

Who You Gonna Call?

BY *Katie Richardson*

PHOTOGRAPHY BY *Paul Howe*

Whether you are new to the area or a longtime resident, this is information you need to know: where's a good place to get your car fixed? *Kearsarge Magazine* readers voted, and here are the 2011 winners of Mechanic of the Year.

#1 Steve Lamery, Promex Service Center

One sign of a successful business is the ability to keep customers coming back over the long term. Steve Lamery, owner of Promex Service Center on Elm Street in Newport, knows a thing or two about that. After 24 years in business,

"Honest; a great deal of patience in explanations; one reliable organization. I would never go anywhere else."

Diane Deckard, Newport

"Stellar service delivered with integrity and cost-saving advice."

Gina Vitale, Elkins

"Steve has always been honest, professional and very competent with any service issue I have ever had with any of my vehicles over the past 20 years. I trust him implicitly and it is a pleasure to do business with him and Promex."

Jay Harvey, Sunapee

"Does a wonderful job and service is great. Prices good. Wife is very nice also."

Priscilla Jones, Newport

he still services the vehicles belonging to his third customer through the door when he first opened in 1987.

"He's fabulous," says Steve's wife, Kim, who helps run Promex as the receptionist and bookkeeper. "He's old school." Steve had worked as a mechanic at garages all over the country when he and Kim decided they wanted their own business. Originally from this area, they decided to settle with their two kids in Newport. Today, they employ

two full-time mechanics and one part-time mechanic.

Promex is a full-service garage and inspection station which works on all makes and models of vehicle. Steve is proud of the fact that in 24 years he has never received so much as a warning from the New Hampshire Department of Safety for inspections he has completed. "I watch out for people," says Steve. "I'm truly concerned with safety."

Part of watching out for people means taking the time to explain problems with a vehicle and discussing possible solutions. Steve says that he likes to offer the simplest, least costly solution while keeping the customer apprised of what work should be planned for down the road. He understands that automotive work is expensive and aims to be honest in his assessment of his customer's vehicles.

Steve is modest about the fact that so many of his customers wrote in praise of his work. "I don't think it takes a lot to run a business," he says. "Be concerned with people and the rest will come." >>>>

Promex Service Center

31 Elm Street, Newport

863-2704

Hours: Monday through Friday,
8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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**#1 Steve Lamery,
Promex Service
Center**

