

Me, Inc.: Naming a business after an owner

By Sandy Hershelman

Your name can be a powerful tool, especially in a small town. While you had no say in what your parents named you, you can decide whether or not you want to become Me, Inc.

Recently, I e-mailed the self-named businesses on my JCHBA e-mail list. I was curious why they had gone that route.

Kevin Coker wanted to differentiate his firm from multiple "Designworks" companies already licensed with the state.

"Initially, I wasn't interested in putting my name on the company business," said the owner of Coker DesignWorks, LLC. "There is a greater identification of the company to an individual, which can be both good and bad. I think it's predominately good, in that my clients work, speak and communicate directly with me. Having my name attached does help in the area of word-of-mouth business leads. The lead quickly identifies with a person and not just a company."

Harold Moe went into business in 1960, naming his company H.M. Construction.

"When we incorporated, we had to change it to Harold Moe Construction, Inc.," said Marianne Moe. "He wanted to keep H. M. Construction because everyone knew that, but having to change to Harold Moe worked out even better for

obvious reasons. Your name is out there all the time. People are always saying 'I've heard of that name.'" Marianne couldn't think of anything negative about using his name—and they would do it again.

Rick added, with a grin, that Tollefson Builders is not going international. Fred and Rick both said that, for most of the custom builders in this county, there isn't much to sell. A few tools, a job or two on the calendar. . .that's about it.

Professional service firms may have very few assets they can wrap their hands around. Their value is in their client lists. Would the sale value of your company be less with your name on it? Would you want to allow your name to stay on a firm after you're gone? That's a biggie.

Of all of the folks who replied to my queries, vanity had nothing to do with naming their businesses. It wasn't a strategic move on any of their parts.

For me, on the other hand, it was a very calculated move. After a decade of writing for local and regional newspapers, I had name recognition—and it made sense to use it.

When someone hires Sandy Hershelman Designs, they're hiring me. They want my talents, my personality, my creativity and my persistence. They're looking for that one-on-one relationship. Maybe that's why many of my clients have become close friends.

With such notoriety comes a lot of responsibility. There's no doubt who signs the checks, who receives the praise, and who's targeted when anything goes wrong.



Before I put this together, I didn't realize there were so many of you with surnames in your business names! I took the personalization even one step further, using my eyes as my logo.

"It was easy and it was obvious," admitted Fred Kimball, of his circa-1990 decision to name his Kimball Woodworks. "There was a lack of imagination that got me into it—and it's name recognition that keeps us going. Ten years later, when Rick Landis and I formed Kimball Landis, LLC, our names already had recognition."

"In a small town, your business is who you are—the name of your business is tied into your level of integrity," said Rick Tollefson. "Probably the biggest decision you make is: Are you planning on selling your business someday?"

Grandfather Bear visits our Jumping Mouse

Liz Coker has organized a wonderful event to celebrate the Jumping Mouse Children's Center one-year anniversary in its new home, on the corner of 19th and Sheridan. "A Night of Stories at Grant Street School" features guest storyteller Chief Grandfather Bear, from the Cowlitz Tribe. From 6 to 8 p.m., Friday, April 28, the Native American storyteller promises to enchant children and adults alike with his retelling of the Jumping Mouse Legend and many other stories. Following the stories, the children will create various art projects.

There is no charge for this event. Please encourage your friends and neighbors to attend.

While we build homes, Jumping Mouse rebuilds children. What a noble cause to support!

relationship and creative tools to enlist each child's productive originality in their efforts to

Since 1999, the staff of Jumping Mouse has used play therapy to aid the healing of children, ages 3-12, dealing with emotional issues. The nonprofit agency's mission is to "access the healing place in children through a holistic method of play therapy. We use

find new options to worn out patterns."

For more info on this excellent program: www.jumpingmouse.org.

Thanks to Liz, the JCHBA had the wonderful opportunity to donate the materials used for the craft projects.

