

10 Years Bobbie & Rick

- celebrates its 10th anniversary in 2012
- distributes AZBox's receivers in North America
- is an enthusiastic satellite feedhunter
- sees a good future for the FTA market in North America

■ A typical residential home in the USA. Looking from the street there are no satellite dishes to be seen and there's also no company sign to suggest that there's a successful online satellite shop hidden inside. A knock on the door reveals Bobbie and Rick along with Ricks Satellite which can be found in the Internet at www.rickssatelliteusa.com.

Married Couple Builds an Online Satellite Shop

Exactly 10 years have passed since Rick Caylor started Ricks Satellite together with his wife Bobbie. It's a small company, a "Mom and Pop shop" as Rick puts it. We paid them a visit at their home in Blue Springs, Missouri, a suburb of Kansas City. And it's from here that they operate their online shop for satellite products with emphasis on AZBox receivers.

Rick Caylor himself is quite the satellite enthusiast. "I set up my first satellite system in December of 1984; it was a 2.8-meter C-band dish", remembers Rick. "I still remember my old Kenwood receiver with its tuning knob; you could use it to quickly scan all 24 analog channels." Rick has been fascinated with satellite reception ever since. Back then his "real" job was as a manager at an auto parts company; satellite reception was his hobby in the evenings.

But he was interested in all those new receivers that kept coming out. "Sometime in the mid 1990's I started working for a satellite installer but I didn't get paid in money, instead I got paid in receivers!" We would like to point out to our younger TELE-satellite readers that in those days



Blue Springs, Kansas City MO

satellite receivers still came with hefty price tags; it was an expenditure that you really had to think about. It was a good decision working for those receivers. "At some point I amassed a collection of about 50 receivers and I was very familiar with each and every one of them since I fully tested them all." Today Rick has shown that his enthusi-

asm back then was a treasure trove of experience; the operation of all of the receivers was intuitively easy.

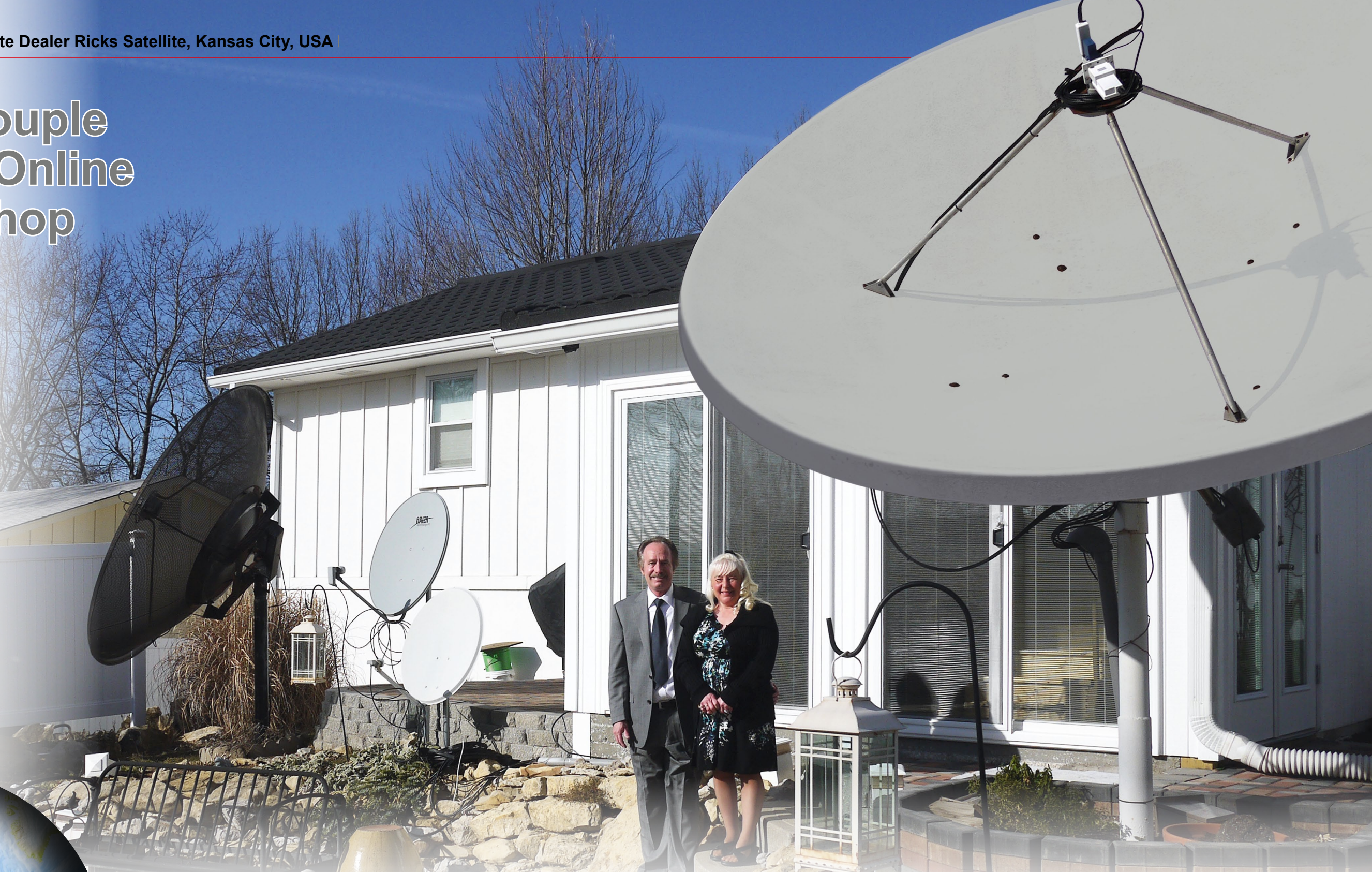
Then one day coincidence came to his aid: his employer, the auto parts company, reorganized and offered Rick a position that didn't appeal to him. Instead, he decided to go out on his own. His wife Bobbie supported him and said, "You have to do what you really like to do." She was right. In 2002 Rick and Bobbie started the company Ricks Satellite. "It wasn't easy in the beginning", says Rick, "My wife had to have a second job on the side."