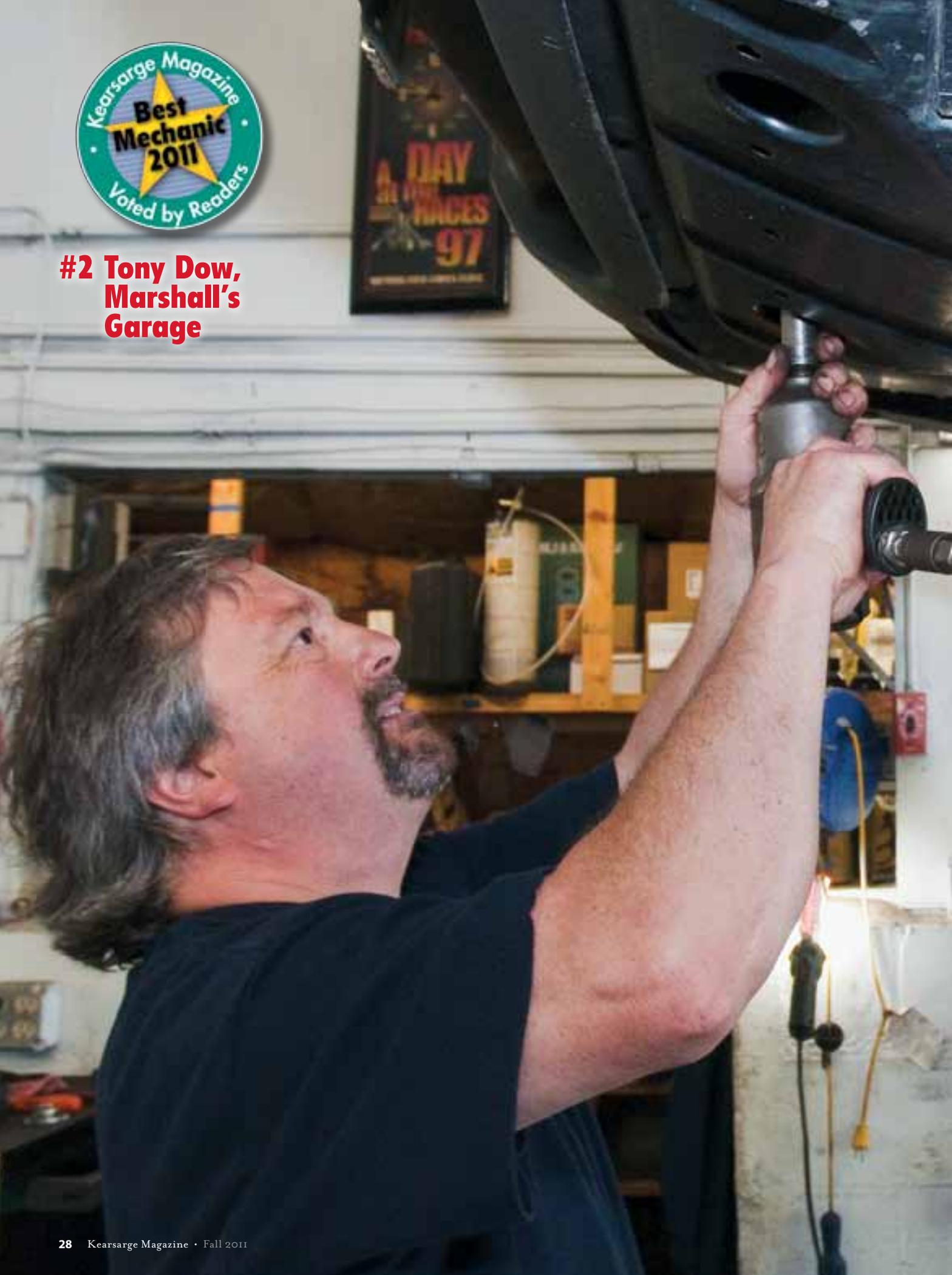


...for repairs is due
completion of repairs
other arrangements
made prior to the work.
the vehicle must stay on
premises until the bill is paid
in full. (Due to credit abuse)

WANTED
OLD
GL...



**#2 Tony Dow,
Marshall's
Garage**



#2 Tony Dow, Marshall's Garage

Tony Dow is an ASE (automotive service excellence) Master Technician who has worked at Marshall's Garage in Elkins for more than 25 years. He also has a degree in Automotive Technology and his L1 certification, which means he is an advanced engine performance specialist. He is one of four mechanics at Marshall's, a family-owned business, and the go-to guy for many customers.

Marshall's is an AAA-approved, Napa Autocare Center which has been in operation since 1947. It offers full-service repairs on all types of vehicles, including domestic, hybrids, and Japanese and European brands. It is also an inspection station and ASE Blue Seal Repair Shop. Marshall's Garage sees many customers from surrounding towns, both full-time and summer residents.

Many customers specifically ask for Tony to work on their vehicle and he says he tries to

give them a complete assessment of what their car needs, in particular addressing safety issues. "Not everybody is made of money," Tony says, so it is his goal to keep vehicles in good working order while keeping expenses to a minimum.

Tony holds several ASE certifications in heavy truck and body, is professional level NAPA certified, Mobile Air Conditioning Society certified, and an AC Delco Master Technician. As Marshall's website says, "When it comes to fixing cars, Tony knows his stuff." >>>>

Marshall's Garage

330 Elkins Road, Elkins

526-6231

Hours: Monday through Friday,
8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

"Tony takes extremely 'careful care' of my old but reliable primary vehicle with 185,000 miles on it. He not only provides routine service at regular intervals but also always inspects the car carefully to identify current service needs and to forewarn about future care."

David Harrison, New London

"Professional, knowledgeable, courteous."

Richard Lindberg, Wilmot

Honorable Mentions

Gary Jackson, Jackson's Garage, Sunapee

"He is like a general practitioner medical doctor who reliably diagnoses your difficulty and solves it, or refers you to an expert who can. He is a second generation mechanic who is reasonably priced, obliging and well liked. He runs what was his father's shop, using an open pit and an adjacent bay with a lift. He has the latest diagnostic equipment. A one-man dynamo."

Bill Johnson, Bill's Garage, Gilsum

"He's in his late 70s and doesn't miss a beat. He will come and get your vehicle — day or night, sun or snow — with his wrecker and have you back on your way in no time at all. Not only does he keep everyone's care on the road, but he's the town's fire chief. He has a lot on his plate, but stays calm and cool and is

respectful, trustworthy and competent in all he does. We need more people like Bill Johnson."

Richard Pockett, Hastings Service Center, Guild

"He estimates time and cost accurately. He gives you a clear explanation. Pleasant, but no jokes — when your vehicle is ailing, no jokes please!"

Mike Willis, B&L Auto Repair & Body Shop, Grantham

"He is very reliable, down to earth, honest and helpful. Always!"