Liz, whose husband is Kevin Coker

(Coker Design Works), is the chairman of the JCHBA's Home Builders Care Committee. If you'd like to join her on her mission of spreading goodwill throughout the land, call 385.2739.



Committee Corner

Membership: Sandra Toy reports a JCHBA/LeTip business mixer Wednesday, April 26 at the HomeStone Mortgage office, near Kala Square. Join us!

Home Builders Care: Liz Coker organized the April 28 "Night of Stories at Grant Street School" with storyteller Chief Grandfather Bear. The JCHBA donated supplies for the craft activities, in support of the Jumping Mouse Children's Center. Want to help coordinate other community events? Call Liz at 385.2739.

Golf Tournament: The golf committee is about to gear up for the July 21 fundraiser. A sign-up sheet is in this newsletter. We need golfers and sponsors. Call Jim Groves to help round them up, 385.6282.

(Other committee chairs: Please e-mail Sandy and let her know what's happening with your group. . .)

Lily's Kitty: You snooze, you lose

Marty Kithcart, eat your heart out: Lily's Kitty could've been all yours!

Yes indeed, if the owner of Landmark Excavating had been at our March dinner meeting, when his name was drawn, Lily's \$145 Kitty would have been his!

Marty's in good company: Malcolm Dorn (Wallyworks Enterprises) missed out in February.

A recap of our new game: "Lily's Kitty" is run by a tiny dog in a purple boa. She cons you into buying \$1 raffle tickets. Lily draws one of the tickets. Half of the tickets sales go into the

pocket of someone who bought one that night. Rick Tollefson (Tollefson Builders) and Homer Smith (Homer Smith Insurance) can attest to that fact. The rest is added to Lily's Kitty for the second drawing.

In Lily's purse are the names of all of the JCHBA members. If the company name drawn has someone in attendance, that person goes home with the Kitty. (If there's more than one of you there, you get to battle it out.)

Make sure to come to the April 26 mixer. Lily's already fluffing her boa. She and her Kitty will be waiting!



BIAW hosts your Spike Party

Spike Olympics
Wednesday, June 14
Davenport Hotel, Spokane



Compete in the games. . .
. . .or be a spectator.

The Spike Party is held prior to the BIAW Summer Board Meeting. To qualify to attend, you need to have recruited one new member between Nov. 1, 2005 and April 30, or have 100 Spike credits by April 30. Questions? Call Jenni at 800.228.4229.

From Sandy Hershelman, your executive officer. . .

EDC's still alive and well

I (we) now hold a seat on the transitional board of the newly reconfigured Economic Development Council of Jefferson County.

I know: You thought they put it out of its misery. Nope. It's been revived.

EDC President Lawrence Graves (*Frontier Bank*) has managed to hold on tight through this latest roller coaster ride. Kudos to him!

I was encouraged, looking around the table at the new EDC board. The faces were, for the most part, business owners who I know to be logical. The board has been designed to include one member from each industry, who in turn is responsible for bringing the issues of his/her group to the table.

Seats previously held by elected officials will now be held by nonvoting senior staff members.

Can the EDC be turned into a thriving entity? Who knows for sure? But the effort deserves our support.

I've always been in support of an EDC. By its very name, it should be an organization that supports economic development within our county. Not wild, crazy mayhem, but smart, controlled growth that fits within our rural county. (The big box stores have already picked Sequim. You can relax: They're not coming here.) An EDC should both attract new businesses and support those of us who have businesses in this county.

I've lived in Port Hadlock for 26 years. When my children were small, money was very, very tight. The harsh realities of unemployment and under-employment were daily present in my life and my friends' lives. Many of them still survive paycheck to paycheck.

Too many of the available jobs pay minimum wage, or slightly higher. Even with the highest state minimum wage in the country (\$7.63 an hour), a minimum wage job may gross \$1,300 a month. Subtract \$200-\$300 in taxes.