■ A successful couple: Rick and Bobbie together run the satellite online shop Ricks Satellite in Blue Springs, Missouri, USA. It's an area with 60,000 inhabitants located east of Kansas City. It's an excellent location: Kansas City likes to be referred to as the heart of America; it's not only the geographical center of the USA, it's also the mathematical center of USA's population.

The young company managed to sell 50 receivers in the first year. 10 years later sales have greatly increased: "We sold over 1100 receivers in 2011 with the AZBox Receivers being the biggest seller." But receiver sales are only one part of their business. "We also sell complete systems for GALAXY 19 reception at 97W. In 2011 it totaled 300 systems, most of which were with 75cm dishes, some shipped with 90cm antennas." Rick

explains to us what all the fuss is about with GALAXY 19: "It is currently the most interesting of all satellites in North America in terms of FTA." The satellite TV market in North America is supplied by two large PayTV providers that each have their own reception systems. Rick provides us with even more background: "The last analog terrestrial transmitters were turned off about two years ago. The problem is that the new digital terrestrial

transmitters don't have the same range as the old analog transmitters. And so, for many people living in outlying regions the only solution was to subscribe to a satellite PayTV service. Rick says: "The Satellite Pay Services normally require a two year contract and then after you subscribe to a basic package, you can then subscribe to an extra fee to the same local channels that they used to receive for free with an terrestrial antenna when



they were analog. Additional receivers for other rooms are also another \$5.00 a month."

Rick continues: "Many people that went to the Satellite Pay services are canceling their service when their original 2 year commitment is over."

This is where GALAXY 19 comes into play: "There are only one-time reception system costs involved with this satellite, after that, no additional costs. That's why we're now getting quite a few complete system orders for this satellite." Rick is convinced that more and more viewers are ready to give up paying monthly subscription fees and that they'll find happiness with the FTA alternative. "Unfortunately, only a few potential viewers are aware of this possibility, but the word is slowly getting out."

Since Rick is himself a satellite enthusiast, he knows exactly what receivers are appropriate for the North American market. One receiver brand stands out in particular: "AZBox has exactly the receivers that are optimally suited for this region", says Rick. He is so enthusiastic about their products that he has even taken over the North American distribution of that brand name. "The AZBox re-



1. Bobbie, Rick's better half, is always on the telephone. "I get almost 200 telephone calls from customers a week."

2. UPS bringing a delivery of receivers. The garage and a separate building extension serve as the warehouse. Ricks Satellite is purely an online shop and ships to its customers from around the world via mail and courier.





■ In Rick's warehouse: boxes of AZBox receivers are stacked up all the way to the ceiling. These units are quite popular in North America since they can receive modes that are used by a number of North American services and that can't be received by most other satellite receivers.



