

Ace Hardware Honors 2021 ‘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 tenth annual "Coolest Hardware Store" awards. Ace Hardware, the world's largest retailer-owned 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 Gemmen's Home & Hardware in Hudsonville, MI and Strand Ace Hardware in Escalon, CA. These stores share common traits yet offer unique product assortments and locally relevant flavor above and beyond most hardware stores.

"With more than 5,400 Ace locations around the world, no two stores are the same," said John Kittell, Vice President, Retail Operations and New Business, Ace Hardware Corporation. "Each independently owned and operated store provides a shopping experience that is locally relevant to the communities they serve. The teams at Gemmen's Home & Hardware and Strand Ace Hardware embody the unique and helpful spirit that makes Ace great."

Gemmen's Home & Hardware, Hudsonville, MI

Gemmen's Home & Hardware has served the Hudsonville, Michigan community for more than 65 years.

Customers travel from afar to see the vast product selection that the store has to offer and experience the outstanding service from expert staff in each department.

Gemmen's Home & Hardware is 42,000 square ft. of retail space that boasts unique store décor and a locally relevant product assortment. In addition to offering top brands in paint, power tools and grills, Gemmen's has an innovative toy department, an expanded housewares department with local and regional gifts, and niche décor from local artisans. The store also features brands such as Red Wing Boots, Carhart and Cub Cadet.

Reaching out to the community has always been at the heart of the Gemmen's team. Whether it is the store's annual Mother's Day and Father's Day events, special visits with Santa during the holidays or the annual "Ladies Night" which has grown into a highly anticipated local event, Gemmen's continues to engage the community in fun and relevant ways. In 2020, Gemmen's adapted and created new, safe ways to connect with customers including virtual visits with Santa and allowing children to virtually nominate parents to receive a special gift for Mother's Day and Father's Day.

In addition to fun events and store promotions, Gemmen's gives back to the Hudsonville community by sponsoring the local little league team and the Hudsonville "Green Team" which helps keep the local parks and nature center clean. The store also offers a series called Gemmen's Workbench, free informational webinars for the community on topics related to home, crafting, and hardware.

Strand Ace Hardware, Escalon, California

Originally founded by the Strand Brothers in 1946, Strand Ace Hardware was purchased by the Swanson Family in 1975 and has grown from a 2,500 square ft. building to more than 28,500 square ft. of retail space to better serve the Escalon, California community.

Strand Ace Hardware currently consists of two buildings and an outdoor garden center. The south building has 16,500 square ft. with more traditional hardware department including paint, plumbing, electrical, lawn and garden in addition to product assortments specific to the local community. The north building has 12,000 square ft. of retail space dedicated to outdoor living products including grills and patio furniture. The north building also features a small engine repair shop and lumber department.

Strand Ace Hardware also creates fun and unique experiences that engage the community. From in-store events such as grill demo days, kid craft days, and an annual "Party on the Patio" customer appreciation night to participating in the "Christmas on Main" downtown light parade - Strand Ace Hardware focused on connecting with the Escalon community.

The Swanson family takes pride in supporting local organizations in their community including the Boy Scouts, FFA, the high

school football team, the Sportsman Club, and the Garden Joy Community Garden. Strand Ace Hardware also participates in Ace Children's Miracle Network events throughout the year.

About Ace Hardware

Ace Hardware is the largest retailer-owned hardware cooperative in the world with more than 5,400 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:  [Photos \(1\)](#)  [Video \(2\)](#)

<https://newsroom.acehardware.com/2021-02-11-Ace-Hardware-Honors-2021-Coollest-Hardware-Stores>