



BLUE BIRD

CABS

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Blue Bird Cabs Pick Up Where Others Leave Off

Forget about what you've been hearing in the news, says Herman "Duffy" Mazzeo, owner of Blue Bird Cabs. He's committed to serving his customers by providing the best service in the best cabs around town. Make no bones about it. That's a fact.

"I've helped a lot of the other cab companies out," said Mazzeo, defending the criticism he and other cab companies have received in recent weeks. "I'm here to help people stay in business, not put them out of business."

Mazzeo purchased the oldest cab company in the city three years ago, which has been growing ever since. Blue Bird Cabs has been in Winston-Salem for the past 70 years. He has a total of 119 cabs in service, 60 in Winston-Salem, 49 Red Bird Cabs in High Point and 10 in Thomasville.

"We're growing because we are concentrating on putting money back into the cabs and back into the company," says Mazzeo, whose business caters to a majority African-American clientele.

Not only does Mazzeo express his concern for his customers, but also for the cab drivers. "We have a lot of people who have been with Blue Bird even before I was here. They are committed to the business and have a great deal to offer" to the community, says Mazzeo.

In what is known as one of the most dangerous businesses in the country, Mazzeo says, measures are taken to ensure no illegal activities are occurring in his business. To drive Blue Bird Cabs you must undergo a drug test, have a sound driving record and clean criminal record.

"We also pay attention to our dispatch. If someone leases a cab and doesn't check in for any rides or fares, then we're going to get suspicious," he added. It costs \$50 to lease a cab for up to 12 hours. On average a cab driver can make no more than \$200 a day.

To combat the rise in crime in cab companies, Mazzeo and Blue Bird Cabs will be installing a new state of the art computer system that will improve the dispatching system. The new system will have a street map which will be able to locate the exact location of a cab. Mazzeo says a system like this will change the face of crime in the cab business. "We will be able to tell where the cab is and how long its been there." Phase I of the new system is expected to begin next month and cost an estimated \$200,000.

"I'm just here to say that we provide quality service and our customers will tell you that."

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