

We Sell Fun!



As sewers, we often become so consumed with fabrics, designs, notions, and embellishments we forget that without our fine sewing machine – in perfect working condition – we would have only ideas, stash, dust collectors, and frustration.

Enter Guy and Harriett Pound. When they opened City Sewing Center in Kalamazoo in 1976, they made a conscious decision to be a hard-line dealer. They would sell high quality sewing machines and provide excellent service after the sale. Their business would concentrate on their area of expertise and complement the soft lines of fabric stores in the area.

Pfaff sewing machines are at the core of their business. At Pfaff's urging, they opened The Sewing Machine Store in Battle Creek in 1999, relying on the same philosophy that drives City Sewing Center. In 2009, Babylock wanted to boost its sales in the Battle Creek area. Having once sold Babylock sergers, the Pounds and The Sewing Machine Store were a natural fit. Guy feels that the two stores complement each other. He says, "Sewers like to shop close to home."

Guy has been in the sewing machine business since 1966, selling many brands that are no longer available in the retail market. He credits his background with providing the foundation for his extensive repair skills, an interest that began out of intrigue for the mechanics of sewing machines. His name is often mentioned when sewers talk about where to find quality repair services. He calls himself a dinosaur; we call him an expert!

As with many brands, Pfaff sewing machines have very loyal owners. Guy observes that some of

his customers have numerous machines, many of them top of the line. He will most certainly find the same is true of Babylock owners. I didn't want to hurt his feelings, but he was pretty much preaching to the choir on that one! New owners will be able to learn how to use their machines under expert guidance in either location.

Business has been good at both locations this year. Guy says that the sewing machine sales business has experienced numerous waves over the years. We can relate to the excitement of machines that first sewed zigzag stitches and made working with double knits more efficient. We remember the introduction of sergers and embroidery machines. Many of us quilt and recognize the huge contribution (or expense, depending on your perspective) this wonderful pursuit makes to local economies. Guy ponders what's next. It's possible that the Babylock Sashiko, which creates a true hand-stitched look, may be at the forefront of embellishment machines.

The Pounds are seeing younger sewers who are interested in garment construction in their stores. He credits this side of the sewing resurgence with increased machine capability – the ability to duplicate ready-made techniques. He feels that much of that increased capability is thanks to the needs of quilters...increased arm clearance, additional lighting, needle-up/needle-down, more built-in stitches. Increased machine features translate into increased creative potential for us. Guy summarizes this all of this by saying, "We sell fun!" Who among us would disagree?

When you shop, tell Guy and Harriett you're a member of the American Sewing Guild.

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