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Retail car sales have turned into big business for Parkway Auto Trade

Milton dealership has experienced a growth spurt in recent years

By JENNIFER ENRIGHT

Back in the late 1980s when Parkway Auto Trade first opened in Milton, Ontario, it was strictly a wholesale automotive business. In those early days, owner Carmine Mallozzi can recall selling between 30 and 40 cars a month, and most of those vehicles were destined for other dealers or to Milton's Toronto Auto Auctions. Nearly twenty years later, however, the retail end of the business has expanded dramatically and Mallozzi attributes at least part of that growth to Milton's recent population boom. Today, the retail end of the business - managed by Carmine's son-in-law Nick Moretti - accounts for more sales than the wholesale division of the company.

Mallozzi says the company has enjoyed a "growth spurt" in recent years. When Parkway Auto Trade opened its doors on Lawson Drive in 1989 Mallozzi oversaw the construction of the first phase of the present building. But with more growth, a result partly of an increase in retail sales, Parkway doubled the size of its building in 2004. The present building, which is approximately 6,000 square feet, includes auto detailing and reconditioning facilities and a fully licensed and certified mechanic's shop. There's also a division of the company, Associated Vehicle Appraisals and Remarketing, which offers appraisals and remarketing services. "We diversified our company where we do appraisals for businesses, estates and private individuals," explains Mallozzi. "We do evaluations on personal property such as cars, trucks, motor homes, and boats."

Mallozzi says his business is a little "off the beaten path" when it comes to dealerships, most of

which he notes are located on major routes closer to residential areas and not in industrial areas. It made sense initially, he says, to locate Parkway close to Toronto Auto Auctions, where the company does a lot of its business. But even so he says the location has not hurt the retail end of the business.

Today, Mallozzi says Parkway caters to the needs of a variety of different customers by selling and leasing both new and used cars and light trucks. Many of the used vehicles are purchased at franchise dealerships, including Honda, Toyota, Nissan, GM, Ford, and Chrysler. "We purchase a lot of trade-ins which we turn around and recondition and either selectively retail to the public or, if we feel that they don't meet our standards and aren't suitable for the consumer, we then sell wholesale to an auto auction or to other dealerships."

Each vehicle comes with a warranty that provides insurance on the mechanical aspects of the vehicle. Older vehicles, which are no longer covered by factory warranties, are all insured with Lubrico Warranty, a warranty company that Mallozzi says has a good track record in the automotive insurance business.

Mallozzi says he takes pride in offering his customers a quality product. But at the same time he's proud of his company's efforts to be a good corporate citizen. As a business owner, Mallozzi says being active in the community is important to him and in recent years Parkway Auto Trade has been involved with a number of community organizations and non-profit groups including the Canadian Red Cross Society, Halton Women's Place, and the Milton District Hospital Foundation.

Mallozzi says Parkway Auto Trade may not be the biggest dealer in town, but he believes it's definitely a dealership that's identified closely with Milton and the Milton community. Recently, Parkway Auto Trade was nominated as Business of the Year for 2004 (25 employees or less) by the Milton Chamber of Commerce. "I think our basic philosophy is we are community oriented. In the last two or three years, we've been recognized in helping a lot of local institutions and charities."

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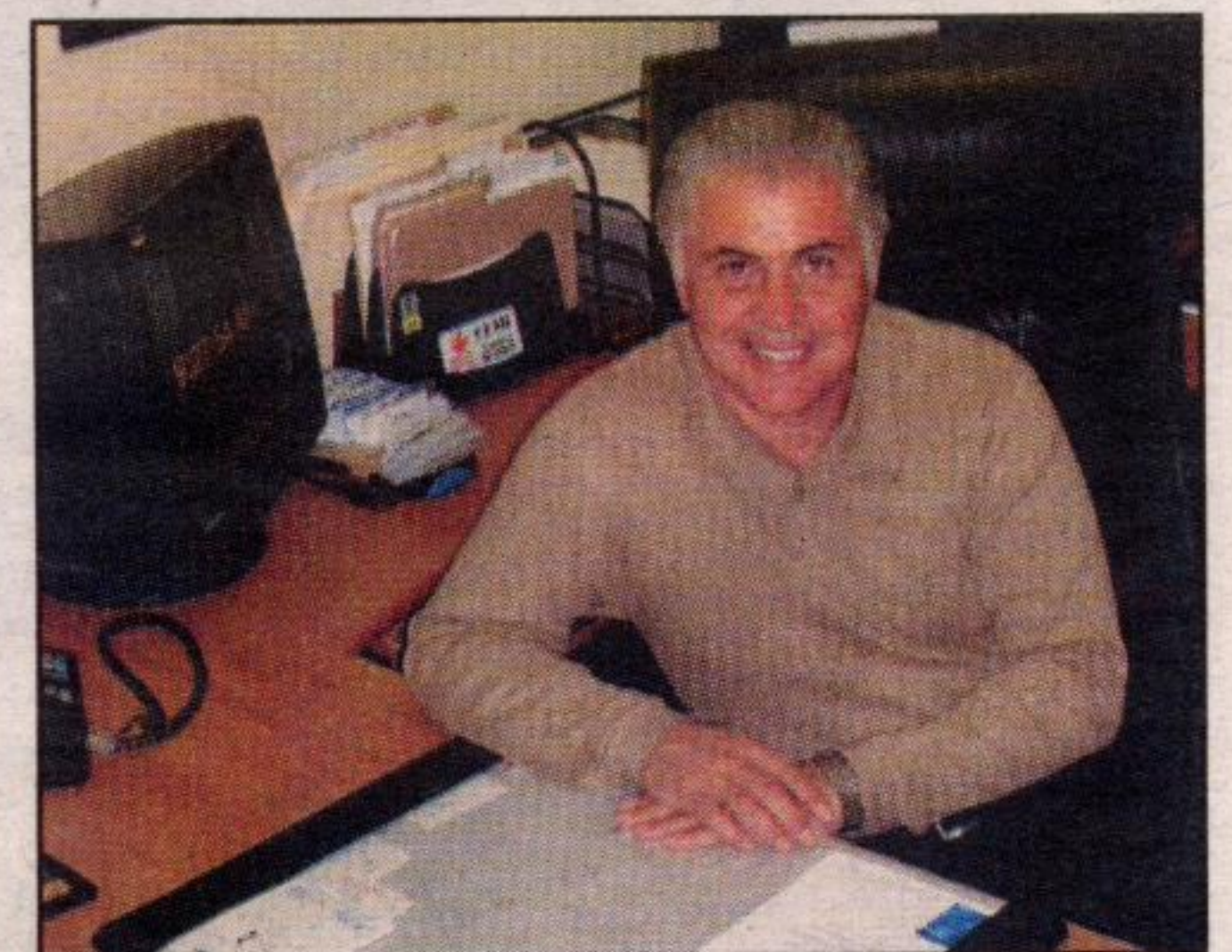
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Carmine Mallozzi of Parkway Auto Trade

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