.

His actions are from the heart — and he truly represents the values and core beliefs that were envisioned by the George family when MDI began. Please congratulate Dwayne Reece, recipient of the 2017 Chairman's Award!

## Doug Vaughan Awards

Part of the Alex Lee Vision Statement says that our Company will be “respected by its communities for the value it and its employees add.” It is employees like Doug Vaughan who make this vision a reality. Doug Vaughan worked for Alex Lee from 1995 to 1998 as Director of Real Estate. After his death, it came to light how Doug not only served our company with boundless energy, but also how heavily he was involved in adding value to the community.

The Doug Vaughan Community Service Award recognizes employees for the value they add to their community by participating in causes worth supporting, donating money or time to projects and events that will benefit the community, helping in schools, serving in community groups, and helping raise money for charity organizations.

## PAULA MITCHELL



**Paula Mitchell**, Human Resources Specialist for Lowes Foods, and her husband, Dennis, have been growing their community by devoting time to Troop 409 in King, NC. Their goal is to be a positive influence in the lives of many boys and young men in the King area. The troop is sponsored by Carl Calloway American Legion Post 290, which provides programs that build character, develop social responsibility, and encourage personal fitness. Paula

has worked diligently over the years using not only her spare time but also vacation time to support Troop 409 through various fundraisers, such as manning a food booth at the Stokes County Fair and the Corn-Shucking Festival and participating in KingFest. Alex Lee is proud to make a donation to the Boy Scouts of America for Troop 409 in Paula’s honor.

## MARTHA JUNE



One of the key values at Alex Lee is “Respect.” We “respect every individual we encounter whether employee, customer, supplier, or stranger, including diverse points of view.” This is true of **Martha June**, Utility Warehouse employee in the Returns Department at MDI. In addition to being a joy to be around at work, Martha spends countless hours bringing joy to many in her community through her involvement with several organizations in Caldwell County. For the last five years she has volunteered time to Caldwell Hospice to brighten the lives of others during difficult times. She also assists the senior citizens at Koinonia in Lenoir with their shopping and making doctor appointments. Martha has served as a board member for Habitat for Humanity for the past three years. She also volunteers her time at Helping Hands doing whatever she’s asked to help those in need. Martha needed assistance herself at one time in her life and believes giving back to others is a small sacrifice to

help the community she is very proud of. Alex Lee is proud to make a donation to Helping Hands in Martha’s honor.

## ANDY WHARTON



Alex Lee is based on a high standard of values and beliefs that have made our company successful. **Andy Wharton**, Deli/Bakery Specialist for MDI, not only applies these to his role at MDI but also to the children and young adults he coaches and mentors in his local community. He understands the value in teamwork and supports local teams any way needed to create team opportunities for students. Although he travels extensively over seven states for MDI, Andy always finds time to help coach and train aspiring young athletes regardless of his work schedule. Andy has donated over 20 years of his time to coaching baseball for the Mountain View Recreation league. He has also organized and coached the Catawba Valley Storm Travel Baseball Organization, which developed several college baseball players as well as minor league and even Major League careers. Andy has also volunteered time to coach the Diamond Life Academy Heat Baseball to state championships. And on autumn nights he can be found in the announcer’s stand as the “Voice of the Fred T. Foard Tigers,” commentating for the Fred T. Foard High School football games. Alex Lee is proud to make a donation to Fred T. Foard’s Athletic Department in Andy’s honor.

## THE 2017 SPARX AWARD WINNERS

We would like to congratulate our **2017 ALEX LEE SPARX AWARD WINNERS**. This year, we received over 80 amazing ideas, several of which are already making an impact. However, there could only be three winners.



**FIRST PLACE** went to **Tammy Wilcox** and **Tom Hutchison** of **Team Liquid Hot Magma** for their idea of renovating our original MDI Warehouse and transforming it into a world-class print and advertising services facility. Doing so could have the potential to save the company \$300,000 per year by expanding our in-house print capabilities and not outsourcing to third parties. Additionally, expanding our print capabilities has the potential to generate significant sales growth in the form of new print services to our existing and potential new customers.



**SECOND PLACE** went to **Team Beer Run**, consisting of **Charles Slezak**, **Terry Moore**, **Wes Doub**, and **Clark Stephens** for their idea of creating an internal distribution network of local breweries. Currently, many popular local craft breweries do not have

broad distribution, meaning you can typically only find and buy their beers at stores close to where they are produced. Creating our own pick up and drop off distribution network would allow us to be one of the only grocers to carry certain NC craft beer in markets where they are currently not available, making us the exclusive home for these brews in these markets and deepening our Beer Den brand.



**THIRD PLACE** went to **Team Lowes Foods on the Go**, consisting of **Chuck Alexander**, **Adam Barnhardt**, **Julie Brewster**, **Jeremy Dale**, and **Terry Stanley**, for their idea of a Lowes Foods vending program for convenience items such as bread, milk, and eggs that we can keep outside of our stores for 24-hour availability, as well as in high population density locations such as large apartment complexes and urban locations.

Thank you to EVERYONE who participated in this year's Sparx Challenge. We continue to be amazed by the quality of the ideas we receive. You are making an impact. We strongly encourage you to keep the ideas coming. The challenge is open to every host and every employee in our company. We are looking for any and all ideas, both big and small. Participating is easy. Just go to our website, [WWW.ALEXLEESPARX.COM](http://WWW.ALEXLEESPARX.COM), and click "Fire up your idea." If you have an idea, we strongly encourage you to submit it today – you might be our next winner.

– *Dana Rice, Contributor*

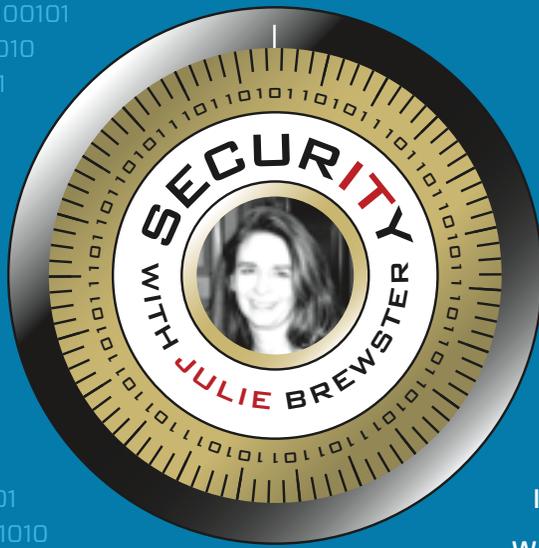
# KEEP YOUR HEAD IN THE CLOUDS

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**spar\***  
CHALLENGE

*Be in to Win Cash Prizes  
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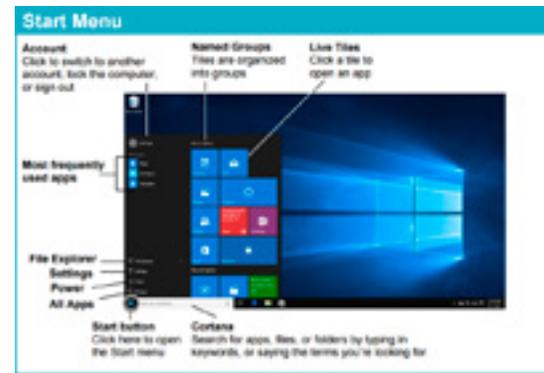
# IT'S TIME FOR WINDOWS 10

