

## '7 Wonders of Gaston County' begins with Tony's Ice Cream

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[Bernie Petit](#)

Tony's Ice Cream has always had a loyal customer base, said owner Louis Coletta.

It's been around since 1915 and at its current location on Franklin Boulevard for more than 60 years. There's not a bevy of retail and shopping surrounding it, so it's not a spur of the moment kind of place for a lot of people.

But Tony's has been able to get by and thrive because of two things – its commitment to its customers and its ice cream, Coletta said. That's why readers voted it one of the Gazette's Seven Wonders of Gaston County.

"We take care of the kids and the churches," said Coletta, who owns Tony's with son Tony Coletta and daughter Melinda Bradley. "That's always been our philosophy."

As for the ice cream, which it makes next door to the restaurant, Coletta said Tony's couldn't compete if it didn't pay close attention to the quality of ice cream it serves.

"We have to stay a little above the people who make ice cream just to sell it," he said. "We want to be able to look the customer in the eye and know we're giving them something we're proud of."

Take a trip to Tony's and you'll see people of all walks of life from all around Gaston County. And they'll be slurping down one of the shop's signature milk shakes or enjoying one of its 20-plus flavors of ice cream. It's a family atmosphere and Coletta said he and his employees take pride in making folks feel at home.

"If you don't have a friendly place, people won't come see you," he said. "People have to drive here with us in mind. We're so proud we've got that kind of customer base. They've been so good to us over the years."

### How the Seven Wonders Were Chosen

The first ever (to our knowledge) definitive list of the Seven Wonders of Gaston County was chosen from an online vote of GastonGazette.com readers. Readers nominated Gaston County landmarks, events and people by e-mailing the Gazette or posting the nominations online before the top 20 finalists were selected.

One wonder will be revealed each week through Nov. 23 online and in the Gazette.



### Map: Tony's Ice Cream

