

10th annual special:
Bravo! Looks Back

Bravo!

2007

ENTREPRENEUR AWARDS

Celebrating Excellence in Northern Colorado Business

Larry Kendall:
Lifetime of achievement

Aims Community College
has Regional Spirit

Energy Logic
Emerging into the future



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REPORT**

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Larry Kendall easy choice for tenth Bravo! Lifetime Achievement award

Larry Kendall's still-youthful face belies the decades he spent — along with several hundred “shareholders” — building The Group Inc. Real Estate into a regional powerhouse.

But his accomplishments made him an easy choice as winner of the Bravo! Entrepreneur Lifetime Achievement Award for 2007.

Kendall was selected through a rigorous screening process that included past winners, the Bravo! Entrepreneur Awards Steering Committee and the Bravo! Entrepreneur Steering Committee. His vision in crafting a new type of real estate brokerage, initially to the ridicule, dismay and outright opposition of others in the industry, demonstrate his entrepreneurial qualities.

You'll read about Kendall's persistence, determination, vision and compassion in this special section, along with profiles of our other Bravo! Entrepreneur winners.

Bravo! Entrepreneur is a *Northern Colorado Business Report* program conducted in partnership with the Fort Collins Area Chamber of Commerce, the Greeley Chamber of Commerce, the Loveland Chamber of Commerce, the Northern Colorado Economic Development Corp. and Upstate Colorado Economic Development.

Presidents of these organizations appointed business leaders to the Awards Committee, whose work was assisted by dozens of past Bravo! Entrepreneur winners. This year's Awards Committee included Tim Dow, Dow Law Firm, Fort Collins; Lucille Mantelli, Carestream Health, Windsor; Ron Schneider, retired banker, Loveland; Marilyn Foster, vice president of business development, Home State Bank, Fort Collins; Kelly Peters, city of Greeley; Don Churchwell, retired CEO, Home State Bank, Loveland; and Bruce White, president, Conquest Oil Co., Greeley.

They were assisted by past Bravo! Entrepreneur winners, and by students at the University of Northern Colorado Monfort College of Business, who judge the Emerging Entrepreneur award.

Winners of Bravo! Entrepreneur awards are chosen from Fort Collins, Greeley, Loveland and Outlying Communities. Additionally, an Emerging Entrepreneur Award, a Lifetime Achievement Award and a Regional Spirit Award are also presented.

Here's a rundown of all Bravo! Entrepreneur winners for 2007:

- Bravo! Entrepreneur Lifetime Achievement Award: Larry Kendall, The Group Inc.

- Bravo! Entrepreneur — Fort Collins: Rulon Stacy, Poudre Valley Health System

- Bravo! Entrepreneur — Greeley: Larry Seastrom, New Frontier Bank

- Bravo! Entrepreneur — Loveland: Linda Ligon, Interweave Press

- Bravo! Entrepreneur — Outlying Communities: Martin Lind, Water Valley

- Emerging Entrepreneur Award: Steve Byers, EnergyLogic Inc.

- Regional Spirit Award: Aims Community College

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Co-publisher

The Northern Colorado Business Report
The Wyoming Business Report



Christopher Wood
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agencies noted above. Thanks to Caldera Creative Services, Mountain Media, Simply Chocolate and to our own Jim Rath, who does such a marvelous job organizing our events.

Lastly, thanks to our many sponsors, including platinum sponsors Bank of Choice; Ehrhardt, Keefe, Steiner and Hottman, and Water Valley. Our reception sponsor was United Western Bank; our awards sponsor was CSU Office of Economic Development; and our dinner sponsor, McWhinney. Gold sponsors included Hewlett-Packard Co., Palmer Flowers and MediaTech Productions.

We also are grateful to our many table sponsors.

Finally, we hope you enjoy this special section on Bravo! Entrepreneur 2007. We'll see you next year in Greeley!



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Bravo! Awards Committee

Tim Dow, Dow Law Firm, Fort Collins; Lucille Mantelli, Carestream Health, Windsor; Ron Schneider, retired banker, Loveland; Marilyn Foster, vice president of business development, Home State Bank, Fort Collins; Kelly Peters, city of Greeley; Don Churchwell, retired CEO, Home State Bank, Loveland; and Bruce White, president, Conquest Oil Co., Greeley.