IF YOU HAVE PURCHASED A HOME PC IN THE LAST TWO YEARS, MORE THAN LIKELY IT CAME WITH WINDOWS 10. YOU MAY BE WONDERING, WHY WE HAVE NOT UPGRADED OUR PC'S TO WINDOWS 10 AT WORK? THERE ARE SEVERAL REASONS CORPORATIONS INCLUDING OUR OWN DID NOT IMMEDIATELY START UPGRADING PCS AND LAPTOPS TO WINDOWS 10. THE THREE MOST IMPORTANT ARE STABILITY,

COMPATIBLY, AND SUPPORT. MICROSOFT CHANGED A NUMBER OF THINGS WHEN THEY LAUNCHED WINDOWS 10. MANY OF THESE FEATURES ARE GREAT FOR CONSUMERS AND MOBILE DEVICES, BUT THEY FUNDAMENTALLY CHANGE HOW WE STAFF OUR SUPPORT SYSTEMS. THE IS DEPARTMENT HAS BEEN BUSY TESTING APPLICATIONS AND LEARNING HOW THE NEW WINDOWS 10 ECO SYSTEM WORKS. WE HAVE STARTED TO DEPLOY ALL NEW SYSTEMS WITH WINDOWS 10; HOWEVER, THIS WILL BE A GRADUAL UPGRADE OVER THE NEXT TWO YEARS.

The end user experience in transitioning from Windows 7 to Windows 10 is pretty intuitive. Windows 10 has a new look and lots of changes under the hood, but it all starts with the familiar Start Menu. Check out this Start Menu info graphic and these helpful links for Windows 10 basics, tips, and tricks.

The Alex Lee Support Center is available for questions and there are Windows 10 classes on **Lynda.com**. Help is only a click or call away.



- <https://www.laptopmag.com/articles/windows-10-keyboard-shortcuts>
- <https://www.cnet.com/how-to/windows-10-guide>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=miauAtIjPgtU>

Thank you for all you do to keep our systems safe and secure. To submit requests for IS Security topics you would like to see covered contact **Julie.brewster@alexlee.com**. **Please report any security incidents to the Alex Lee Help Desk at extension 54466 or by email to helpdesk@alexlee.com.**

# 2018 WELLNESS PROGRAM: QUEST METABOLIC SCREENING



**A**s a member of the Alex Lee family, your wellbeing is important to us. In partnership with Aetna, Alex Lee is able to offer **QUEST METABOLIC SCREENINGS** as an important wellness benefit. All full-time employees and their covered spouses enrolled in the Alex Lee medical plan are encouraged to complete a Quest Metabolic Screening this year. The screening is an important preventive measurement to identify the early warning signs of diabetes and cardiovascular disease. The measures included in the screening are blood sugar, triglycerides, HDL (good) cholesterol, blood pressure, and waist measurement.

Let's look at a real life example of why understanding your baseline measures is important: Earlier this year a 36-year-old Alex Lee employee developed a skin rash that would not go away. The employee went to multiple doctors' visits and took numerous medications; however, the rash would not go away. One day while the employee was at work, the employee experienced nausea and blurred vision. The manager immediately told the employee to go to the doctor, who ran blood tests that showed a blood sugar level of 735! This is a life-threatening level! The employee was rushed to the hospital. Although

the employee survived the ordeal, the employee's life was changed forever. The employee was diagnosed with diabetes and now takes daily medications and does regular blood sugar tests along with daily insulin shots. **This outcome could have been prevented with early intervention had the employee received a preventative screening.**

As of July 1, 2017, there are two ways you can complete the Quest Metabolic Screenings: **1)** Have your doctor complete a Physician Fax Form (if you have had a wellness exam since January 1, 2017). **2)** Register for a Quest Patient Service Center Appointment. To print a form or to sign up for your screening, go to <https://my.questforhealth.com>. You must register through this website for both options. (NOTE: The registration key is "alexlee.")

**In order to avoid paying up to a 30% penalty on your 2018 medical rates**, you and your covered spouse **must** complete a Quest Metabolic Screening **AND** your annual wellness exam by November 15, 2017.

Take the first step in maintaining or improving your health by knowing your baseline measures and completing your Quest Metabolic Screening.



# A MESSAGE FROM BOB

**BOB McTEIR, PRESIDENT OF MDI**

## A LOVE FOR COMMUNITY.

*I felt that I had to share this story with you. Last night just after 10:00 pm, I received a phone call from our COO. Normally this is not a good sign because this is around closing time at the stores and sometimes things can go terribly wrong around closing time. When I saw his name come up on my phone there was a part of me that started to cringe, and I realized that this would probably not be a good call. Upon answering the call Rusty (COO) informs me that we have just been robbed at one of our newest acquisitions in Clinton. He proceeds to tell about the events and how the robbers had guns, including a shotgun. This particular night Vicky from our Eutaw location was on site to help them with closing. Vicky had already worked a full day at our Eutaw location because our store manager was on vacation. So after a full day of work and then some, she drives to Clinton to help them with their closing. She was up in the office when the three gunman came in the store and started pointing a shotgun, hand gun, and rifle at our staff members on the registers. These are young staff members that I'm sure are overwhelmed with the events. Vicky proceeds to tell the gunmen not to point the guns at them but to point them at her. Vicky informs them that she is the one who can get them what they want. So in the midst of some of the most gut wrenching events, Vicky has managed to demonstrate love in the center of it. I'm in awe today and so thankful that none of our people were hurt and that God protected them all.*

— **MACK McLAMB,**

Owner of 25 Carlie C's IGAs  
in Eastern North Carolina.

I wanted to share this story with you because we often hear stories about the selflessness of our customers' employees and also of our store owners. We work in a business that is very much about giving back and being part of a community. I have often written about the community events that our stores participate in. Not just once a year for a big event but almost on a daily basis, they are participating in everything from bake sales to Toys for Tots. We have great customers, and they would be the first to tell you it's because of their people. Just last quarter in Boyd's *INK* article he wrote: "Successful independents are focused on their communities... Their success is completely tied to knowing their neighbors and appealing to their communities." I've never met Vicky, but it's a wonderful feeling to hear about the love that she showed her fellow employees — her community. Vicky, thank you for everything that you do!

We are a great company because of our people. Thank you for everything that you do. Be safe out there. If you are driving a truck, working in the warehouse, driving from store to store to call on customers, or working in the office — whatever you are doing, be safe out there.

