

Headline: The 'Sole-man' holds steady

TRT: 3:29

—

[[LEDE]]

[[OC-SOPHIA]]

DOWNTOWN IS DEAD.

YOU MAY KNOW THE PHRASE.

IT RINGS TRUE FOR ONE SHOE REPAIRMAN IN THE CAPITOL SQUARE IN DOWNTOWN COLUMBUS.

OUR CHUCK RINGWALT SPOKE WITH HIM AND JOINS US AGAIN NOW.

CHUCK.

[[OC-CHUCK]]

THAT'S RIGHT SOPHIA.

DAVID STALEY MADE AN OLD PAIR OF OXFORDS SHINE LIKE NEW.

THE PROCESS TOOK ABOUT AN HOUR...SO I LEARNED A LOT ABOUT THE MAN WHOSE NICKNAME SAYS IT ALL.

[[TAKE PKG]]

[[PKG]]

[[NATS]]

(shoe drop)

[[TRACK]]

THIS STORY IS ABOUT MORE THAN JUST SHOES.

[[NATS]]

(air in glove)

[[TRACK]]

*IT'S ABOUT THE MAN WHO SHINES THEM.*

DAVID STALEY (STAY-LEE) IS *THE SOLE-MAN*.

[[NATS]]

(Tin hits the floor)

[[SOT]]

(David Staley, Staley Shoe Repair)

"Taking a pair of shoes that people feel are beyond repair and breathing new life into them, keeping them out of a landfill."

[[TRACK]]

FOR 36 YEARS STALEY SHOE REPAIR IN COLUMBUS HAS WAXED, BUFFED AND SPIT SHINED THE SHOES OF THE CITY'S RESIDENTS.

[[SOT]]

(David Staley, Staley Shoe Repair)

"I actually enjoy working with my hands. There's just so much that America was built on as far as working with your hands. Plus, I don't believe my industry is going to be outsourced any time soon."

[[TRACK]]

TWO DECADES AGO...THERE WERE 35 THOUSAND CUSTOMERS ANNUALLY...*BUT FOOT TRAFFIC DWINDLED* AS DRESS DOWN FRIDAYS BECAME THE NEW NORMAL.

AND THE PANDEMIC IS *WEARING DOWN THE SOLE-MAN*.

HE SAYS HE GAVE UP COUNTING THE PEOPLE PASSING BY.

(one person passes by as Staley waves).

[[SOT]]

(David Staley, Staley Shoe Repair)

"Mike. He and his wife have been coming in for 20 plus years. He just informed me that they are retiring and moving to Scottsdale in August I believe it is."

[[TRACK]]

ANOTHER BLOW TO HIS BUSINESS...DOWN 60 PERCENT AFTER CLOSING FOR THREE MONTHS (NAT POP) AND WITHOUT CUSTOMERS RETURNING DOWNTOWN. IT'S LONELY.

[[NATS]]

(Staley sighs in an empty room)

[[SOT]]

(David Staley, Staley Shoe Repair)

"It's been a test."

[[NATS]]

(Staley picks up brush)

[[TRACK]]

BUT *HE'S NOT LETTING THE SHINE FADE JUST YET...TREATING EVERY SHOE LIKE IT'S HIS OWN.*

[[SOT]]

(David Staley, Staley Shoe Repair)

"I equate it to cleaning and waxing your car. The last thing you do is dress out the tires and wheels."

[[TRACK]]

THIS THOUGH...*MAY BE THE LAST MILE.*

HE'S GIVING HIMSELF TWO MONTHS BEFORE MAKING A DECISION.

[[SOT]]

(David Staley, Staley Shoe Repair)

"I'd hate to call it a career after 36 years and at pushing 60 years old going into something else."

[[TRACK]]

*BUT HEY...EVERYONE HAS TO WEAR SHOES...RIGHT?*

[[SOT]]

(David Staley, Staley Shoe Repair)

"I'm a glass half full kind of guy. I control what I can control and leave the rest up to God."

[[NATS]]

(Staley bags shoes)

[[SOT]]

(David Staley, Staley Shoe Repair)

"And he is ready to go home."

[[END]]

[[TAG]]

[[OC-CHUCK]]

NOW...STALEY SAYS HE'S BEGINNING TO SEE MORE FAMILIAR FACES WALKING THROUGH THE BUILDING.

IT'S JUST A MATTER OF THEM STOPPING IN THE STORE.

[[OC-SOPHIA]]

SO...DOES HE HAVE ANY PLANS FOR THE NEXT COUPLE OF MONTHS?

[[OC-CHUCK]]

HE'D LIKE TO MOVE...BUT HE SAYS IT'S DIFFICULT TO HAVE CUSTOMERS FOLLOW HIM THERE...SO HE'S CONTEMPLATING MOVING...BUT HE SAYS KEEPING THOSE CUSTOMERS IS REALLY DIFFICULT.

[[OC-SOPHIA]]

I CAN UNDERSTAND THAT.

ALRIGHT...OUR CHUCK RINGWALT...THANK YOU SO MUCH.

[[OC-CHUCK]]

THANK YOU.

[[END]]