

Springhill dealership to remain in business

Contributed by Tiffany Flournoy
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Despite being on the initial General Motors dealership closure list just two weeks ago, Springhill Motor Company will not be losing its GM affiliation after receiving an evaluation notice in mid May.

General Motors has changed its mind and decided not to pull its association with the only auto dealer in North Webster Parish. The decision comes on the heels of a trip to Detroit by Springhill Motors owners Bob and James Colvin. Without a scheduled appointment to meet with GM reps, the brothers showed up in the auto capital of the nation armed with a strategy.

"We spent a solid week at the GM World Headquarters meeting with people from GM each of the four days we were there," Bob Colvin said.

During their visit the Colvin's shared information regarding the trade area surrounding their dealership, as well as their passion for the business.

Colvin said he thought the outcome of the meeting was fairly positive and felt that the family-owned North Webster Parish dealership had a good chance at making the cut.

However, those feelings later wavered after the news of a GM press conference, in which GM said that the appeals process would not work for most dealers. In addition, the auto giant said they planned to go with the original closure list.

"At that point we were pretty discouraged," Colvin said.

Tuesday morning, Springhill Motor Company was no different than any of the other dealers who received FedEx package from GM.

"Every dealer received a FedEx package Tuesday, win, lose or draw," Colvin said. "We didn't open ours until Tuesday night. It was pretty stressful opening that envelope because we didn't know which way things would go."

Colvin said according to the information enclosed, some dealers received letters of immediate termination, others opened letters informing them to remove competitive brands from their dealership with benchmarks attached and some had welcomed dealers on the train to a realigning GM.

The letter to Springhill Motor Company read, "proud to have you on board for the future." However, that wasn't the case for roughly 1,500 other dealers who were hit with closure notifications.

"We hope to be here another 64 years," Colvin said while celebrating with a piece of chocolate cake.

Although the Colvin's are uncertain of the ultimate deciding factor and GM's choice to keep the dealership with the GM name, Bob Colvin said he truly believes their trip to Detroit made a difference along with parish-wide support.

"A lot of people in Springhill had written letters," Colvin said. The Springhill Chamber, banks, mayor's office and we know that our congressman, Rep. Jean Doerge and Sen. Robert Adley, Gov. Bobby Jindal and the state office of commerce were all putting their best foot forward to help us.

"GM told us after the meeting we were the kind of dealers they wanted going forward," Colvin

continued.“This is a big thing and it means a lot to us.”

It appears the family’s passion and dedication and keepsakes paid off.

Colvin said he showed GM the same thing he showed the Press-Herald, but in picture form — memorabilia, old brochures, the mini museum and the modernized facility.

“People have been pouring in here congratulating us and I didn’t even think the word had gotten out yet,” Colvin said. “We’ve been serving Webster Parish longer than any other dealership, since 1945.