



December, 2022

Jay Thornton and Eric Abell, who own and operate Parsons Roofing, will be celebrating 10 years in business May 2023. It was sort of a strange twist of fate that brought the two together in business. Thornton was a UGA graduate who majored in risk management and insurance. Upon graduation, he visited a friend in Utah who was in the roofing business. When he came home, he decided he wanted to follow suit. So, with the help of a couple of fraternity brothers, he launched a roofing business in 2013.

Jay wanted to use the name "Parsons," since Kathryn Parsons Willis was his grandmother and the Parsons owned the Parsons General Store in downtown Duluth for many years. There were a number of Parsons stores in the area decades ago. Originally, Parsons opened in Lawrenceville as a trading post. It moved to Duluth in 1925 and the Cumming store opened in 1948. The Cumming store closed in 2019. Ms. Willis told Jay he couldn't use the family name until he demonstrated his business was worthy of it.

Interestingly, Eric Abell had been in the roofing business in Kentucky for many years. One day, he was visiting friends on Lake Lanier when his personal watercraft ran out of fuel. As Eric was floating near boat docks, a lady emerged from a houseboat and asked him if he needed help. The lady happened to be Jay Thornton's mother. Eric explained he was out of gas. The fuel dock was closed at the time so Ms. Thornton said she could put some fuel in his boat from her houseboat. As they were fueling, she began talking with Eric and learned he was in the roofing business.

Jay's mother told Eric her son was in the roofing business and introduced them. A friendship developed and in 2018 Eric moved his family down to the Atlanta area to partner with Jay. They decided to combine their two roofing companies in 2018 in the Doraville area and have since grown significantly, providing a variety of solutions to commercial customers.

When the company was in its third year, Jay had demonstrated enough integrity and humility to earn the Parsons name.

Recently, Parsons Roofing moved to 3100 Medlock Bridge Road, Suite 335 in building 300, Peachtree Corners, doubling the size of its office/warehouse space. It was the company's third expansion in 10 years. The company now has 23 employees.