



**SEPTEMBER 2022**

## **Business Spotlight: Rehab Garage**

Driven by a lifelong passion, Will Patterson has turned a hobby into one of Tomball's local business gems. Located near historic Old Town Tomball, Rehab Garage rebuilds and restores vehicles utilizing high standards and customer service. In less than a decade, Patterson and his team have created one of the largest car restoration shops in the country. Rehab Garage's success allows Patterson to give back to the community in a unique manner.

### **Car Restoration Roots**

Working on cars for 30 years, Patterson has honed his skills working on all types of vehicles. He was 15 years old when he rebuilt his first car and he has not stopped since.

"I learned the hard way. I bought a car for 500 bucks, drove it three blocks, and then it blew up. I spent the next year and half learning how to rebuild that car," said Patterson. "But when you love something, you want to learn more about it."

## **Turning Hobby into Business**

While the car restoration hobby has been a part of Patterson's life for a long time, the idea of operating a business around it is still pretty fresh. Spurred by a misleading portrayal of the car restoration process on television, he decided it was time to apply his love of cars in the business world.

Nearly eight years ago, Rehab Garage was founded with one employee and one bay. Led by rapid growth and the immediate need for more space, they relocated to Tomball in 2017. With help from the Tomball Economic Development Corporation (TEDC), Rehab Garage designed the 40,000 square foot building into a functional space for the many cars being rehabbed.

### **Process-Based Approach**

Rehab Garage typically has around 60 vehicles in process at a given time. The shop utilizes a process-based approach rather than project-based, in order to increase workflow capacity and improve flexibility for customers.

"Our unique process not only helps our workflow, it also gives the customer direction and a plan that can help them budget the job," added Patterson.

With nearly 20 employees, the shop specializes in media blasting, custom fabrication, mechanical and electrical services, custom paint and body work, upholstery, and performance upgrades. Rehab Garage works on all types of vehicles, from muscle cars to race cars to classics. Patterson makes it a point to transfer his three decades of experience to his team.

"We're a very flexible shop with a diverse skill set," said Patterson. "If you're not training your team in this business, you're eventually going to get behind the eight ball. We're constantly looking for ways to learn new things. It's hands on learning."

The craftsmanship has helped make Rehab Garage a trusted shop for clients around the world. Cars like the 1960 Lincoln Continental Mark V Convertible, recently featured at the world-famous Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance car show, are restored by the shop's experts.

### **Expansion Plans**

To further meet customer needs, Rehab Garage is expanding. They recently finished 10,000 square feet that will be utilized for high end vehicle storage. A second expansion of approximately 32,000 square feet is also being considered. Patterson hopes to utilize a Business Improvement Grant from the TEDC for further improvements.

The completed expansion will allow Rehab Garage to implement a valet service to deliver vehicles to their owners when requested. This added benefit will help Rehab Garage become a one stop shop for car enthusiasts.

"Anything to do with that car, from beginning to end, we're going to have our hands on," added Patterson.



## **Giving Back**

Thriving in Tomball energizes Patterson. The building that houses Rehab Garage is special to the United States veteran. According to Patterson, every Purple Heart made in the United States for nearly 35 years was made by Graco Awards at the shop on 723 S Cherry Street. Rehab Garage purchased the building after Graco vacated it, and Patterson and Rehab Garage maintain that unique connection to military personnel. The shop has helped in raising approximately \$500,000 every year for the Green Beret Foundation.

An exciting success story, Rehab Garage feels right at home in Tomball. Patterson claims the city fits the company's personality and clients enjoy the way the two intersect.

*"We love Tomball. We're a hometown feel kind of business."*