



Lujack's sale nears completion

By Kay Luna | Wednesday, April 11, 2007

The sale of a long-time Quad-City auto dealership is set for closing Thursday, marking the first time in more than 50 years someone outside the founder's family will hold the reins.

"It's going to be a great opportunity," said Mike Leep Sr., owner and founder of Gurley-Leep Automotive Family, which is purchasing Lujack's auto dealership in Davenport. "We are so excited to be a part of the Quad-Cities community."

The sale of Lujack's to Gurley Leep, located near South Bend, Ind., will merge the largest dealerships in Iowa and Indiana.

Leep said little will change at Lujack's. The name will continue to honor Johnny Lujack's fame as a star quarterback and Heisman Trophy winner for the University of Notre Dame.

The sale, announced in early December, does not mean current owner and chairman Pete Pohlmann will leave the fold. He and his family will stay involved as minority owners and investors in the business, and Pohlmann will continue working at Lujack's as community liaison and spokesperson for at least the next nine years, Leep and Pohlmann said.

Lujack's 400 employees also were invited to stay on board and continue to receive similar employment benefits, they said.

Leep has said he's open to the idea of expanding Lujack's further. He's no stranger to such growth in the South Bend area, where Gurley-Leep is made up of 16 dealership locations in Indiana and Michigan.

Both parties have declined to divulge the sale price, though Pohlmann called it "a win-win and a fair transaction."

"This has been a very smooth sale transaction, and we're very excited about the next chapter of our lives," he said. "We just finished one of the best months we've ever had in our history — the best March we've ever had — and I think our team is looking forward to the transition."