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Northern Colorado
**BUSINESS
REPORT**

Kendall steered Group's ship, rallied its crew



Bravo! recognizes 31-year record of brokerage founder

FORT COLLINS — Before Harvey Nesbitt died in 2000, he recounted in a *Business Report* interview how Larry Kendall had changed the course of his career, and his life.

Nesbitt was not quite a cofounder of The Group Inc. Real Estate, the company that under Kendall's leadership became the dominant residential brokerage force in the region. He had joined the Fort Collins company as a broker in its second year — 1977 — when the unorthodox business was just finding its way in the market.

"It wasn't always easy, and sometimes it was pretty rocky," Nesbitt said. "Everybody wanted to manage. Everybody wanted to pick out the color of the stationery, and nobody wanted to sell real estate."

Nesbitt credited Kendall for keeping the crew of The Group's loosely run ship together long enough for it to catch the wind.

"A lot of other brokers would not have had the persistence and determination to make a noble project like this work," he said. "The secret of how this thing works comes down to our fearless leader."

Persistence, determination, vision and compassion — qualities that Kendall's longtime associates cite as his most valuable characteristics — are also those that led judges to select him as the 2007 recipient of the Bravo! Entrepreneur Lifetime Achievement Award.

That "noble project" is the pattern of ownership that for decades made The Group different from any other residential



Courtesy The Group Inc. Real Estate

GROUP THERAPY — In the middle 1970s, The Group Inc.'s ad campaigns played on the brokerage's often-misunderstood name. This posed photo with founder Kendall prominent in the upper right ran under the headline "Group therapy."

real estate brokerage in America. Brokers who joined the company in that era were immediately shareholders — equal owners — under a system of Kendall's design that was unlike any other in the country.

"We were accused of being socialists, or even communists," Kendall said. "Some people still don't understand the concept."

The Group's distinctions, the characteristics that make it different from any other real estate brokerage in the region, make up a long list. For instance, the company was the first to put prices on signs in front of sale properties.

"We were the only industry I can think of that offered products for sale to the public without telling them the prices," Kendall

said. "If we are, as we want to be, the No. 1 source for real estate information in our market, we've got to get the information out. Now, we're putting prices on all of our signs."

Kendall two years ago stepped down from his role as chairman of The Group, and while he still closely tracks the day-to-day progress of the company, he spends as much time traveling abroad, and on road trips to conduct sales and leadership training seminars under the "Ninja Selling" brand.

In fact, over the years brokers by the thousands from throughout the world have made the pilgrimage to Fort Collins to learn the Ninja Selling secrets from the master.

"It's about how to do business but also about how to run your life," current Group chairman and longtime Kendall friend Chuck McNeal said. "It's interesting that local people just don't understand the absolute cult brand that the Group enjoys nationally. I give most of the credit for that vision to Larry."

Susie Ewing, who at the age of 22 began work at The Group as the company's first receptionist in 1976, said her long association with Kendall had paid all manner of unexpected dividends.

"I basically grew up at The Group," Ewing said. "There are a lot of people I've worked with for 25 or more years. But the thing I take away from working with Larry for 31 years is that he is an encourager. He always encourages you to do more, to be more. He truly brings out the best in people."

"The secret of how this thing works comes down to our fearless leader."

The late Harvey Nesbitt,
longtime broker
The Group Inc.

Past winners — Lifetime Achievement

- 2006 — B.D. "Pete" Peterson and J. Barney Flood
- 2005 — George Hall, Greeley
- 2004 — Bill Neal and Leo Schuster, Fort Collins and Loveland
- 2003 — Kathryn Hach-Darrow, Loveland
- 2002 — Bob Tointon, Greeley
- 2001 — Tom Gleason, Fort Collins
- 2000 — Ken Monfort, Greeley
- 1999 — Bob Everitt, Fort Collins
- 1998 — W.D. Farr, Greeley



Business Report file photo, November 1999

Ligon wove success during craft venture's genesis



Kristen Tatti, Northern Colorado Business Report

By **Kristen Tatti**
ktatti@ncbr.com

After Linda Ligon gave birth to her third child and decided to take some time away from teaching high school students at Fort Collins High School, she found she needed something to keep her busy.