MDI

## CUSTOMER PROFILE

# RICK'S IGA

*The Jarrell Family Celebrates 38 Years  
in Glen Daniels, West Virginia*

If you are ever traveling near Glen Daniels, WV, be sure to visit Rick's IGA. You will like the store, I guarantee: the owners and employees are exceptional. Owned and operated by Rick and Freda Jarrell along with their son, Robbie, and their daughter, Robin, Rick's IGA has been a mainstay now for 38 years in the area. Once you talk to the Jarrell family, it is well evident why they are successful. They place the customer first in every situation, whether carving a special cut of meat or cashing a personal check.

**Eddie Minton**, the IGA Director at MDI, works directly with Rick and his staff to organize an annual anniversary sale each October through November. This past year was an absolute monster for business and excitement in the area. While the store does great business on a normal week, this anniversary sale took them over the top. They had a whopping 164% increase in sales the week of the ad, which is remarkable considering they have only three registers and are closed on Sundays. Customers old and new came from as far as 50



miles away to take advantage of the great deals. Although the store was packed each day of the sale, customers waited patiently because they know Rick and his team will always put them first.

The success that Rick's IGA has experienced is impressive, especially since there is no shortage of competition in the area. Kroger, Food Lion, Dollar General, Family Dollar, and Wal-Mart are all eager to steal a piece of this business. But Rick's IGA is able to fight them off with their promotional activity and fair-priced strategy. It is great to see that the independent grocer can still prosper in this day of mega stores and specialty concepts. We at MDI congratulate Rick's IGA on a job well done!

— **Skip Lutz** and **Stacey Hussey**, Contributors



## IGA FIVE-STAR RETAILER STATUS AWARDED TO EIGHTEEN CARLIE C'S!

Each year, IGA Retailers around the world go through a series of assessments to ensure that customers are encountering exceptional shopping experiences each and every time they enter an IGA store. In-store appraisals are combined with training and customer feedback evaluations to

create a thorough assessment process, and only the very best IGA Retailers are awarded the coveted Five Star Retailer status. This year we are proud to announce that 18 Carlie C's stores have received this distinction! The process has been a focus of the stores and management this past year, helping improve

the education of Carlie C's employees and the experience of its customers. Carlie C's has been an MDI customer since February 2000, and all of us at MDI would like to congratulate Carlie C's on this great accomplishment and well deserved recognition!

— **Lee Bowers**, Contributor



# FOOD SHOW

APRIL 24 - 26<sup>th</sup> 2017

**THE MDI MERCHANDISING SHOW** was held April 24-26, 2017, in Asheville, NC. This was MDI's first resort location show, and there were a lot of enhancements and additional activities that made this an exciting event for MDI customers, vendors, and associates.

Customers began arriving on Monday afternoon at the event hotel, Crowne Plaza Resort-Asheville, and were greeted at the MDI welcome kiosk and given a special guidebook with the show schedule, venue locations, maps, and directions. Banners and signs, noting activities, decorated the area, thanks to the MDI Advertising Department and Print Shop's superb work. In the months leading up to the show, attendees had the opportunity to pick a Tuesday afternoon activity: a Biltmore House and Gardens Tour, a Brewery Tour (Sierra Nevada and New Belgium), or an Omni Grove Park Inn Golf Tournament.

A Monday night reception at the Crowne Plaza Resort Expo Center Complex kicked off the show and was followed by dinner and special guest speaker, MLB Hall of Fame Cincinnati Reds Catcher Johnny Bench. Johnny signed autographs prior to speaking and was very entertaining. Attendees then networked and socialized while entertained with music. The evening proved to be enjoyable for all and was a great success.

Tuesday morning started off in the Expo Center with breakfast and the MDI Ad Group Meeting, followed by MDI Retail Institute of Learning (RIoL) sessions. Larry Levin, of Information Resources, Inc. (IRI), spoke on "Key Strategies for Today's Supermarket," and Kevin Paul Scott discussed "Training Skills and Inspiring for Passion." MDI Evolve Marketing presented the session "Being Relevant in a Digital Age & Digital Ordering."





# JUST\$AVE'S FIRST ANNUAL FAMILY MATH NIGHT ADDS UP

After the RiOL sessions and a lunch buffet, attendees boarded buses for their chosen Tuesday afternoon activity. It was a beautiful day, and we heard many wonderful comments from participants about how much they enjoyed their afternoon. Attendees had Tuesday evening to themselves to enjoy Asheville's many sites and restaurants.

On Wednesday, the show opened with stellar attendance at the U.S. Cellular Center in downtown Asheville. Customers registered and then started down the "pathway to sales and profits" on three levels of the U.S. Cellular Center complex. The concourse level featured Candy, GM, HB, DSD, RAS, Store Development, New Items Pavilion, and the June Dairy Month display. The arena-floor level featured Center Store Departments, the Hispanic Pavilion, the Digital Pavilion, and the Coffee Shack. The exhibit-hall level featured Meat, Seafood, Bakery/Deli, and Produce.

We would like to especially thank to **Mark Abernethy** and the MDI Warehouse and Transportation Departments for their coordination in order selecting; transporting displays, display props, and supplies; and delivering all these products to the U.S. Cellular Center — and the return trip after show was over. MDI drivers did an excellent job of steering their trailers into some tight spaces around this downtown Asheville facility. There are many Alex Lee/MDI associates who worked very hard to prepare for and make this resort show a great success. Their commitment to excellence and their dedication to achieving our goals for every aspect of the show was wonderful.

The Asheville Convention and Visitors Bureau was very welcoming. They worked closely with us to plan the event. We also thank Crowne Plaza Resort-Asheville, Biltmore Estate, Omni Grove Park Inn Golf Resort, New Belgium Brewery, Sierra Nevada Brewery, and Young Transportation for making us feel so welcome.

We are looking forward to our next two merchandising shows at Hickory Metro Convention Center with some further enhancements to our experience for the retail stores we serve. And planning has already started for our next resort location show, coming in April 2018.

— **Tom Hurd**, Contributor



**B** **BEING NEIGHBORLY** means creating a welcoming environment and being an active member of the community. It is also a core priority at Just\$ave. On April 10, 2017, Just\$ave Store #168 in Robbins, NC, exemplified this spirit of community involvement by organizing the first annual Family Math Night. The students from Elise Middle School in Robbins, along with their families, were invited to participate in the event.

The team at #168 developed a math-based game, requiring division and multiplication to determine unit prices, for students in sixth through eighth grades. The students were required to use items in the store to answer the questions successfully. Every student who participated was eligible for extra credit. Parents were also invited to shop the store while their students took part in the event. Snacks and treats were distributed in this environment of learning and fun.

School officials praised the team at Store #168, offering many thanks and recognitions. This event certainly exemplifies a heartfelt caring for the community. It is evident that the team at Store #168 understands the meaning of the Just\$ave purpose "We Truly Care." Everyone is excited to continue the tradition of Family Math Night next year!

— **Allen Reavis** and **Stacey Hussey**, Contributors

# MDI'S MARCH TOWARD SQF



In the world of food safety, there are myriad abbreviations: FDA, USDA, FSMA, FSIS, GMP, SOP, HARPC, HACCP, etc. Every organization, rule, program, or procedure seems to go by an abbreviation. SQF is the latest one MDI is tackling: **Safe Quality Food**. As our outside storage business continues to grow and we increase our presence in the global food supply chain, we have a need to identify ourselves as a leader in the realm of food safety. One way to do this is to have our facility certified SQF-Level 2.

