

Owners Work With Neighbors To Address Lighting Issues

CARess Car Wash Offers Array Of Services To Whitehouse Area

BY MELISSA GARRETT
MIRROR REPORTER

The new CARess Car Wash on Finzel Road in Whitehouse is owned by a family with a wealth of experience in the car wash business.

Sisters Linda Williams and Annette Loar, along with their husbands, Gary Williams and Terry Loar, comprise Foursome, Inc., the company that owns the business.

Terry Loar has been in the car wash business for 20 years and the Williams joined as partners in 1989, although at the time they lived in Albuquerque, N.M.

Gary Williams said he and his wife learned the business for several years before moving to Holland in 1997 to help run the car washes full time.

Williams said the company has six other car washes in the Toledo area including two very popular sites at Douglas Road near The University of Toledo and Airport Highway near Byrne Road.

Foursome, Inc., decided to open a car wash in Whitehouse following a conversation with F&F & Associates, the owners of the Sunoco station next door.

Williams said the partners learned the Whitehouse area was growing and a car wash would be a good companion to the Sunoco gas station and convenience store.

The CARess Car Wash is an unmanned soft cloth car wash, which is open 24 hours and offers easy access as well

as a vacuum.

Customers can buy a car wash while purchasing gas at the Sunoco or use cash or a credit card to pay on the site.

There is also a vacuum on the back of the property for customer use. Williams said a vacuum with a carpet shampoo option is planned for the future because several customers have requested the machine.

"We built the business from the ground up," Williams said. "We are a small business, so we can respond to our customers on a one-to-one basis."

"We are particular about keeping our equipment in running order and we respond to complaints personally. We see a refund as an opportunity to make a customer happy."

Williams said the building was designed with clear walls to give the car wash an open look and safer feel so the building is not so claustrophobic and there is less chance of vandalism and theft.

In addition to responding to customers' needs, the business has responded to its neighbors' concerns as well.

Williams said he received a complaint from one resident who is a trustee of the Blue Prairie homeowners' association regarding the brightness of the lights.

Because some of the Blue Prairie homes back up to the car wash property, the resident asked if there was anything that could be done to lessen the brightness of the



The CARess Car Wash on Finzel Road in Whitehouse is open 24 hours a day and services are available for purchase through the Sunoco station next door as well as at the car wash site.

MIRROR PHOTO BY MELISSA GARRETT

lights, which are on all night.

While Williams said he did not think the lights were bad, he wanted to be a good neighbor. He took each of his 400-watt lights down separately and wrapped the insides with aluminum foil so the light only shines down rather than out. The process took about a week.

The light near the auto cashier was the only one left untouched, to provide enough light to keep the area safe.

Williams said the Whitehouse Police Department washes its cruisers at CARess Car Wash, and the police have mentioned the lights make the business and surrounding area easier to patrol.

The landscaping between the car wash and the neighborhood also includes a line of staggered trees that is intended to block light and sound when the trees grow a little larger.

Williams said the resident who had complained told him he had gone above and beyond with the light dampening and that call was the last he heard from anyone regarding light and noise issues.

The car wash offers a complaint box, and the company's phone number and e-mail address also are available for customers' comments.

"I thought we made ourselves easy to contact," Williams said. "We want to

be a good neighbor."

A group of residents from the Blue Prairie subdivision attended several Whitehouse Village Council meetings after Williams had adjusted the lights to complain about excessive light and sound from the business.

The group said the owners of the car wash had worked to improve the light situation and it was in continuing discussions with the owners about further light mediation and a possible reduction in nighttime hours of operation.

Council said the car wash met all of the requirements

to receive a building permit and there was nothing it could do since the property was zoned commercial and the owner was in full compliance with the village's regulations.

Council suggested the residents continue to try to work something out with the owners.

Williams said the residents did not have ongoing discussions with him and he was surprised to hear there were further complaints regarding the car wash.

Williams said the idea of reducing operating hours was never discussed. He said the owners would not look at that option until they have a full year of operation under their belts — until February 2006 — to assess how sales have been.

According to Williams, winter is usually their best season since people use car washes more rather than washing their cars at home and people want to wash the salt from their cars on a regular basis.

"We want to be good neighbors and make friends in the community," Williams said. "What happens here affects our business and their way of life."

Williams said the Whitehouse CARess Car Wash has been an expensive location for the company and the owners hope it will be a success in the future.

WHITEHOUSE LIBRARY NEWS

Works By Area Photographers On View

An exhibition of photographs by local residents will be on display in the Whitehouse Library's art gallery through the month of October. The exhibition includes works by Howard Burkert, John Walz, Melissa Garrett, Dick Larabee, Rosanne Roche McCraney, Kitty Stone, Nic Thakur, Melanie Heinlein, Abby Curtis, David Gasser, Katrina Kuhn, Jayn Zimmerman, Laura Zimmerman and Sarah Zimmerman.

The gallery is open during regular library hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays from noon to 8:00 p.m. and Saturdays from noon to 2:00 p.m.

Encore Program Set On Tuesdays

Area children are invited to participate in the Whitehouse Library's Encore reading program, an extension of the summer reading program. Encore reading will start at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesdays. Volunteers will be on hand to guide participants.

Library Presents Children's Story time

The Whitehouse Community Library will offer its children's story time program through the winter months. Story time takes place at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesdays.

The Whitehouse Library is located at 10651 Waterville St. near the France Stone quarry. The library is open from noon to 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday and Thursday and from noon to 4:00 p.m. on Saturday.


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HIGH SCHOOL & JUNIOR HIGH MENU

October 17 through October 21

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Baked Potato with Toppings Breadstick Broccoli & Cheese Mixed Fruit Cup	Chicken Fingers over Rice Eggroll Oriental Vegetables Pineapple	Barquito Boat with Salsa Garden Salad Sherbet Cup	Chicken BLT Salad with a Breadstick Orange Wedge	French Bread Cheese Pizza Veggies & Dip Applesauce

Menu is subject to change without notice! 2% milk and chocolate milk are offered as a daily choice.
Contact person: Jeri Mier (A.W. Food Service Director) 419-877-0789

ELEMENTARY & MIDDLE SCHOOL MENU

October 17 through October 21

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Baked Potato with Toppings Breadstick OR Fish on a Bun Broccoli & Cheese Mixed Fruit Cup	Chicken Fingers over Rice w/Eggroll oriental Vegetables Or Caesar Salad with a Breadstick Pineapple	Barquito Boat OR Chicken Patty on a Bun Garden Salad Sherbet Cup	Chicken BLT Salad with a Breadstick OR Meatball Sub & Garden Salad Orange Wedges	French Bread Pizza OR Footlong Hot Dog on a Bun Veggies & Dip Applesauce Cup