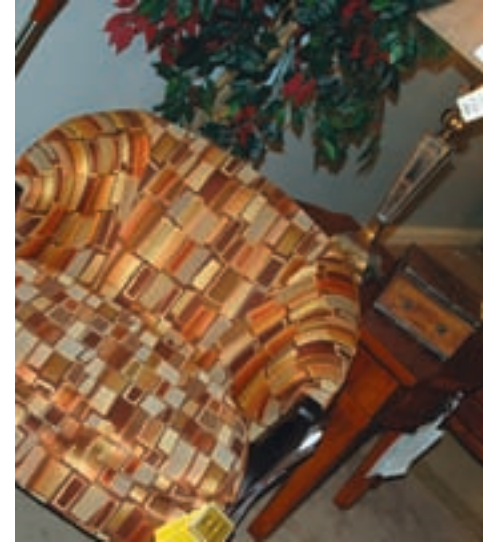


BUSINESS



Story and Photos by Robert Burns
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EDGEWATER – The giant big rig rolled into the Edgewater Parking lot Tuesday afternoon, packed to the roof with a shipment of Fathers Day gold. Scott Brinson helped the trucker back the rig up to the loading dock – as brother Craig grabbed a couple of padded hand dollies. “We thought he’d be here earlier,” said Craig, “but as long as he’s here before Fathers Day, we’re okay.”

Scott motions with his hands until the big rig gently kisses the platform. Then the dynamic duo of davenports dives into the off-load. In a heart-beat, it’s complete – 43 new recliners to add to the already impressive crop of American-made recliners dotting their Furniture Gallery showroom at 3042 South Ridgewood Avenue.

“Fathers Day is here,” said Craig, “and that’s a time when people think about the man in the family. No matter what, everyone can use a good comfortable chair.”

In the show room, the brothers and Craig’s wife, Kelle, show-off an impressive array of Papa Pleasers. Some are huge and over-stuffed, the height of indulgence; others are smaller, made for the small frame or smaller room.

“Believe it or not,” said Craig, “those smaller recliners are some of our top sellers because fewer furniture places carry the smaller recliners any more.”

The brothers tear into the newly shipped boxes, revealing the very latest in 21st Century reclining. “Our parents, Larry and Pat Brinson, first got into the furniture business here in Central Florida back in 1971,” said Craig, “then we opened the Edgewater store in 1983 and we’ve been here ever since.”

Scott begins to strategically move the new chairs into the showroom from the warehouse. Since the recent economic slowdown, the brothers have done most of their bugging-lugging on their own.

“We actually like it that way,” said Scott, “beginning, middle, end – from the

SITTING



PRETTY

Edgewater’s The Furniture Gallery Offers Dad a Relaxing Alternative to Age-Old Father’s Day Gifts

truck to the showroom and into your living room. We treat your furniture with love all the way.”

While business has slowed overall, both brothers agree, recliners continue to sell fairly well.

“Part of it, of course, is comfort,” said Craig. “But, a large percentage of recliners are purchased for medical reasons.” He added people often suffer from gastrointestinal problems such as reflux, where they benefit from the incline, or people simply having to keep their feet elevated, for circulatory reasons.

“A lot of heart patients,” said Scott, “come in here. Their doctor says they have to take a load off their feet, and this is a comfortable way to do it.”

One piece of advice the long-time residents pass along is to make sure you buy a piece of furniture from someone who is going to be around to back up the promises they make.

“What I’ve noticed lately is liquidation firms will come in and take a lot of money from locals, and then ‘poof,’ they’re gone!” shrugged Craig. “That’s not a good way to do business. Too many are left holding the bag.”

According to the brothers, the week before Fathers Day is always busy – and so is the week after.

“Well, it’s tough to buy a chair for someone else,” said Craig, “especially if it’s a surprise. It might not be the right fit, the right fabric.”

With a laugh, he said they spend the week after Fathers Day trading out recliners. “It’s just part of the business. But try that with one of those liquidators, and you’ll be stuck.”

In the front lobby of the Furniture Gallery stands a framed portrait of the late Larry Brinson, the founder of the firm, and the father of Scott and Craig.

“You’ve got to do it while you still have a chance; when it comes to Fa-

thers Day gifts,” said Craig, looking at the stacked boxes of the new shipment. “There comes a day, when we can no longer give this kind of comfort. It’s important to do it while we can.”