In the 1990s there were several significant food safety crises, with “mad cow” disease in the United Kingdom of particular importance. Mad cow, more appropriately known as bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), infected at least 120,000 cattle in Britain in 1993. Similar to BSE, Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease is a degenerative, invariably fatal brain disorder in humans. By 1995, the first victim of a new variant of Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (nv-CJD) died at age 19, which, according to the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke, “has led to concern that BSE may be transmitted to humans through consumption of contaminated beef.” Though there is no direct proof yet to support this theory, “laboratory tests have shown a strong similarity between the prions [misfolded proteins] causing BSE and nv-CJD.” The year would end with three deaths from nv-CJD and the start of many countries banning imports of British beef.

In light of this and other food safety crises, many

of the largest food retailers collaborated through the Consumer Goods Forum, and in May 2000, the Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI), a non-profit foundation, was formed. GFSI provides benchmarks, allowing multiple bodies to certify companies at the same high standard. The certification bodies developed “schemes” under the GFSI guidelines. There are ten schemes recognized globally, but the three most popular in the U.S. are SQF, British Retail Consortium (BRC), and Food Safety System Certification (FSSC 22000). All three have the following in common: risk assessment or hazard analysis and critical control points (HACCP); preventive controls; good manufacturing practices (GMPs) or prerequisite programs (PRPs); and continuous improvement management system and commitment.

SQF is recognized around the world as a rigorous food safety management system. As part of the Food Marketing Institute (FMI), the Safe Quality Food Institute (SQFI) understands the grocery wholesale business and works to create standards that maintain food safety but are practical for our business.

So what is the expected outcome once we obtain this certification? By having one of the most stringent and respected certifications in food safety, we can expect greater customer confidence in the products we sell. Once certified, we gain market and customer prospects for our outside storage business through a searchable database for customers looking for SQF facilities. SQF also provides proof of due diligence and shows our proactive approach to identifying and managing risk.

The road to certification is an intense process, but one that will be worthwhile. Steps include learning the SQF Code, showing management commitment to the program, assessing risks, and training our employees. From there we have to monitor, verify, and validate that the system we have put in place is working. We conducted an assessment in May to identify any gaps in our program, and we will work towards completing our certification audit in early FY18.

While it hasn't been an easy process, the Warehouse management team and the Sanitation/SQF team of **Rachel Ellis, Scott Jandrew, and James Freeman** have worked diligently through this process to provide our customers Safe Quality Food.

— **Rachel Ellis and Joe Pfeifer, Contributors**

# MDI BY THE NUMBERS



## MDI Print Shop

On an average month, the MDI Print Shop produces 3,232,986 black-and-white images and 224,600 color images. The shop also uses 1,728,793 sheets of paper on average. If these almost two million sheets of paper were one big sheet with Hickory, NC, in the middle, the sheet would extend east to the coast, north to Pittsburg, west to Nashville, and south to Savannah.

## MDI Warehouse

### Distribution 2017 YTD Facts as of April 29, 2017

On average, our Selectors traveled 1,040,095 miles to complete our customers' orders. That's traveling from the surface of the earth to the moon almost four and a half times. On average, our Lift Operators traveled 217,911 miles to keep our pick slots full. That's traveling from Hickory, NC, to Anchorage, AK, 49 times.

On average, we shipped 744,175,796 lbs. to our customers. That's basically hand stacking the complete Empire State Building onto pallets and shipping it out.

On average, we shipped 32,102,574 cubic feet worth of groceries to our customers. That's enough groceries to completely fill up 20 Goodyear Blimps.



## MDI EASTER EGG-STRAVAGANZA

On Saturday, April 8, MDI threw its First Annual Easter Egg-stravaganza, taking place in the grassy area around the MDI walking trail. Kids of all ages participated in a relay race, egg hunts, bounce house, and egg decorating. A balloon artist and a face painter were also in attendance. Additionally, MDI raised money and donations for the Catawba and Caldwell County Soup Kitchens. Overall, the event was a great success!

— *Stacey Hussey, Contributor*



## CUSTOMER PROFILE

# ANDERSON DILWORTH

*Georgia Senators Honor  
Anderson Dilworth for His Lifelong  
Service to His Country, His Community,  
and the Grocery Industry*



*Left to right: Tracy Dilworth (son); Senator John Wilkinson; Stan Dilworth (son); Joel Dilworth (wife); Anderson Dilworth; Senator Frank Ginn; Lt. Governor Casey Cagle; and Melody Biederman (daughter).*

## TAKE A BREAK TUESDAY

As warm weather rolls around, so does the fun at MDI, most recently with April's "Take a Break Tuesday." Employees came out to the cafeteria to have some fun and relieve stress through hitting piñatas full of gift cards, healthy snacks, and chocolate. Employees also enjoyed healthy snacks such as protein bars and fresh fruits and vegetables. During the event, the health coach offered information on how to register for the upcoming metabolic screenings as well as information on the Peerfit exercise program available to employees.

Each month the MDI Wellness Committee meets to discuss and plan health related events and activities. Recently, the Wellness Committee has been working on the fenced area outside of the cafeteria to make it a relaxing place to take a break or have some fun. Now available in this area for employees to enjoy are corn hole boards, a basketball goal, and a football throw. Please feel free to use these games for stress relief and relaxation.

The Wellness Committee is always looking for suggestions from employees for the relaxation area or a "Take a Break Tuesday" activity. Please email your ideas to the health coach at [orenicks@aetna.com](mailto:orenicks@aetna.com).

— *Sharon O'Renick, Alex Lee Health Coach, Contributor*

We are honored at MDI to have Anderson Dilworth as one of our MDI independent customers. Anderson owns three Dill's Food City stores serviced by MDI in North Georgia. Anderson received the Georgia Food Industry Association's Legacy Award and was honored for his lifelong service to the grocery industry. It is our pleasure to have Anderson and his wife, Joel, and their children, Tracy, Stan, and Melody, and the entire staff at all three stores as part of the MDI family. Congratulations! A well-deserved award!

