

Theodore (Ted) Swaldo

After graduation from New Philadelphia High School in 1961, Ted entered a co-op program with the Timken Co. and graduated with honors from Tri-State College (now Trine University) with a degree in Mechanical Engineering. After a nine-year career with Timken he became the Engineering Manager at Air Enterprises in Akron before co-founding a high voltage electrical manufacturing company, American Switchgear Corp in North Canton in 1976. That company developed a second Automotive Division dedicated to manufacturing automotive and truck water pumps and became ASC Industries Inc. Swaldo then bought the company, sold off the electrical division and turned ASC Industries into the largest automotive water pump company in the world (12 million units annually) with factories in Spain, Mexico, China; with the corporate headquarters in Green, Ohio.

After he sold the company in 2007, Ted “retired” from the business, though his two months of retirement didn’t sit well with him. So, he started Gervasi Vineyard in Canton to give him “something to do”. In less than a year, he and his family transformed the picturesque 55-acre farm into an award winning winery, featuring an outstanding Italian Bistro, a marketplace gift shop for selling its wine and imported housewares, and an outdoor Pavilion developed in beautiful Tuscan mission style décor.

Since opening in 2010, GV Destinations has added “The Villa Grande” conference center, six (6) Italian designed Villas with a total of 24 luxury suites (rated a AAA four diamond property and nominated by USA Today as the best wine country hotel in the USA for two consecutive years), a new state of the art computerized winery, and a pub style restaurant called “The Crush House”. The property has become a true destination in the tourism industry and attracts over 250,000 visitors annually.

In 2014, he continued to build in the hospitality industry by constructing a vibrant new 400 seat restaurant in Green, Ohio called “The Twisted Olive”. Swaldo later returned to his manufacturing roots in 2015 and co-founded a truck up fit company with his son-in-law called “American Road Machinery” (ARM) specializing in the building of all types of trucks including snow & ice, dump and tank trucks.

Today, Ted and his family are expanding the footprint on the Gervasi estate by adding a luxury boutique hotel featuring 24 suites to host overnight guests and state-of-the-art distillery and coffee house located on the south side of Gervasi Village further solidifying Gervasi Vineyard as a unique Tuscan-inspired winery resort. The newest additions for this \$9 million project are scheduled to open late 2018 or early 2019.

A former member of the North Canton Jaycees and the North Canton Rotary, Swaldo was awarded the Paul Harris Fellowship Award by Rotary International. He has been associated with the World Champion Bluecoats Drum & Bugle Corps for over 32 years serving as Executive Director for ten years, and continues today as a Board member. Ted was selected to serve for four (4) years as the Board Chairman for Dump Corps International (DCI), the governing organization for the activity headquartered in Chicago.

In 1987 Ted was named Tri State College Outstanding Alumni. He has always been active in his community and has served on the Pro Football Hall of Fame Enshrinement Festival Committee, the Board of Advisors for The University of Mount Union, and is currently a member of the Board of Directors of Walsh University. In 2017, Ted served as Co-Chairman of the Stark County United Way Campaign with his son, Scott.

A native of Tuscarawas County and one of ten children, he has been married to his high school sweetheart, Linda Meese, for 55 years. Their family includes two children, Scott Swaldo, Christi Blackerby, son-in-law's Tom Blackerby, and Jeff Hicks and three grandchildren.

“The same way families work together, I have been able to re-create this environment in the work place,” said Swaldo. “Although I have managed numerous businesses and have had thousands of employees, I have always felt that no one has ever worked FOR me, everyone has always worked WITH me. Together, we have worked to improve the quality of life for all concerned.”

Updated 6/4/18