

Jim Allard does business with dozens of companies as vice president of Allard Contractors, an aggregate company in Coquitlam, B.C.

## What sets Ritchie Bros. apart? People, says Jim – and a slice of pie.

Jim Allard describes himself as “just a gravel guy from Coquitlam.” With his brother Barry, Jim presides over Allard Contractors Ltd. – a Greater Vancouver, B.C.-based aggregate company with five gravel pits, a concrete plant, 100 employees and a multi-million dollar fleet of crushing equipment, mixers and loaders.

Jim and Barry’s father James J. Allard Sr. started the company in 1945. At the time, it was a one man, one truck operation – but it quickly grew. In 1964, James Sr. bought his first gravel pit on Pipeline Road in Coquitlam, the current site of the company’s head office. A few years later, he brought his two teenage sons into the business.

Around the time that James Sr. was establishing a name for himself in the B.C. aggregate industry, the Ritchie brothers were establishing a name for themselves in Canada as auctioneers of industrial equipment. Naturally, their paths crossed.

“Our relationship with Ritchie Bros. started as just business,” says Jim. “My dad used to go to the early auctions in Edmonton. In fact, we still have some of the conveyers he bought in those days. Ritchie Bros. auctions are social gatherings; all the aggregate guys are there. If you’re in the industry and there’s an auction, you’ve got to be there, just to talk to your competitors and your customers.”

Jim attended his first Ritchie Bros. auction in the late 1960s. Since then he’s bought and sold countless pieces of equipment through Ritchie Bros. – but it’s the relationships he’s built and the people he’s met that he values most. Especially Dave Ritchie.

“I’ve only known two true givers in my life – people who give with no expectation of receiving anything in return,” says Jim. “Dave Ritchie is one of them. I feel blessed to have known him. He is an unbelievably generous man. The secret to his success is the way he treats people – his original partners, his employees and, so importantly, his customers. Success comes from what you do, the way you do it and the way you treat people.”

Jim recalls the time Dave had an extra-large jacket tailor-made for a customer attending a fishing trip at his lodge on Stuart Island. And the time Dave found two tickets to a sold-out event in Victoria, B.C. for an Australian customer and his wife he just happened to bump into during their visit to Canada. And the time Dave borrowed one of Jim’s mixer trucks and returned it with a fresh coat of paint.

“Another time,” remembers Jim, “I was at an auction in Denver. I’m out of place there; I’m just a Coquitlam guy. I’m not one of the heavy hitters who’s going to spend millions. Dave sees me and he says, ‘Allard.’ I can’t believe he recognized me. ‘Come up to the VIP room,’ he says. ‘There’s some great homemade pumpkin pie.’ That’s what makes Dave a success:



Jim Allard

**“It doesn’t matter if you’re selling a million dollars of equipment or you run a single bulldozer, you’re treated just the same.”**

he’s the kind of person who can make you feel like the most important person in the world with a piece of pumpkin pie.”

In Jim’s opinion, the mindset that Dave established at Ritchie Bros. – of giving every customer the respect and attention they deserve; of going the extra mile to make someone feel valued – has been maintained with successive generations of Ritchie Bros. employees.

“I have absolute trust, faith and confidence in the people at Ritchie Bros.,” says Jim. “If I have questions or I want to know something about a piece of equipment, I just pick up the phone and the guys at the auction site tell me, straight up. I don’t have that kind of personal relationship with other companies I deal with. It doesn’t matter if you’re selling a million dollars of equipment or you run a single bulldozer; at Ritchie Bros. you’re treated just the same.”

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