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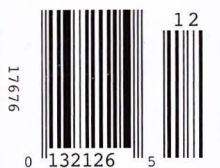
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Successfully blending Family and business is no small feat,

but this year's crop of Family Business Award winners show that not only can it be done, but that it can create a solid business foundation for generations to come.

Now in its 24th year, the annual awards recognize companies that have successfully mixed business with family. Winners are selected based on their proven business success, positive family and business linkage, multigenerational family business involvement, contributions to industry and the surrounding community, and innovative business practices and strategies.

Winners were selected by the Cox Family Enterprise Center at the Coles College of Business at Kennesaw State University. Awards are given in large, medium and small business categories; the Century Award honors a family business that has been in operation for 100 years or more.

This year, Claxton Poultry Farms is the large business winner. Atlanta-based Juneau Construction Co. is the medium-sized business winner, and Baumgarten's, also based in Atlanta, is this year's small-sized business winner. Yancey Bros. Co., which started in 1914 and is based in Austell, is this year's Century Award Winner. Finalists for this year's awards can be found on page 53. — *Christy Simo*

2015

Family

Business

Awards

Stories by Ralph Ellis & Karen Kirkpatrick

"People are wondering how long Nancy and I want to be here," Les says. "We're spending a lot of time now on training the leadership, more than marketing and pre-construction. We're getting our leadership group teed up."

If the children do move into management of the company, it won't be gift-wrapped, Nancy says.

"They'll have to get the respect of the people who are here," she says. "They'll have to earn it." – RE

SMALL BUSINESS BAUMGARTENS Atlanta

Remember those small, hand-held pencil sharpeners you used as a kid? You may still have one tucked away in a drawer somewhere, just in case you want to abandon your laptop or tablet sometime and write it down old school. Well, those pencil sharpeners were the beginning of a family business that started in Georgia just after World War II and is still thriving today.

Baumgartens is an office supply manufacturer now making a name for itself with a number of environmentally friendly items, but, yes, they also still manufacture those pencil sharpeners. The backstory to the American

Baumgarten business – 2015 Cox Family Enterprise Center Family Business of the Year Award winner in the small business category – begins in Austria in the 1800s, when the family manufactured fine paper. When World War II started, however, the Baumgarten family had to close their business, escaping the country with their lives and just a few personal belongings.

Following the war, Fred Baumgarten set up shop in Atlanta selling the first hand-held pencil sharpeners in the United States door-to-door.

"My grandfather [Fred], knowing people still in Germany after the war, went to [some] companies; one was a pencil sharpener company," says David Baumgarten, vice president of Baumgartens, "and [he] met a guy who made a plastic paper clip."

Hans Baumgarten, David's 91-year-old father and company treasurer (David's mother, Jean, is president and CEO), picks up the story. "My father was going to a Frankfurt trade show on a train. He met a guy on the train who was editor or owner of a magazine called *Made in Europe*. Lots of the European manufacturers used to advertise in that. This gentleman told my father he heard of a new manufacturer who was making paper clips from plastic instead of metal. My



Family Tree: The Baumgartens, from left, David, vice president; Jean, president and CEO; and Hans, treasurer

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father went to see this gentleman, and we've been doing business with them since about 1950, maybe earlier, without lawyers, without contracts, without anything."

While the company has come a long way from pencil sharpeners, paper clips and door-to-door sales, it continues to look to its roots as it expands. The words "baum" and "garten" mean "tree" and "garden or orchard" in German and help explain the company's current focus on environmentally friendly products, says David.

"We have a couple of brands I've created," he says. "One of them is called Qi Bamboo. That tries to take items that would be made out of other materials, like plastic, and if we can make it out of bamboo material we will, because it's a sustainable, natural resource."

The company has also developed a line of products made from sugar cane waste. "We make cups and plates and bowls. And there's also forks, spoons and knives that are made out of waste from starches, from tapioca starch or potato starch," David says. "These products are fully biodegradable. You can use them and put them in your backyard compost if you want to. They will eventually break down and go back to the earth."

David explains the move to eco-friendly products as both a business and an ethical decision. "People who are buying want to buy from companies who have the heart of their organization intact and who act with an increasing level of responsibility for everything that they make and the entire company environment. [People] want to feel that their money went to companies who have great values and their values are closer to their own." — KK

CENTURY AWARD WINNER YANCEY BROS. CO. Austell

The phrase "family business" often conjures images of a company passed down from parents to children, the younger generation growing up in the business and stepping in to run it as the

older generation retires. But over the course of more than 100 years, Yancey Bros. Co., this year's recipient of the Cox Family Enterprise Center's Century Award, hasn't driven that straight line even once. The business has been continually run by members of the Yancey family, but the path of ownership has zigged and zagged from brothers to nephews to in-laws.

Jim Stephenson, the current chairman and CEO, is one of the in-laws — married to Donna Yancey Stephenson, niece of



Moving the Earth: Jim Stephenson, left, Yancey Bros. chairman and CEO, and Trey Googe, president and COO

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