



Jefferson County Home Builders Association's Building Community

April 2005
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Newsletter

Working at home: Blessing or nightmare?

In Jefferson County, cottage industries thrive. Myriad businesses are operated out of the home. Many of us have spent years walking a tightrope, trying to balance work and family.

Working at home can be wonderful! We all know that. It can also be the absolute pits, especially if you have small children at home.

Over the last 15 years, some things haven't changed. Most mornings I just put the blinders on and forge ahead. I've gotten pretty good at getting a cup of coffee without even seeing the stacks of dirty dishes from the night before.

Carefully sidestepping the vacuum cleaner, without spilling a drop of coffee, I meander down the hall. It's tough, though, to climb over the mountain of dirty laundry because the hamper is right outside of my office door. Oh well, throw a load in.

Ten years ago, it was a whole different story. I was married, and my two kids were 8 and 12. Working at home was ideal for me. I could work and yet still be there for the kids. Then again, maybe I should say: I could work in spite of being there for them.

It felt good—like I was really in control—when someone asked how many hours I worked, and I'd say, "Oh, it's directly related to what else is going on in my life." They'd just eat it up!

Ryan wanted me to go on his school field trip. Great. Heidi had a gymnastics meet. Fine. I'll often take a few photos at those outings and write an article for the newspaper. Their friends loved the attention. And heck, I got paid for being the good mom.

Writing requires a certain amount

of concentration, which was easily undermined by the kids' fighting, doorbells ringing, and the zillion "Can Heidi come play?" phone calls I answered in any given week.

Life was wonderful when there were no half days or holidays from school, my ex wasn't on one of his clean-the-house kicks, and there were leftovers to zap.



Things went along pretty well during the school year. I tried to write during school hours. I felt productive. Once the kids got home, Mom's Taxi was usually on the move.

Summer, on the other hand, was hell...writing-wise, at least. While nothing is more important to me than the kids, that need to write does somersaults inside me if it's not let out.

So, for three months, the sun was out (occasionally) and the kids were happy to be out of school. I just did what I could and tried to keep my frustrations to a minimum. My mantra was: They're only young once, they're only young once...

I told myself it'd get easier as the kids got older—and it did. Heidi was about 9, before I felt reasonably sure that Ryan wouldn't kill her if I escaped for a short interview. I'd often come home to tears...usually hers.

The "Don't Knock Unless You're Bleeding" sign on my office door had little effect. With a sliding glass door onto the deck, Mom was fair game for faces through the window.

I usually write when it's quiet, so noise is distracting. When I filled in at the newsroom, I got used to noise. Once back home, I soon needed quiet again.

Face it. Kids equal noise. Earplugs helped drown out Heidi's TV and Ryan's guitar practice, but nothing buffered their fighting. And nothing got me more uptight—it still does. And they know it.

Working at home is the ultimate in flextime. But, for me, it began out of necessity, rather than desire. If I got up at 5 a.m., I could put a full day in before Ryan got home at 2. "If" was the operative word here.

No matter how much you work, it never seems like you're doing enough. When I started logging my time, it amazed me. I thought I worked a fraction of the time I actually do. I've always gotten down on myself for the days when I have four billable hours, yet manage to ignore the 12-hour days.

I chuckle when I think about using a video-cam through my computer. Fortunately, none of my clients have

• Continued on page 3 •

LID guide available online

The March 22 Low Impact Development workshop at the Washington State University (WSU) Extension was really interesting. It's amazing to see the difference a well-designed plan can have on a site.

The Low Impact Development Technical Guidance Manual for Puget Sound is available for download from www.psat.wa.gov/Programs/LID.htm. There are also a few print copies available at the JCHBA office.

The Puget Sound Action Team and WSU Extension Pierce County partnered to develop the manual, with lots of help from a broad-based advisory committee and others. The manual is targeted to professionals in the Puget Sound region interested in incorporating LID practices into development projects. This manual is the best thinking to date on this subject. It will be updated periodically, as more is learned about LID.

For those who are unfamiliar with LID, it's an environmentally friendly approach to developing land and



managing stormwater runoff. Originally developed by Prince Georges County, Maryland and others, many jurisdictions across the country—including several in Puget Sound—are turning to LID techniques to help protect their natural resources.

The author of the manual, Curtis Hinman of WSU Extension, is compiling comments and suggestions for its improvement. E-mail him at chinman@wsu.edu.

Not quite Webster's. . .

Intoxication (*n.*) Euphoria at getting a tax refund, which lasts only until you realize it was your money to begin with.

JCHBA tees off on July 15

The Jefferson County Home Builders Association's 10th Annual Golf Tournament takes over the greens

at the scenic Port Ludlow golf course on Friday, July 15.

The shotgun start for the four-man scramble is set for noon. You need not have a foursome to enter.

The \$100 entry fee includes a cart and steak dinner. Your free SUBWAY lunch will be available at check-in.

There're lots of great prizes, too!

We're seeking players and sponsors for the JCHBA's big fund raiser. A downloadable registration form is available online at www.jeffcohomebuilders.com, or call 379.8784.



BLAW SPIKE PARTY!