Nathan Walker, Walker Automotive, Wilmot

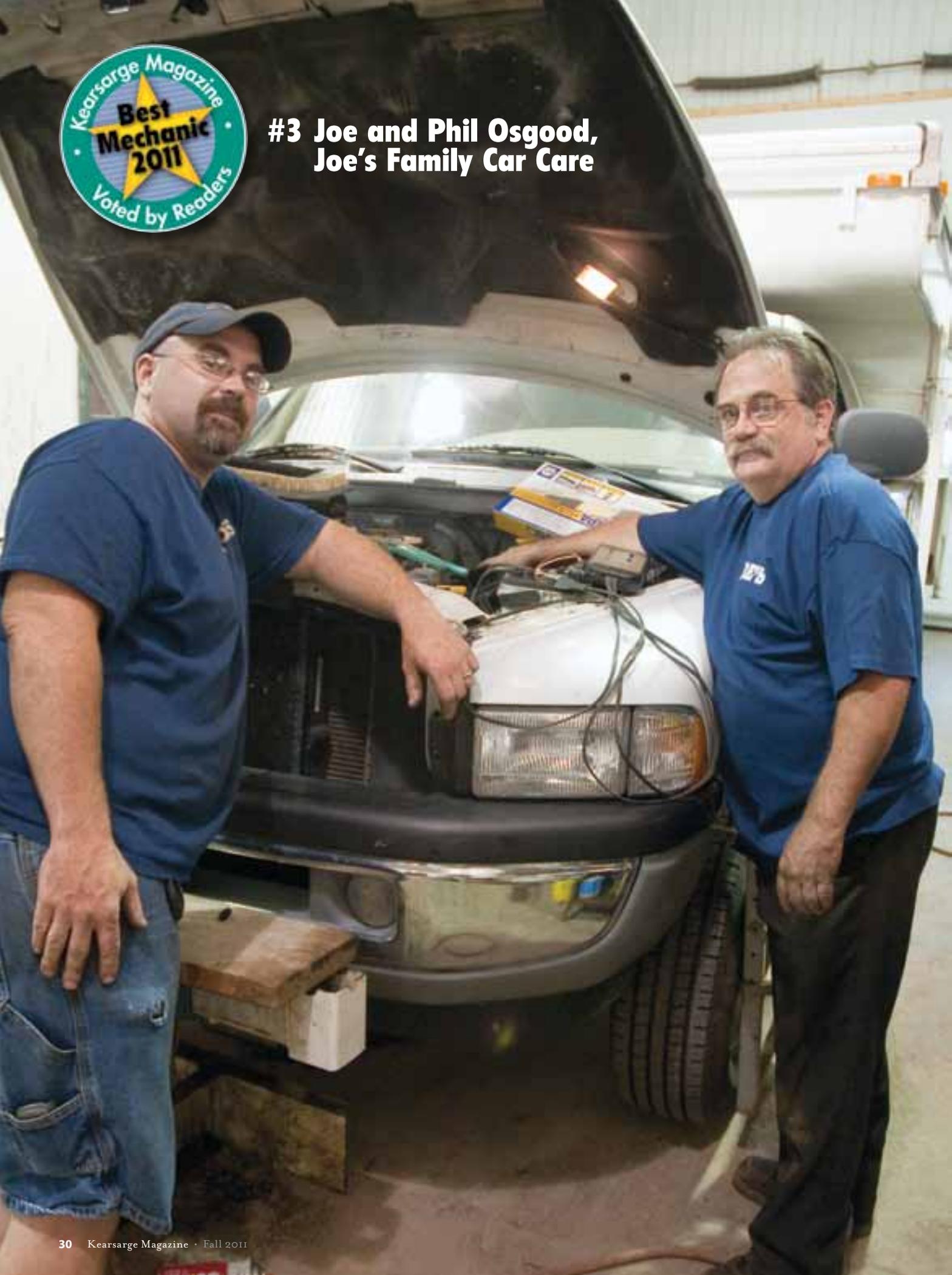
"Great service. Dependable."

Scott, Phil, Darrell, Paul and Brian, S&P Auto, Andover

"Polite, funny, quick, all-around great guys."



#3 Joe and Phil Osgood, Joe's Family Car Care



#3 Joe and Phil Osgood, Joe's Family Car Care

Family is part of the title at this Claremont garage and family is what it is all about. Joe Osgood has been in the automotive business for many years, previously running a garage on Pleasant Street. He opened his current garage 13 years ago on Summer Street with his son, Phil, and they have been co-managing the place ever since. Joe's wife, Elaine, and Phil's wife, Amy, also work there, manning the phones and doing the bookkeeping. Even the family dog is part of the business, greeting customers in the office.

Joe is also a state representative for Sullivan County District 4. He says Phil's management of the shop while he is in Concord allows the business to continue its smooth operation.

"We work on people's cars the same way we work on our own," says Joe, explaining his business philosophy. Phil agrees, acknowledging that "people don't want to mortgage the farm" when they bring their vehicle in for work. The Osgoods say they fix parts rather than replace them whenever possible. They also take pictures of problem areas to show customers when they come to pick up their car.

Joe's is a full-service garage and inspection station and also sells tires. The

business employs four full-time mechanics and one part-time mechanic, all of whom are longtime employees and ASE certified technicians. Amy says that since they started their computer invoicing system in 1998, they have entered close to 50,000 transactions. "This has grown way beyond our expectations," says Phil. 

"Honest, friendly, thorough, patient, goes the extra mile, accommodating. Father and son are both excellent mechanics!"

Patty Dickinson, Claremont

"Help and advice beyond with former car. Joe helped get car going after accident. Philip is courteous and goes the extra mile to answer questions."

Carol Schuschu, Claremont

Joe's Family Car Care
 96 Summer Street, Claremont
 543-9744
 Hours: Monday through Friday,
 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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