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## Truck, trailer repair business owner opens new, larger facility

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By Eric Schwartzberg

Staff writer

**FAIRFIELD** — In Sandra Ambrose-Clark's 26 years in the trucking business, no deal went down faster than the one that landed a newly expanded headquarters for Without a Doubt Truck & Trailer Repair.

The business, one of four owned by Ambrose-Clark, started in a two-bay garage on North Gilmore Road in Fairfield in 2007, a facility it had outgrown more than a year ago. It recently moved to an 8-bay garage at 3240 Production Drive thanks to a twist of fate.

"We needed to move into a larger facility ... and it was truly a miracle the way this all happened," Ambrose-Clark said. "I'd just been trying to find a place and one day a gentleman that worked for me was driving by this building and a (for sale) sign was being put out. He stopped and asked and another gentleman said 'Sure, I'll show it to you right now' .. and I came down a few hours later and the deal was done."

Billed as the largest private-owned garage in the area, the business has two relaxation rooms for drivers along with a courtesy van.

A grand opening celebration from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sept. 14 will feature family-oriented events, including a barbecue cookout, prizes, vendors showing off different products, an 80-foot-tall inflatable gorilla and a safety demonstration to teach younger drivers how to drive safely around tractor trailers.

Without a Doubt works on diesel trucks, dry vans and all Class A trucks and performs quarterly preventative maintenance and yearly Department of Transportation inspections.

Having a larger facility has cut wait time for major repairs on a piece equipment from two or three days to "in and out the same day," Ambrose-Clark said.

It's also boosted staffing from four to 16 mechanics and allowed the business to be open from 7 a.m. to 12:30 a.m. Monday to Saturday, giving it weekend hours for the first time.

"My hope is that we will become 24 hours a day within the next year," Ambrose-Clark said.

She learned the ropes of the trucking trade from her parents. Her father, Jacob Ambrose, started third-party brokerage business ESJ Enterprises in 1986, naming the business for wife Eva, daughter Sandra and himself. Following his death in 1987, Eva Ambrose took over.

Ambrose-Clark, who got involved in the early late 1980s, now owns ESJ Carrier Corporation and started Without a Doubt Truck & Trailer Repair in 2007, Name Your Freight Rate brokerage in 2010 and Without a Doubt Warehouse in 2011.

Her leap into self-started entrepreneurship came as the result of a question.

"A reporter asked me 'Now that you've lived your dad's dream and you've had the brokerage and the trucking, what do you want to do?'" Ambrose-Clark said. "And you know the question perplexed for a long time and that's when I saw the market changing. From his question, Without a Doubt Truck & Trailer Repair was born."

She's now working to grow the trucking and garage side of the business more so than the brokerage side.

"Brokerage is a wonderful business, however the economy's a scale and you need to be large like TQL or C.H. Robinson Worldwide in order to have a true great following," she said. "A small company like ours, it takes the right customer, it takes someone who actually is looking for service and in the past couple of years it's become a price market."

The combination of companies complements each other.

"Now we're a true logistics provider of services," she said. "We can deliver a load, we can warehouse it for you, we can pick, pack and ship it for you, we can put it out on our trucks and we can ship it out on different trucks. If a truck has a repair issue, we can fix it right there on the spot."

Ambrose-Clark also dispels the notion of "there's no such thing as a free lunch" by offering just that to anyone and everyone from 11 to 2 p.m. every other Friday at Without a Doubt Truck & Trailer Repair. About 180 people show for the food and stick around for the camaraderie

"It's turned out to be a great community builder," she said. "Everybody sits around and talks. It's a lot of fun."

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Without a Doubt Truck & Trailer Repair, 3240 Production Drive, Fairfield

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