Wednesday, June 15

**At the beautiful
Resort Semiahmoo
Blaine, Washington**

To qualify, you must be a current BIAW Spike and recruit at least one new member between November 1, 2004 and April 30, 2005, or have earned at least 100 Spike Credits as of April 30, 2005. Qualified Spikes may bring one guest!

**To RSVP, please call Amanda at
BIAW at 800.228.4229 by June 1.**



Denver hosts green

The Denver Green Building Conference is April 27-29 at the Belmar Center, in Lakewood, Colorado. It's not too late to attend. Group and special rates are extended until day of event.

Network and learn. Details are at www.denvergreenbuilding.com or contact John Gitchell at 970.328.6449, or John@SustainableConferences.com.

Dawson ill, hit hard

Kevin Dawson, 45, was recently diagnosed with multiple sclerosis (MS). He is uninsured and currently unable to work due to double vision. A benevolent account for Kevin has been set up at U.S. Bank.

The JCHBA member is a partner with Dan Dankert in D&D Insulation.

Kevin, our thoughts and prayers are with you. You are truly fortunate to have such a caring business partner as Dan.

EarthDay talks BuiltGreen

The JCHBA's BuiltGreen program will be introduced at Port Townsend's Pope Marine Building from noon to 1:30 p.m. on Saturday, April 23.

BuiltGreen is just one of the many events at this weekend's EarthDay EveryDay! Festival. Events are limited to the Pope Marine Building on Saturday, and expand onto Memorial Field on Sunday.

From noon to 6 p.m. on Saturday, expect speakers and panel discussions. At 7 p.m., enjoy *Save the Earth—Save Ourselves!*, a Poetic Justice Theatre Ensemble presentation.

From 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday, April 24, the Earth Day celebration really comes alive. At Memorial Field, there'll be lots of hands-on projects, games and demonstrations; electric vehicles and other green transportation; green building practices; sustainable agriculture; kids activities; music; food and entertainment. From 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., there will be more interesting discussions at the Pope Marine Building, as well as movies at the Bishop Hotel.

For more info about this free event:

www.earthdayeverydaypt.com.
Questions: Contact Melinda Bower at 379.4491.



Note: The JCHBA is currently awaiting permission from the HBA of Metro Denver to use its trademarked BuiltGreen name.

Tips for working at home

Working at home for 15 years, many of them with small children, has tested my sanity—and taught me a lot.

- Ignore the dishes and dirty house during working hours.
- Cook kid-friendly large meals that reheat well as leftovers.
- Schedule time so intense tasks may be done with no interruptions.
- If you're not a kid person, admit it. Get a babysitter when tackling a project where you need to focus.
- Maximize your efforts. Can your product be resold?
- Get a lock for your office door.
- Buy earplugs.
- Get each of the kids a TV. I'm sure I'll hear it for this one, but if you have

to work, they need to be occupied. (I'm not talking eight hours a day here!)

- Watch how your child acts when certain little friends come over. Do they play quietly? You hardly know they're there? BINGO! They are the ones to invite over when you're working. Save the ones who need volume-control knobs for nonworking hours.
- Let the answering machine screen your calls.
- If you have toddlers, don't kick yourself for not getting a lot done. Allow your business to grow as they do.
- As a writer, there wasn't much my kids could do to help me, but if there's something yours can do to help in your occupation, let 'em.

Work at home

• Continued from page 1 •

ever asked to speak to me that way.

Just picture how professional I'd look, in my jammies, frantically waving my arms and throwing empty film canisters at squabbling children, while interviewing the governor. Her Honor may be envisioning me in a suit and heels, but we know better, don't we?

You know, writing is a weird occupation for a people person. You take someone, who loves talking and meeting people, and stick her in a tiny room with a computer—often for 12 hours at a time, if deadlines are involved. It's no wonder I sometimes go batty.

Discipline: the "D" word. Under a deadline, I thrive. I often take on more than I should. But, I meet those deadlines! Without a deadline, I wallow. That probably explains why all of those Great American Novels I've conjured up are still in my head...and not on paper...yet.

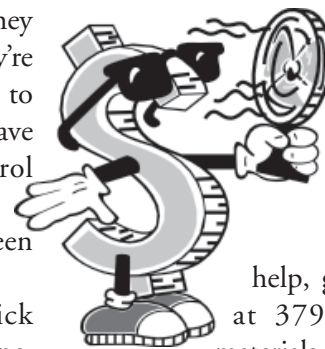
Member drive is on with a \$500 prize

The JCHBA has an anonymous benefactor. We have been offered a \$500 incentive for attracting 20 new members between Nov. 15, 2004 and May 1, 2005.

The \$500 can easily be yours. Be the first one to have six new members to your credit, by the time we reach the 20 new member mark and the \$500 is all yours.

If you need help, give Sandy a call at 379.8784. Printed materials are available at the office, or they can be e-mailed or snail mailed to you.

Note: The person who actually "closes the sale" gets the credit for bringing in the new member.



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Join the JCHBA for Casino Night



Karaoke!

Live band!

Gamble, or not. . .

Come have a great time. . .

7 Cedars Casino

Thursday, April 28

6:30 p.m.

We'll order from the menu.

Please RSVP (yes or no) to 379.8784 by April 23.

The restaurant is smoke-free.