



Pat Finley and family

Pat Finley

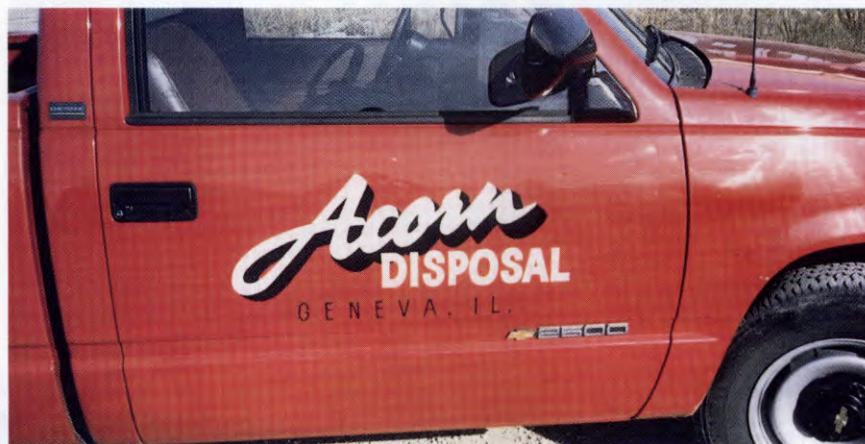
Montgomery, Illinois

Pat Finley says that the only major change at his shop since his work was featured in the March/April 1985 issue has been a little construction work around the shop. He has partitioned off an area for the shop's office so that he'll have an area to meet with customers.

"Believe it or not," he says, "I've been meaning to remodel ever since I moved in here 15 years ago. I'm building a few more pattern racks, too. This place is no picture of efficiency - I'd like to get it organized a little better so I can be more productive."

Pat still does a lot of vehicle lettering, and enjoys a steady flow of plywood signs and other commercial work. He does a lot of small fleet work for contractors, taxi services, towing companies, and local government. "Let's put it this way - I never throw a pattern away," says Pat. "Some of my customers add or replace vehicles on a regular basis, so I do a lot of multiples."

Most of Pat's work comes from the Aurora, Illinois area. Since he lives about 15 miles to the west, in Big Rock, he also picks up some work in that area. Much of the work comes





via word-of-mouth, and he also runs a small display ad in the local Yellow Pages.

Having established a sound base of customers over the past 15 years, Pat's "peak periods" come closer together than ever before.

"Customers tease me about never being able to get in my shop because I'm so busy," says Pat, "or say that once they order something it takes two or three weeks for me to get to it. Every once in a while I 'catch it' because I'm behind on a job, but they keep coming back. Most of them are willing to wait.

"I have a good clientele - I know them and they know me. If they need something immediately, they'll tell me they need it immediately. If they don't, and can give me a little time," he stops and laughs, "they'll still tell me they need it immediately!

"With my one-man show here, I'm usually booked three to four weeks down the line. But, I try to only book four or four and a half days of each week. That way I can work in one of my good customers if they should need a rush job. I've found that's better than booking a full week. You have Friday, or at least Friday afternoon and sometimes Saturday morning to catch up if you have to squeeze something in."