— *David Logue, Contributor*



# SUPER BOWL AVOCADO CONTEST

**OUR FIRST ANNUAL SUPER BOWL AVOCADO DISPLAY CONTEST**, featuring avocados from Mexico, created a great deal of excitement for our stores. The contest was open to all stores for participation. A promotional flyer was printed in all of the produce order books and was also placed on MDI Intouch for download and submission. Stores were asked to create an avocado display and submit pictures to MDI along with the completed entry form. The entries were judged by a national avocado commission using two main criteria: creativity and the percentage volume increase in avocado sales from last year. Produce Managers at all participating stores received a gift card award. The top three winning stores were:

1st place	<b>BILLY SELIG</b>	Piggly Wiggly #04 Sanford	\$700
2nd place	<b>RANDY FORREST</b>	Lowe's Foods Store #235	\$500
3rd place	<b>TRACI NEWBERRY</b>	Piggly Wiggly #85 Pinetops	\$300

There were 10 honorable mentions who won \$100 gift cards each:

- |     |                       |                           |
|-----|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| 1.  | <b>LAURA BARNHART</b> | St. Mary's Galaxy         |
| 2.  | <b>GARRETT KNAPP</b>  | Lowe's Foods Store #215   |
| 3.  | <b>JON TESSIER</b>    | Lowe's Foods Store #190   |
| 4.  | <b>ANDREW DICKENS</b> | Lowe's Foods Store #157   |
| 5.  | <b>MATT PACE</b>      | Lowe's Foods Store #149   |
| 6.  | <b>TIM BAKER</b>      | Lowe's Foods Store #245   |
| 7.  | <b>PAUL RAYNOR</b>    | Lowe's Foods Store #228   |
| 8.  | <b>DANNY BATSON</b>   | Bargains Foods            |
| 9.  | <b>KELLY BYRUM</b>    | Piggly Wiggly #89 Ahsokie |
| 10. | <b>MIKE PETTY</b>     | Tri County Quality Foods  |



The rest of the non-placing participants won a \$30 gift card each. It pays to participate! We encourage all stores to take advantage of the special promotions we offer during special events and holidays. These contests create excitement for consumers, engaging their attention with visual appeal. Keep on the lookout for the next contest opportunity!

— *Lorena Lemus, Contributor*



# A MESSAGE FROM TIM

**TIM LOWE, PRESIDENT OF LOWES FOODS**

## Local

**SUPPORTING LOCAL** is more than a slogan here at Lowes Foods. When our local partners and communities thrive, we thrive with them. During the summer, when it is peak season for local produce, our local partnerships are more evident. But supporting local is about more than just buying produce from local farmers. Here are some ways we are growing community and bringing our commitment to life.

At the peak of the growing season in the Carolinas, over 35% of our produce is grown locally. We've built our partnerships with local farmers through years of cooperation. Lowes Foods, together with MDI, hosts farmer meetings to discuss which crops will be in demand, how to stagger the crops so that the supply of produce over the season is steady, and requirements for delivering product either direct to store or to MDI. So that our guests can enjoy hard-to-find, unique varieties, we created Carolina Crate, our subscription program for peak-of-the-season local produce.

When we open stores in new markets, we seek out local vendors around the new locations. Lowes Foods hosted local vendor fairs in Greenville and Lexington this year. Through these events, we identified dozens of entrepreneurs eager to sell their products in our stores. Often, the local vendor fairs are the catalyst to move these small businesses from selling only in their backyard to selling their product in many locations across the Carolinas. Together with Lowes Foods category managers, these entrepreneurs learn about proper product labeling and distribution options.

Lowes Foods provides an opportunity for these entrepreneurs to grow, and our guests get to enjoy their unique products.

As we continue to convert our Lowes Foods brand products to the new brown bag label, we are also searching for suppliers in the Carolinas for our private brands. Today, our Lowes Foods brand ice cream, cookies, frozen pasta entrees, granola, and flour are all produced in the Carolinas. Partnering with local suppliers provides more flexibility in meeting our clean label requirements, introducing different flavors, and strengthening our local economy.

In the meat department, we have several important partnerships with suppliers in the Carolinas: Amick Farms chicken, Smithfield pork, and Carolina shrimp. Because of our commitment to Carolina shrimp, a processing facility in Oriental, NC, was reopened, creating new jobs.

Our guests continue to express how much they appreciate what we do to support local, but we wanted to do more. This spring we launched Shop Carolina, a movement to unite farmers, vendors, other local businesses like restaurants, and individual advocates in celebrating what makes the Carolinas special. Each local partner is part of what makes our community vibrant and has a story to tell. If you want to get to know a few of the farmers and vendors we partner with, you can find video profiles on our Facebook page. As a Carolinas-based business, we are so proud to partner with these local companies, share their stories, and help our communities thrive. We hope you are too.



# LOWES FOODS SECOND HARVEST

On April 13, 2017, in Winston-Salem, NC, Smithfield Foods' Helping Hungry Homes® initiative, a program focused on alleviating hunger and helping Americans become more food secure, joined forces with Lowes Foods to donate more than 41,000 pounds of protein to Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest North Carolina. The donation, equivalent to more than 110,000 servings, will help families fight hunger across North Carolina where one in six are food insecure. In attendance was Lowes Foods President **Tim Lowe**, Smithfield Foods VP Dennis Pittman, and NW Second Harvest Food Bank CEO Clyde Fitzgerald, Jr.

Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest NC, the North Carolina Feeding America affiliate for an 18-county service area, is the leading organization addressing hunger across our region. Working with more than 450 on-the-ground, non-profit partners, we provide access to nutritious food for neighbors who need it today, as we pursue an end to hunger through advocacy and innovative partnerships between the private, public, and non-profit sectors and funders working to address poverty and other community challenges linked to persistent food security in our region. Our network helps nearly 300,000 neighbors with food assistance each year. One-third of those we are helping are children. Second Harvest Food Bank programs include special initiatives that are feeding futures, feeding opportunity, feeding health, and feeding change. [www.HUNGERNWNC.ORG](http://www.HUNGERNWNC.ORG). #feedingcommunity

— **Jeff Sahr**, Contributor





# MERLEFEST

**MerleFest** celebrated its 30th anniversary this year, and we focused on local vendors and being healthy. But of course we brought along SausageWorks too! We featured fresh cut Pick & Prep fruit and vegetables to pair with Little Black Dressing from High Point, Roots Hummus out of Asheville, and Uncle Chris' Pimento cheese from Clemmons. We partnered with Bullzhead, a local BBQ sauce from Clemmons, to bring out the food truck and sell our SausageWorks sandwiches this year, which guests could top with Boar and Castle from Greensboro and Uncle Chris' Pimento Cheese or pair with a bag of Carolina Kettle Chips out of Kittrell. Each of these vendors came to spend a day with us at the festival, where they told people about their delicious products made right here in the Carolinas and shared their inspiring stories. Guests loved the option of being able to eat healthily or grab a brat, but most importantly, they were excited about being able to support a local vendor.

— **Stewart Gregory**, Contributor

## LOWES FOODS HOLDS ANNUAL HEALTH FAIR



On April 21, Lowes Foods held their Annual Health Fair in their training center. This year we were lucky to feature some new vendors such as 9rounds Fitness, and Wake Forest Baptist Center for Integrative Medicine, as well as some returning groups such as Moonstone Massage and Truliant Federal Credit Union. We also had the opportunity to sample kombucha (a healthy fermented drink) from the Buchi Bus and healthy food from Muscle Maker Grill.

— **Sandra Hagan**, Contributor

## LFS MOORESVILLE GARDEN CENTER



“Floriculture products are highly impulsive and seasonal,” according to the USDA website. “Planting is relaxing.... It’s rewarding to see the results of hard work.... It’s pleasant to look at.... It’s an activity you can do outside.... And it can improve the look of your yard.” With these benefits in mind and raw data of how successful our inside floral sales have historically been, we decided to take on the challenge of building an outdoor garden center at our Mooresville, NC, store. Well, it appears we were correct in our assumptions.

