

PROFILE



DEBI CAGLE

**OWNER OF CAGLE'S
APPLIANCE**

Chamber picks Cagle for honor

By Liset Márquez
Staff Writer

ONTARIO — Debi Cagle, owner of Cagle's Appliance Center in Ontario, was recently named small-business person of the year by the Chamber of Commerce.

Cagle has always prided herself on giving back to the community, most recently she donated a washer and dryer to the USO at Ontario.

One of the keys to her success was her parents who started this business 52 years ago, she said.

About 20 years ago her father needed to retire so she and her brother, Jerry went into partnership. About a year after that Cagle bought out her brother.

"I didn't think I'd ever own my own business. I saw my parents put in the hours, they worked 24/7. When the opportunity came, that my father had this business he built from the ground up, I realized the opportunity I had," she said.

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Cagle said she is happy to continue the service once offered by her parents.

"I started out washing used appliances. I earned every bit of this, he didn't just hand this to me. He let me make mistakes, even if it cost us money. I would ask him why he didn't tell me or warn me, and he would say 'If I told you wouldn't believe me.' If I did it, then I won't repeat the mistake," Cagle said.

Cagle, like her father, has remained very hands-on. If something needs to be cleaned, she said she is out there cleaning, or if customers have questions, she is there helping them.

Cagle has gone through some difficult times. Nine years ago she lost her father; a year after that her husband was killed in an accident. Last year her house burned down.

"My employees, customers and family is what kept me going," she said.

The business is still very much in the family, her brother, Gary, is the service manager; her cousin Gina is the dispatcher, her aunt Bonnie handles the billing, and her cousin Sharon is the controller.