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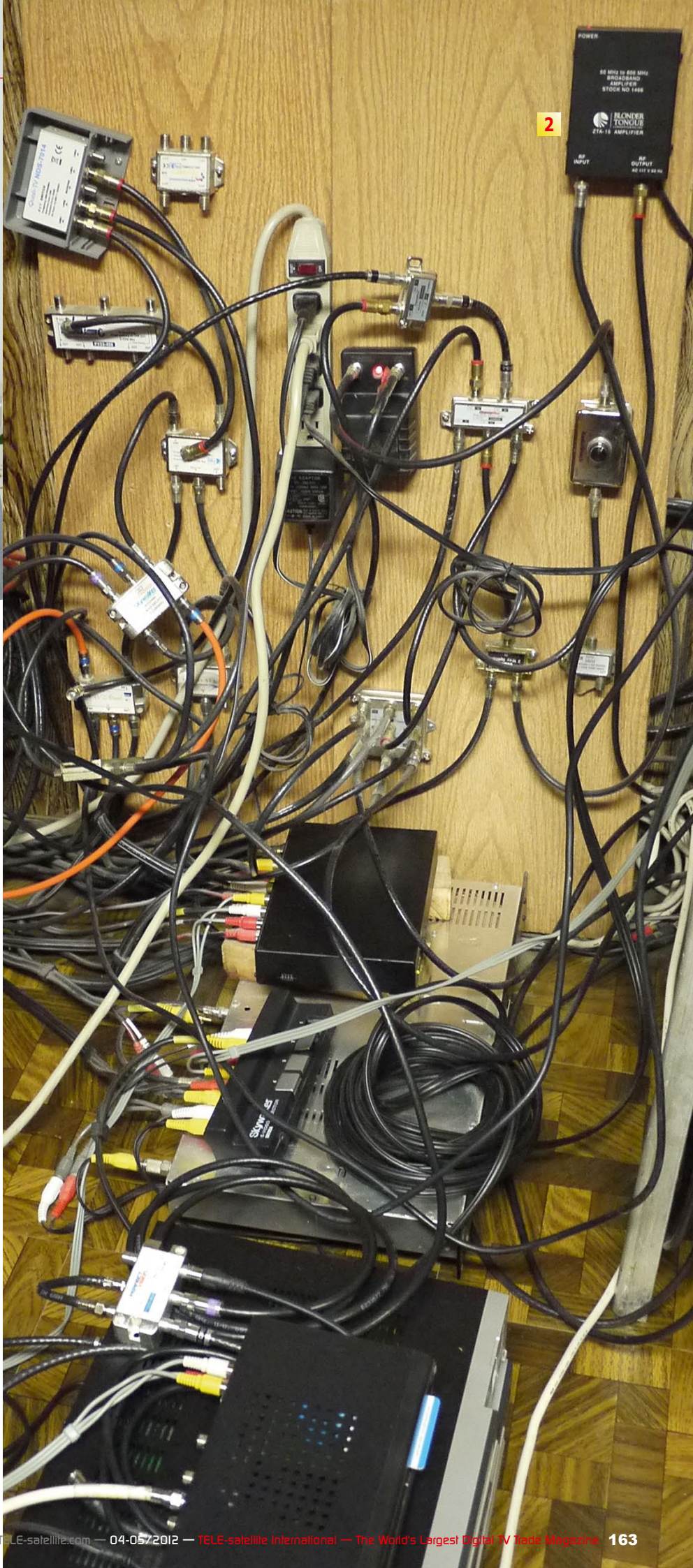
1. Rick Caylor is a guest on "The Power Hour" radio show every second Friday on GALAXY 19 (11.836V SR20765, Channel Star4, Mono Right) and reports (not only) on satellite reception. The broadcasts are archived in the Internet at www.thepowerhour.com

2. There's no doubt about it! A satellite enthusiast is working here! Rick is constantly putting receivers to the test and connecting them to his satellite antennas.

ceivers can receive modes that otherwise could only be received with much more expensive professional receivers." 8PSK and 4:2:2 he points out as an example. Sure enough, Rick was able to start a new business with AZBox receivers: he sells them also to uplinkers and professional users thereby saving them almost ten times the cost of a professional box. "Obviously, this works for only a few applications, such as, for monitoring."

Clearly, this niche has become so large that Rick can divide his business into three nearly identical segments: satellite enthusiasts (hobbyists), professional users (uplinkers) and FTA viewers (regular viewers). Rick is happy with the way his business has developed: "We had a 20% increase in business in 2011 and AZ Box was one of the major reasons for that and we anticipate another 20% increase in 2012 with that distributed evenly across all three business segments."

Rick and Bobbie made the right decision 10 years ago: they converted their hobby into a successful business. They had to deal with a number of difficulties but now there's no holding back. With the right products Ricks Satellite business can only continue to climb upwards.



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