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Photo

GETTING A FAITH-LIFT

Family business a blessing for Longview auto mechanic shop



Michael Cavazos/News-Journal Photo

Frank Flores, Johnathan Flores, and Victoria Flores of Frank's Lobo Tire are pictured on Nov. 29.

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The changing times will become obvious within weeks at Frank's Lobo Tire in the Pine Tree area of Longview.

That's when the decades-old business will install a new sign with its new name, but it will remain in the hands of the same family who started it.

Faith Automotive will still be owned by Frank's Lobo Tire founder Frank Flores, but two of his children have joined the business as owners as well — his son and daughter, Johnathan Flores and Victoria Flores.

"We're all Christ followers," Johnathan Flores said of how they selected the new name. It lets people know what the business is all about, he said — serving people the way Jesus served.

It also will serve to address some confusion that has developed over the years. They said there are two other similar businesses in the community with "Lobo" in the name, including the one where

Frank Flores originally started his business in downtown Longview in 1995. He sold that business in 2010, but opened the current shop in 2016 on Marshall Avenue.

And no, while Frank said he supports the Lobos, his children attended Pine Tree schools. When he started his business, he bought an existing business that already had "Lobo" in the name.

Frank started working in automotive repair about 20 years before he first opened his business, starting out changing oil and then moving up at other shops.

"I wanted to help the people out," Frank said of his motivation for opening his own shop. He said he saw that a lot of people couldn't afford what large companies were charging people to repair cars. "I wanted to help the community."

The name change also will clear up confusion about the services the shop provides.

"People never knew all the work we did," Johnathan said, explaining that his family's business provide all sorts of



Michael Cavazos/News-Journal Photo

Victor Hernandez spends his morning working on a vehicle.

general mechanical automotive repairs — transmissions, exhaust, alignments, for instance, but no paint and body work. Johnathan also started a used car business nearby.

Frank is not retiring, but he is handing the reins over to his children, who he said are operating with the same model as he has — with honesty and care for customers.

They are, however, modernizing the shop. The office has

been updated and renovated, with additional work planned — new equipment, new bay doors and more cosmetic upgrades.

Johnathan, the company CEO, said he wants to franchise the business in the future.

"That's a dream. It's really God's plan if that's going to come to fruition," he said. "It's the vision I have to expand to other

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