With a herculean effort from our real estate team, facility team, IT team, store team, and produce merchant team, we built a garden center, in one day, to the right side of our store. On March 29, we launched an offering second to none. Using three local growers, we are able to offer over 100 different outdoor items from annuals to perennials, from flowering plants to shrubs and trees. Our guests are so excited and have validated our decision with their pocketbooks. Sales have been fabulous! We are definitely the buzz in Mooresville this spring!

— **Richard McKellog**, Contributor



# LOWES FOODS SPONSORS THE 2017

NORTH CAROLINA

# AZALEA FESTIVAL



**T**his year, the grassroots team of Division 5 participated in 14 events leading up to and during the 2017 Azalea Festival. A big thank you to **Keira Lanier** from Store #199 and **Mandie Ross** from Store #186 who helped out on more than one occasion this year. They made *a lot* of samples. **Alexandra Evans** is the grassroots coordinator for all the Azalea Festival events and events in Division 5. During the festival, we shared our stories of using Lowes Foods catering for business meetings, employee parties, and guest-appreciation events. Samplings of grilled SausageWorks sausages and our signature chicken grape salad were well received! We sampled to over 400 local businesses during these 14 events. Thanks to **Whitney Pennell** from HR, **Keeland Carpenter** from Store #242, and **Jim Brookman** from Store #237.

“Becca Samples,” “Mandy and Keira,” and “Kids Zone” — we set up these sampling stations at the children’s play area during the weekend street fair in historic downtown Wilmington. **Rebecca Pardue** at Store #215 demonstrated making the “apple sandwich” and gave out samples to children and their parents. The apple sandwich has two rings of apples, almond

butter, local honey, and our private label granola sprinkled on top. We went through three cases of apples! And we handed out recipe cards from the Community Table.

We set up our grill on four different occasions outside of the Azalea Festival office. Businesses involved with the festival had to stop in on certain days to pick up passes, parade and street fair registration packets, and tickets, so the traffic was good.

We supplied dessert at the “celebrity luncheon” held at the country club of Wilmington. This elegant affair presents the Azalea Queen and her court along with the who’s-who of Wilmington. Our s’mores cakes from Store #199’s Cakery were a big hit, so much so that we ran out — that buttercream icing mixed with marshmallow fluff. Mmmmmm. We also served coconut, red velvet, and carrot cakes from the Cakery.

At the parade proper, **Arie Farrior** from Store #199 and **Kari Morrison** from Store #215 manned our tent, selling L’oven cookies, deli tea, lemonade, and water to the thousands of spectators. Due to street closings, we had to be down there at 6:30 am. It was chilly but fun!

— **Alexandra Evans**, Contributor



**A**s part of our Alex Lee People Strategy, we want to celebrate a culture of Food, Family, and Fun! When you break it down, each of us are passionate about food. This passion looks different for each of us: some are very health conscious, others enjoy that sweet treat, while all of us have memories tied to events where food was on the table. Many of these memories include our family. The Alex Lee enterprise has a history built on the value of family. We spend more time in many cases with our “work families” than we do with our own families, making it of utmost importance to develop relationships that help us move the organization forward. Ultimately, to do this well you have to have a little fun! In an effort to leverage this part of the strategy we created “Third Thursdays,” taking place at all Alex Lee companies. This is an event designed for us to gather together, socialize, and HAVE FUN. It is an event to get to know each other and an opportunity to share stories — and, well, to have a little fun. Maybe it’s a game of ping pong, a Jenga challenge, a cornhole match, or a game of Kan Jam. Ultimately, it’s a time to come together and grow stronger as a team.

— **Brandon Greene**, Contributor

## YELP’S SIP & SAMPLE TOUR

**O**n April 18, the Greer store hosted a group of Yelp Elite members for a “Sip and Sample” store tour, led by co-manager **Daniel Murray**. The tour began in the Beer Den where guests were treated to a pint of beer or glass of wine to sip while they walked the store, learning about the different departments and sampling our Originals. The hosts truly rolled out the red carpet for the Yelpers, preparing tastes from each department, wowing at every turn. Drinks in hand, the Yelp crew headed to Boxcar for a coffee and chocolate tasting, followed by guacamole and fresh-squeezed juice at Pick & Prep, stopping to admire the pick Your Own Herbs along the way. The SausageWorks and Smokehouse teams outdid themselves with pulled pork as well as Brisket Believer, and of course grilled sausages. Somewhere along the way, one of the guests was so impressed with what she saw, she grabbed a cart and shopped while she toured! In the bakery, guests sampled BreadCrumb bread and naturally enjoyed a cake walk along with icing samples in Cakery. No tour would be complete without a Chicken Dance in the Chicken Kitchen, and guests couldn’t get enough of the salt-and-vinegar and mango habanero wings. Finally, a stop at Sammy’s meant tastes of our delicious pizza. As the tour concluded, each guest received a Lowe’s & Behold gift box filled with examples of the many local products we carry as well as a few of our originals, including a Himalayan salt grinder and SausageWorks mustard.



**BRIAN MAUNEY**



**BARBARA ROBINS**

## Y'ALL AWARD WINNERS

**BRIAN MAUNEY**, Lead PNP Chef at Reynolda Store #165, has been with our store now for nearly three years. He came to us with basically no grocery experience and immediately began to shine in the Pick 'n' Prep area. Not only has he received numerous Y'All cards over the years, he has won Y'All of the month twice. Brian has nailed quite a few mystery shops as well. He is committed to service, conditions, quality, and culture. He exemplifies what a Lead Chef should be. Brian is making his way to our new Kernersville store as Lead Smoke House in which we are very excited for him.

— **Mike Jones**, Contributor

**BARBARA ROBINS**, Assistant Guest Services Manager at Jamestown Store #188, is a host who deserves this award. Barbara was our LFTG Lead, and she was recently promoted to Assistant Guest Service Manager. She has grown our LFTG business to over \$10,000 a week, while wearing the hat of backup office clerk, backup scan, and backup vendor receiver. In all of this she has maintained a great attitude and is loyal to taking care of the business and our guests. Barbara calls regular LFTG shoppers to ensure that they are being taken care of at all times. When she's not busy in LFTG, Barbara is always willing to assist in any other department and has decorated cakes for us, as well as wedding cakes for guests. Barbara goes the extra mile every day she's here to ensure that our guests have an exceptional experience.