"I decided I needed a home-based busi-

ness," she said.

With that in mind, she coupled her knack for crafts with her interest in special interest publishing to create a regional newsletter focused on weaving. Little did Ligon know that the regional crafting newsletter that she started in 1975 would grow to become a \$14 million company targeted for venture capital-backed buyout.

"It's her leadership that's done it. She is a one-of-a-kind person."

Clay Hall, president and CEO
Aspire Media Inc.

Interweave Press operated out of Ligon's Loveland house for about three years. It became apparent, however, that as the number of employees grew so did the need to a business space away from home.

"The more room you have the more things you decide to do," she explained.

Interweave soon expanded into new subjects — spinning, hand weaving, herbs, needlework. Basically, anything related to crafts, cooking and gardening was fair game for Interweave. As the company expanded its focus in terms of subject, it also expanded in terms of medium. Interweave began publishing books.

In 2005, Montana publishing entrepreneur Clay Hall, with backing from Chicago and New York venture capitalists, purchased Interweave Press — wrapping into Aspire Media. The terms of the deal were not released. The previous year, Interweave had raked about \$14 million in revenue.



2007 Bravo!
Entrepreneur —
Loveland

**Linda Ligon —
Interweave Press**

Finalists

Finalists for the Loveland Bravo! Entrepreneur Award included:

- Linda Ligon — Interweave Press
- Marcia Sampson — Eldon James Corp.
- Craig Harrison — Harrison Resources and LandNet

Ligon said that the success and size of the company is very surprising to her. She was equally surprised to learn that she was a finalist for the 2007 Bravo! Entrepreneur Awards in the Loveland category. The business grew very organically.

See **LOVELAND, 15B**

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EnergyLogic rides wave of green building awareness



Michael D. Wailes, Northern Colorado Business Report

By Kristen Tatti
ktatti@ncbr.com

EnergyLogic Inc. principal Steve Byers saw earlier than most the growing need for sustainable practices.

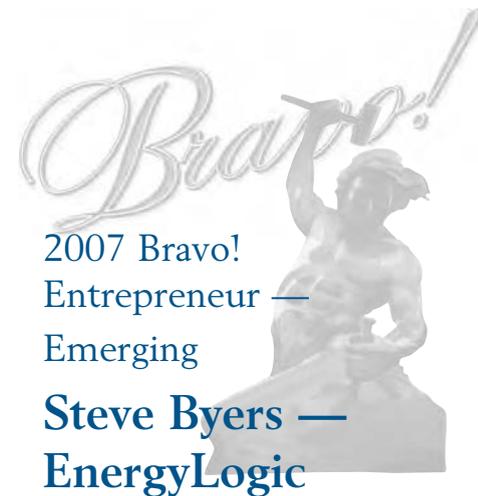
In 1992, upon completing his service to the U.S. Air Force, Byers became an intern at Georgia-based Southface Energy Institute. The non-profit focuses on providing environmental education and outreach. Byers' time at Southface gave him the experience and tools he needed to start his own venture.

Byers' wife, Wynne Maggi, is a Berthoud native, so the couple decided to settle back into the small Northern Colorado town to start EnergySmiths, an energy rating firm with a focus on consulting with home-builders in the region, in 2001.

The business grew quickly, riding a tidal wave of new residential construction along the Front Range. EnergyLogic provides consultation on methods and tools for reducing energy consumption and overall environmental impact. The company's revenues more than doubled in three years, with almost \$890,000 in 2006.

Byers found that there was a familiar face appearing at many of the bids he was trying to land for EnergySmith. Robby Schwartz owned Denver-based energy ratings firm BuiltWright Inc. The two decided that it was in the best interest for the companies to join forces and in January 2006 the two merged to become EnergyLogic.

Today, the company operates three



offices and employs 20 people. However, growth going forward is likely to be more measured and deliberate. The housing market has definitely cooled, slowing the growth of EnergyLogic's core business.

"It's definitely dropped off, but we are continuing to grow," Byers said.

