On the road to savings

Rutledge Pike salvage operation lets customers find, buy old car parts

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Every day, people bring their parts onto the grounds at a Rutledge Pike salvage operation and strip cars of batteries, alternators, wheels, even doors — right in broad daylight.

Management and staff at Pull-A-Part Used Auto Parts don't seem to mind — they even provide wheelbarrows for people to haul the stuff off.

Pull-A-Part, which opened at 3800 Rutledge Pike in 2008, has seen its business increase during the recession.

The self-service automobile parts retail operation, which is open seven days a week, buys cars at salvage rates and maintains them on a 19-acre lot, where customers pay for the parts using their own tools, then buy them at discounted prices. The Rutledge Pike location is one of about 30 Atlanta-based company operations throughout the Southeast.

Charles Seymour of Rogersville was at the Rutledge Pike location this week looking for a front wheel bearing for a 1996 Volvo.

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Jeff Robinson works on removing a door panel from a late model General Motors car at Pull-A-Part Inc. Then, he sold the company to a VW, BMW or Corvettes alternative, for the same price," Levetan said. "Our cashiers don't need to know whether it is a 1992 Jeep alternator. They just need to know it's an alternator instead of a door.

For example, a door is $30, a tire and wheel are $26, a radiator is $43, a windshield is $30, etc.

Then, the cookies jump they turn around and resell on eBay," he said.

Some people do this to supplement their incomes, he said. Some do it for a living.

"We have a husband and wife who come in to one of our Atlanta locations every Saturday," Levetan said. "They pull parts together and tell us that by doing this they have been able to send three kids through college.

Levetan said there are people who have businesses based on searching multiple Pull-A-Part locations for parts. "They sell one such customer has a business making custom motorcycles built partially from cars. "We get a guy out of Kentucky who has been up and down the entire state," Levetan said. "He takes them apart, and rebuilds them and makes three-wheelers.

Another customer specialized in side-view mirrors. "He knows what sells, buys it and sells it on eBay," Levetan said.

"We get asked, 'Why don't you do that? Why don't you just sell parts on eBay? We don't need to do that. We are dedicated to death that we've got people who will come in here and do that."

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