— **Don Bradford**, Contributor

As a result of hosting, Yelp created an entire page dedicated to the tour, where guests could write reviews and post photos of the evening. The event page is linked to the store's main Yelp page, so that anyone who wants to read reviews will also see those of these Elite members. Some of these glowing reviews follow:

*"I was blown away by how excited all*

*the hosts were when sharing information about their department. They seemed very happy and proud to be there. **Daniel** did a great job explaining the Lowes Foods vision.... I was very impressed with the entire store and will definitely be back."*

*"Warm welcomes from the hosts and hostesses, good beer selection to begin our evening, and a tour to end all tours.*

*Lowes Foods is a treat for the eyes, palate, and pocketbook."*

*"This is truly my new grocery store."*

*"A huge thank you to Daniel and all of the hosts who worked to make this a truly wonderful event, helping to spread the word in the community about what Lowes Foods is all about."*

— **Kate Townsend**, Contributor



*Lindsay Deal, a third-generation apple orchard farmer, in Alexander County, North Carolina.*

# ABOUT *the* FARM

## *Deal Orchards in the Brushy Mountains*

**Legendary.** That word comes up a lot at Lowes Foods, whether you're at the annual meeting or in a store. Everywhere you look, there are legendary guests and hosts. And our vendors are also legendary, including grower Lindsay Deal and his apple cider slushies. Yes, apple cider slushies are definitely legendary, along with Lindsay's soft spoken yet spunky personality.

Tucked in the foothills of the Brushy Mountains, Lindsay Deal, of Deal Orchards, Inc., is the third generation to run this orchard and roadside farm market. Around 1939, Brack Deal and his wife, Thelma Isabelle Deal, planted the orchard's first tree. What's amazing about this orchard is that it's literally planted on the sides of mountains. You thought farming flat fields was hard — give this a shot!

Back in the day they cleared the steep mountains with a mule. About 15 acres! The same land has been replanted and is still producing delicious fruit today. Eventually, one of Brack and Belle's children, Lindsay Deal, took over the family

business, and the orchard is over 100 acres today. They grow apples, peaches (yellow and white), nectarines, and Asian pears. In the farm market you'll find country ham, stone-ground corn meal, jams, honey, syrups, cookbooks, candy, and the apple cider slushie!

The first time I visited Deal Orchards was in 2015, and it has been the most memorable farm visit to date. I will never forget Lindsay looking at me and **Anida Kleege** with a straight face as he nodded towards his pickup truck asking, "Do you want the \$5 tour or . . ." He walked over to what I would describe as a cross between an ATV and a golf cart on steroids. Naturally, I declined the \$5 tour, and Lindsay just grinned. Our slushies in hand, Anida and I went on an orchard adventure, up and down sides of mountains, visited some of the workers in the fields, and got to see original buildings from when the orchard first started.

The absolute best part was when we drove to the very top of a mountain. The apple trees went all the way to the top, so of



*Deal Orchards grows an extraordinary number of apple varieties: Ginger Gold, Gala, Honey Crisp, Mutsu, Red Delicious, Stayman Winesap, Jonagold, Golden Delicious, Granny Smith, Rome, Fuji Arkansas Black, Limbertwig, and Pink Lady.*



course we had to check them out. And the view — the view — of all the surrounding mountains, of the entire orchard. It was sunny, quiet, with a slight breeze, and we still had our apple cider slushies! Learning about apples on the top of a mountain is highly recommended.

On the way down the mountain, Lindsay told us about the different apple varieties he grows. Most notable was the Brushy Mountain Limbertwig. This is an heirloom variety native to the region and the same apple his great-grandfather started the orchard with. He told us how firm they are; they are rock hard while growing on the tree. That’s when Anida proceeded to pick a Limbertwig and take a bite. Lindsay looked at me in shock, and said, “Did she just try to take a bite?!” and burst into a belly laugh. The apple was so hard she couldn’t take a bite, but she said the flavor was excellent.

Something important Lindsay spoke about was how hard

farming is and how much weather affects their lives. Lots of guests see “glamorous” farm pictures and miss the blood, sweat, and tears that often go along with the gig. Lindsay has his orchards sprinkled across different parts of Taylorsville, so if a storm comes, it doesn’t take out his entire farm. A single hailstorm can wipe out a farm for 18-plus months. So next time you see a severe thunderstorm rolling through, remember your farmers!

After the farm tour, we got to see the apple sorting process in action. We climbed up to a platform to get an overhead view of where the apples are washed before they move up a conveyor belt into a room where they are hand-graded. Further down the line, the apples are sorted by size. The machine itself is old and has never been replaced, but it’s amazing to see the engineering that went into creating it.

It was such a pleasure to get to know the orchard and to learn about the harvesting, cleaning, and packing of apples. But equally as special was getting to know Lindsay Deal. He is so polite and soft spoken, but has these wise cracks and a grin that just makes you laugh so much! You can tell he truly enjoys what he does, and you can see the same joy in his grown children that work on the farm as well.

— **Krista Morgan**, Contributor

# WHAT'S NEW *at* LOWES FOODS?



## PRIVATE LABEL

Now that the weather is warmer, are you feeling adventurous? Are you looking to take a trip to the Italian countryside without leaving your home? Are you looking for a cool treat on a hot day at the beach? Or maybe you're looking for an extra boost of energy while you're enjoying a hike in the Carolina mountains? Whatever you're doing, wherever you're doing it, Lowes Foods private brand has a treat for you: grab a handful of our new granola or trail mix, take a big bite out of our new thin and crispy cookies, dig into one of our new flavors of

gelato or ice cream, and enjoy an authentic Italian dinner with our imported frozen pizzas or frozen pasta entrees. New Lowes Foods products will hit shelves throughout the entire summer — summer fun is in the bag.

## LOWES FAMILY SIZE FROZEN ENTREES

We now offer eight great varieties: Eggplant Parmesan; Meat Lasagna; Cheese Tortellini; Italian Sausage Tortelloni; Four Cheese Manicotti; Cheese Ravioli; Chicken Primavera & Penne Pasta; and Chicken Florentine & Penne Pasta.

## LOWES PREMIUM 48 OZ. ICE CREAM

Our six new delicious flavors are Chocolate Peanut Butter Swirl; Black Raspberry Truffle; Cookie Butter; Peanut Butter Cup; Southern Praline Pecan; and Strawberry.

## LOWES GELATO & SORBET 30 OZ.

Our four new flavors are Pistachio; Caramel Cookie Crunch; Amalfi Lemon Sorbet; and Summer Raspberry Sorbet.



## HAND TWISTED PRETZEL

Fresh from our Bakery! Dip the pretzel with our sausage works mustard and wash it down with a cold beer from our Beer Den!



## READY, CHEF, GO

Ready, Chef, Go! Microwave & Oven Bags deliver healthy, foolproof, and tasty seafood in minutes. Minimal clean up; no pots, pans, or cutting boards. No kitchen mess or odor. Cooking times are printed on back of the bag for success every meal.



### BRIOCHE BREADS

Authentic European brioche in five varieties: French Braided, French Sliced, Choc 'n' Cream Swirl Pastry, All Cheese 'n' Cream Swirl Pastry, and Hamburger Bun Brioche. Brioche bread makes the perfect French toast. Or try the brioche hamburger buns for the best burger. Or simply snack on the French swirl pastry! All of these items will have you coming back for more!



### TICKLE BELLY CAKE POP

Available in vanilla bean or a dark chocolate, these cakes on a stick make snacking easy!