Rent is \$700-\$800, or so. You do the math and try to raise a family on that. Don't think two incomes fix all. Extra daycare, clothes, gas, etc. often cost more than the second worker earns.

Politicians repeatedly spout quality-of-life rhetoric, yet vote decidedly antibusiness. True quality of life is a family-wage job. Assure the young dad his family will be fed and have a roof over its head. Without that, the beauty of nature and our slower pace of life mean little.

One of the most effective ways to encourage responsible business growth is through the cooperative efforts of local government entities and an EDC. Through the years, I've had lengthy discussions with each of the last five EDC directors. Each came to the job full of ideas and potential. Each left frustrated, having had his or her hands tied by an anti-growth contingent.

Somewhere between the no-growth NIMBYs* and those who'd just as soon clear-cut it all are the rest of us. Let's work together to encourage smart growth, specifically designed for our county. Bring in nonpolluting businesses that pay well—and train our young for high tech and/or vocational careers to fill the necessary jobs.

This shouldn't be a political issue, yet everything is. Most local folks consider themselves independent voters, not red or blue. I propose we mix the red and blue. . .you get purple, you know? And anyone who knows me, or has seen my business card or car, knows that I am the Princess of Purple!

I see Purple as logical, intelligent, unbiased, caring, hard working, non-judgmental, generous, eternally optimistic, and wanting what's best for the future of our kingdom.

Wonder what would happen if we painted Jefferson County with a wash of purple??

**NIMBY: Not In My Back Yard*

New Members

This month the Jefferson County Home Builders Association welcomes two new members to the clan. Supporting fellow JCHBA members is one of our greatest strengths!



Frank Feltes

Frank Feltes Custom Paint & Drywall

P.O. Box 156

Chimacum, WA 98325

360.732.7100

Sponsor: Fred Kimball

Kimball Woodworks

Andy Cochrane

Power Trip Energy Corp.

2343 Thomas

Port Townsend, WA 98368

360.643.3080

360.539.1857 (fax)

andy@powertripenergy.com

www.powertripenergy.com

Sponsor: Melinda Bower

Christopher Cates, contractor

Scholarships. . .

Jefferson County Home Builders Association is offering scholarships to graduating seniors, or those with GEDs, who plan to pursue a course of study relevant to the building trades. The scholarship may be used for a post-secondary education, college or vocational, public or private. Student portfolios may be mailed to JCHBA, P.O. Box 1399, Port Hadlock, WA 98339. Deadline: May 15.

Also, the Building Industry Association of Washington (BIAW) is accepting applications from Washington residents pursuing careers in the construction industry. The student may already be enrolled in an accredited school. The BIAW's scholarship packet may be downloaded from www.biaw.com. Submission deadline is May 19.

Questions? Call 379.8784 or e-mail jchba@olympus.net.

JCHBA Officers

President: Marianne Moe, CAPS
437.2740

Vice President: Rick Tollefson
732.4080

Secretary: Dan Dankert
732.4976

Treasurer: Rick Gore
385.6883

Board Members:

Jim Groves

Sandra Toy Joy McFadden
Fred Kimball

Executive Officer:

Sandy Hershelman
360.379.8784

jchba@olympus.net

www.jeffcohomebuilders.com

Editor: Sandy Hershelman

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**Jefferson County**
Home Builders Association
360.379.8784
P.O. Box 1399
Port Hadlock, WA 98339



Business mixer promotes networking

JCHBA and LeTip Port Townsend unite for an evening of schmoozing, food and drink. . .

Our hostess



Sandra Toy
HomeStone Mortgage

Bring friends! Make new leads! Success is all about who you know. . .



"Put Dollars in Your Pocket"

**Wednesday, April 26
6 to 8 p.m.**

**HomeStone Mortgage
112 Kala Square, Suite 1
Right off of Prospect
Near the airport**

Please RSVP (yes or no) to 379.8784 by April 23. Or reply to your April 17 e-mail from hershelman@olympus.net. Limited space for tabletop displays. E-mail to reserve a spot.