Ace Hardware Honors 2020 ‘Coolest Hardware Stores’

Ace Hardware Corporation recognizes two local stores for customized service

Ace Hardware Corporation is proud to recognize two local Ace Hardware stores with the company’s ninth-annual “Coolest Hardware Store” awards. Ace Hardware, the world’s largest hardware cooperative, selects only a handful of Ace stores annually to receive this coveted recognition – all based on how well the store differentiates its offerings, services and culture to meet the needs of the community.

The winning stores are Woodville Ace Hardware of Tallahassee FL, and Downtown Walnut Creek Hardware of Walnut Creek, CA. Both stores were recently recognized at the Ace Hardware 2020 Pinnacle Conference in Las Vegas. These stores share common traits yet offer local flavor and product selection above and beyond most hardware stores.

“Out of more than 5,300 Ace locations around the world, no two stores are the same,” said John Tovar, Vice President, Retail Operations and New Business, Ace Hardware Corporation. “That local differentiation, on top of the service, convenience and quality our customers have come to expect, is what has Ace Hardware poised to stand the test of time. The teams at Woodville Ace Hardware and Downtown Walnut Creek Hardware exemplify what makes Ace great – helpful, unique, and always striving to meet the changing needs of the community.”

Woodville Ace Hardware, Tallahassee FL

Aside from its core hardware stock, Woodville Ace Hardware differentiates itself by expertly attending to the unique rural community it serves. Be it seed and feed and a large equine department for the many horse farmers in the area, a large garden and gift center so customers can avoid a trip to the city, or even beach umbrellas and Yeti coolers for the one hour trip to the beach, Woodville Ace Hardware prides itself on being a one-stop shop for its distinctive community members.

What really sets Woodville Ace Hardware apart are the special events it hosts for members of the local community, including an annual Ladies Night that brings together women of the area for great times, fellowship, and deals. Additionally, during Science Day the store welcomes students from the elementary school across the street to learn about animals, plants, and basic hardware.

Being the most helpful retail store in the area is truly the passion of the Woodville Ace Hardware team, and that desire is reflected in the store’s detailed employee training program. Woodville Ace Hardware employs a training coordinator who oversees all onboarding of new employees, who each have a training goal set for them every month. The training also includes specialty vendor training for the feed and seed, equine, and power equipment departments.

Downtown Walnut Creek Hardware, Walnut Creek, CA

Walnut Creek Hardware opened its doors in 2008 and quickly positioned itself as the “go-to” hardware store in the area offering a wide selection of convenient core hardware and garden products. Catering to the higher-end demographics in the surrounding area, the store began to focus on designer Benjamin Moore paints and color consulting alongside a distinctive giftware section to take advantage of paint clientele waiting for their product.

The store subsequently expanded into an unused parking lot and an adjacent building, in the process creating a specialty nursery and dedicated outdoor living department featuring grilling and patio merchandise.

Perhaps the most distinctive aspect of the Walnut Creek Hardware store experience is in the store’s décor; including the reason the business is known widely as “The Ace with the Train.” Walnut Creek Hardware features an extensive “G-scale” model train which runs around the store on an elevated track that includes two rail lines looping above the power aisle and around the check-out area. The track also showcases various handcrafted model replicas of famous bridges in the area, including the Golden Gate Bridge, New Bay Bridge, the Tower Bridge in Sacramento and a rail trestle bridge in Benicia.

Walnut Creek Hardware donates extensively to local charities, offers free delivery to the local retirement community, and serves as a major employer for the local community with a staff ranging from age 16 to 78 which peaks at 65 employees during the summer months.

About Ace Hardware

Ace Hardware is the largest retailer-owned hardware cooperative in the world with more than 5,300 locally owned and operated hardware stores in approximately 70 countries. Headquartered in Oak Brook, Ill., Ace and its subsidiaries operate an expansive network of distribution centers in the U.S. and have distribution capabilities in Ningbo, China; Colon, Panama; and Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Since 1924, Ace has become a part of local communities around the world and known as the place with the helpful hardware folks. For more information, visit acehardware.com or newsroom.acehardware.com.

Additional assets available online: Video (2)

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