### CAKERY FRUIT-TOPPED MOUSSE CAKES

The Bloomin' Strawberry and Cream cake is four layers of cake (split layers) filled with a layer of strawberry mousse and

a layer of fresh strawberries and iced with our "real cream" whipped topping! The Berries 'n' Cream White Chocolate Mousse cake is four layers of cake (split layers) and two layers of white chocolate mousse and iced with our "real cream" whipped topping!



### MADE FRESH IN STORE QUICHE

We're now offering five new varieties: Cheese, Broccoli & Cheese, Mushroom & Cheese, Ham, and Cheese & Spinach.



### FIRECRACKER SRIRACHA PIZZA & CHIPOTLE CHICKEN PANINI

We are excited to be introducing the Firecracker Sriracha Pizza and Chipotle Chicken Panini Pizza, two enticing additions to our pizza collection. All of our pizzas are made fresh throughout the day with high quality ingredients.

— *Anida Kleege, Contributor*

# YEARS OF SERVICE



**David Ekard**  
35 YEARS, MDI  
Inventory Control



**William Jarvis**  
35 YEARS, MDI  
Driver



**James Aubuchon**  
30 YEARS, MDI  
Director Deli/Bakery



**Judy Clark**  
30 YEARS, ALI  
Corp Payroll  
Administrator



**Lynn Oxendine**  
30 YEARS, LFS  
Store 123



**J. Lynette Powell**  
30 YEARS, MDI  
Selector



**Connie Reid**  
30 YEARS, MDI  
Lift Operator



**Wanda Sasser**  
30 YEARS, LFS  
Store 235



**Ann Ward**  
30 YEARS, MDI  
Sorter/Strapper



**Joseph Witherow**  
30 YEARS, LFS  
Store 236



**James Boyer**  
25 YEARS, MDI  
Retail Counselor



**Roberta Burke**  
25 YEARS, LFS  
Store 165



**David Dula**  
25 YEARS, MDI  
Utility Warehouse



**Donald Underwood**  
25 YEARS, MDI  
Director Meat Operations



**Bynum Ward**  
25 YEARS, MDI  
Quality Control



**Larry Yancey**  
25 YEARS, MDI  
Utility Warehouse

## ALI

**Michael Martin**, 20 YEARS, *Programmer/Analyst II*  
**Julie Brewster**, 15 YEARS, *Information Security Manager*

## MDI

**John Anderson**, 20 YEARS, *Sales Analyst*  
**Timothy Barr**, 20 YEARS, *Checker*  
**Brenda Bogle**, 20 YEARS, *Customer Service Supervisor*  
**Gregory Crook**, 20 YEARS, *Inventory Control*  
**Michael Dollar**, 20 YEARS, *Assistant Supervisor*  
**Kenny Dotson**, 20 YEARS, *Print Shop Clerk*  
**Jonathan Goode**, 20 YEARS, *Utility Warehouse*  
**Kemberly Higginbotham**, 20 YEARS, *DSD Pricing Analyst*  
**Daniel Hoyle**, 20 YEARS, *Utility Warehouse*  
**Tracy Whisnant**, 20 YEARS, *Driver Supervisor/Coach*  
**Jay Bullis**, 15 YEARS, *Lift Operator*  
**Matthew Duncan**, 15 YEARS, *Checker*

**J. Michael Harrison**, 15 YEARS, *Selector*  
**William Lefevers**, 15 YEARS, *Driver*  
**Tammy Looney**, 15 YEARS, *Custodian/Sanitation*  
**James Mullins**, 15 YEARS, *Receiver*  
**Frederick White**, 15 YEARS, *Utility Warehouse*

## LFS

**Brandy Annis**, 15 YEARS, *Store 153*  
**Judith Ann Blankenship**, 20 YEARS, *Store 121*  
**Cheryl Blair**, 15 YEARS, *Store 149*  
**Curtis Leon Bowens**, 15 YEARS, *Store 445*  
**Patricia Brown**, 20 YEARS, *Store 137*  
**Bonnie Cain**, 15 YEARS, *Store 159*  
**Sandra Craver**, 20 YEARS, *Store 164*  
**Katie Eure**, 15 YEARS, *Corporate*  
**Nick Faber**, 15 YEARS, *Store 226*

**Sandy Fields**, 15 YEARS, *Store 240*  
**Shannon Rae Kish**, 15 YEARS, *Store 199*  
**Kendra Myers**, 15 YEARS, *Store 151*  
**Matthew Nowlin**, 20 YEARS, *Store 259*  
**Abdelaziz Oukerzaz**, 15 YEARS, *Store 162*  
**Tarolyn Pardue**, 15 YEARS, *Corporate*  
**Mona Payne**, 20 YEARS, *Store 158*  
**Carrie Rath**, 15 YEARS, *Corporate*  
**Andrew Rich**, 15 YEARS, *Store 237*  
**Valentin Rodriguez**, 15 YEARS, *Store 189*  
**David Saunders**, 15 YEARS, *Store 125*  
**Joseph Simmons**, 15 YEARS, *Store 171*  
**Rosa Vazquez**, 15 YEARS, *Store 203*

## PROMOTIONS

### LFS

**William Adams**, *Deli Manager Level V*  
*to Deli Field Merchandiser*  
**Cheryl Brooks**, *Deli Manager Level V*  
*to Deli Field Merchandiser*  
**Lora Campbell**, *Deli Manager Level V*  
*to Fresh Co-Manager*  
**Heather Depuydt**, *Fresh Co-Manager*  
*to Store Manager (Large)*  
**Jason Ervin**, *Center Store Co-Manager*  
*to Center Store Field Merch*  
**Brandon Greene**, *Sr. Director Human Resources*  
*to Vice President, Host Experience*  
**Stewart Gregory**, *Grassroots Coordinator*  
*to Brand Mgr, Store Communication*  
**Amanda Morris**, *e-Commerce Data Mainten Admin*  
*to e-Commerce Field Specialist*  
**Bryan Saulpaugh**, *Center Store Field Merch*  
*to Store Manager (Large)*

## RETIREMENTS

**Benett Brittain**, *MDI, 45 yrs*  
**Pecolia Davis**, *LFS, 30 yrs*  
**Charles Lancaster**, *LFS, 20 yrs*  
**Vernessa Wright**, *LFS, 16 yrs*  
**Carolyn Brookins**, *LFS, 12 yrs*  
**Mary Moyer**, *LFS, 11 yrs*  
**Richard Heslin**, *LFS, 11 yrs*  
**James Wickers**, *LFS, 2 yrs*

# PICA Awards

2016



## BEST OF CATEGORY

CLASSIFICATION  
Internal Communications (4 or more colors)

PRESENTED TO  
Daniels Graphics

TITLE  
Alex Lee Ink

CUSTOMER  
Alex Lee, Inc.

DESIGNER  
Goosepen Press, Nathan Moehlmann

*Alex Lee INK* celebrates a recent recognition: Daniels Graphics, which prints *Alex Lee INK*, and Alex Lee won a Best of Category PICA Award this year, for internal communications, beating out competition across North and South Carolina. Since 1966, the PICA Awards have been the premier symbol of excellence for the graphics industry in the Carolinas.