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# THE SPOTLIGHT

## Red Bay Piggly Wiggly & Ace Hardware offers the community one stop shopping with affordable prices

By: Vallean Jackson

Red Bay Piggly Wiggly and Ace Hardware is a locally owned family business that has become a cornerstone in the community. Since 1963 they have adhered to the needs of customers in regards to groceries, fresh produce, meat cut daily, a deli, and a variety of options for home and lawn care needs.

Co-owners Jason Vinson and Ashley Blackburn, are following in the footsteps of their grandfather Homer Vinson and maintaining his legacy. The Red Bay Piggly Wiggly has been around for 62 years and around 2021, Ace Hardware was added to the location. The hardware store was added as a fulfillment for a need in the area. In combining the business with the grocery store, it's convenient for customers and elevates the shopping experience.

"I think one of the reasons my grandfather created this business is because he saw a way to serve the community and give back, and that is what we continue to do every day we open those doors. We're not a big corporation that doesn't know what is going on in the area, we're a family owned business that grew up in the business and in Red Bay. Red Bay is very special to us because we were born and raised here. Now we're raising our children here, so to continue to be of service to the very community that helped to make us who we are today is truly a great opportunity," said Vinson.

Vinson expressed that aside from the wide



selection of groceries, prepared meals, their growing frozen department, baked goods, garden shears, mulch, and other household essentials and needs; they believe strongly in going beyond the doors of the store and into the community of being of service where needed.

"We feel we make a difference in the community by making sure we're paying it forward and giving back. In doing that we serve in our local churches, in politics, on the board, within the city council, sports, schools, donate to education requests, and more. I have been a volunteer coach at Red Bay for about 10 or 11 years now. My sister volunteers as a coach for softball and volleyball throughout the year, and when sponsorship is needed for the ball clubs, we give our support there too. We know what it's like because we were there a time before with kids trying to play ball and needed fees to participate in things and so forth. This business and the chance to

continue to show up for this community is bigger than us, but we go over time to do our part as best as we can," said Vinson.

Piggly Wiggly and Ace Hardware may be well known names that have been around for years, but they have continued to evolve with the times. Vinson shared that when it comes to check out, customers can check out at one register instead of multiple, no matter at which of the stores customers shop. He also mentioned that they understand people are trying to figure out how to have a quality and wholesome meal minus the time to prep the meal and get it ready. So in essence to help, they have increased their options and added more deli items, prepped items, take home to bake meals, and so forth.

"One of the things that makes our location unique that greatly benefits customers is online ordering and grocery pickup which is a great help in the essence of time. It

eliminates customers from having to travel to another location when they are already short on time. We were already in the process of adding this feature, but right when covid hit, it kicked things into hyper gear and the timing couldn't have been more perfect and beneficial for customers. We are glad to be able to offer that option here," stated Vinson.

In an economy where prices on things are skyrocketing, Vinson believes that shopping for groceries is more affordable than going to a restaurant. He shared that by shopping their weekly ad and cooking meals at home, customers could reasonably feed a family of five for under \$35. Opposed to going to a restaurant that would easily likely either double or triple that \$35.

"If I could tell readers and customers anything, it would be that there are savings in going grocery shopping. It maximizes the dollar while still being able to get a good meal. Plus, we've been local since forever. Our customer service, freshness, variety, and value is one that can't be beat," added Vinson.

Red Bay Piggly Wiggly and Ace Hardware is located at 518 4th Ave. S and is open Monday through Thursday 7am to 8pm, Friday and Saturday from 7am to 9pm, and closed on Sunday. To get a preview on the deals for the week, check them out on Facebook, or visit them online at hometown-pigglywiggly.net.



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