EnergyLogic, the 2007 Bravo! Emerging Entrepreneur, is truly a rising star. The company is preparing to launch several new business ventures that put it beyond the scope of consultant to residential home builders.

The company vision of "a future in which all homes have the least possible impact on the Earth" may need some adjustment as it offers its expertise to a new clientele.

"We are trying to form a commercial

See EMERGING, 15B

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Bravo! looks back

A RETROSPECTIVE LOOK AT PREVIOUS BRAVO! ENTREPRENEURS



Schultz still at head of class with Group

By Jessica Centers
news@ncbr.com

What Thom Schultz started in 1974 as a single magazine for youth ministries had by 1998 grown into a multi-million dollar business publishing Christian educational materials. That was the year that Group Publishing received the first Bravo! Entrepreneur Award for Loveland.

Since then, Schultz has continued to grow Group Publishing by finding and filling the needs of churches.

"We're in kind of a funny business, because if you view churches as a market, that market really is not growing," he said. "For us, as a business that helps churches, we need to keep finding new ways to help a stable customer base."

Schultz' answer has been to expand into new areas. Over the past 10 years, Group — in addition to increasing its staff from 200 to 330 and doubling its office space — has launched a network of women's clubs operated within churches and acquired a California company called Simply Youth Ministry.

But by far its largest expansion has been into church management. Group created Church Volunteer Central, now the largest association of volunteer managers in the world, and launched a Web-based church management software program. It even provides low-cost background checks for church volunteers.

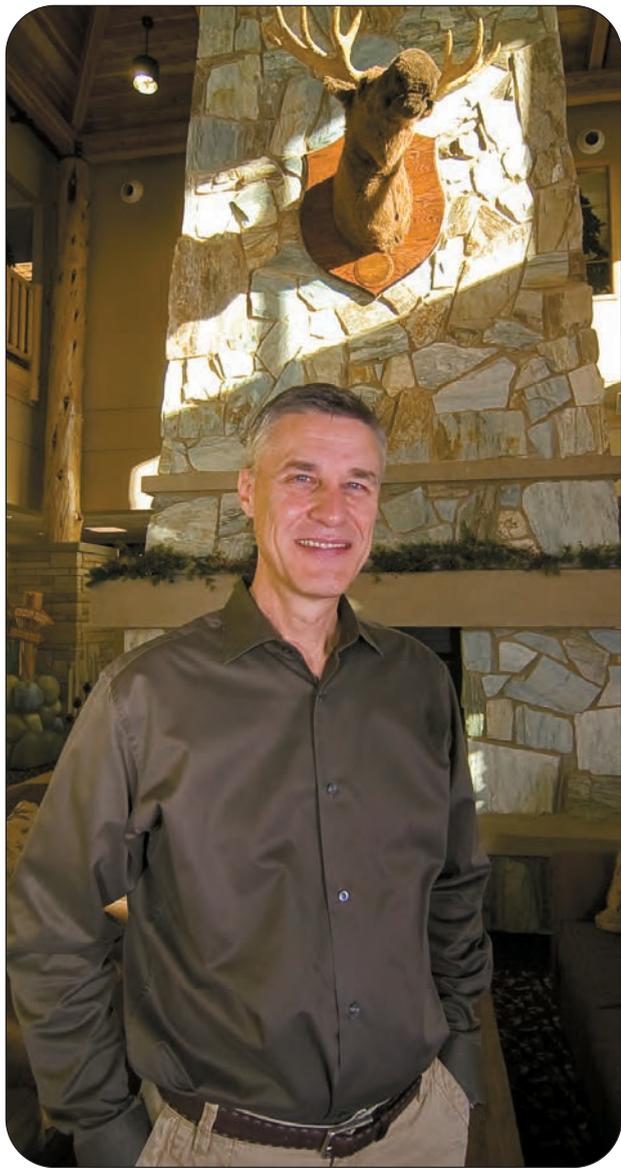
"When you stop to think about it, the church is the largest user of volunteers in the country and in the world," Schultz said. "There are more people who volunteer through their church than any other (group). That's an art and a science all in its own."

Group products help teach that science with resources on training, managing and establishing sound procedures.

When Schultz entered the field, there was just one non-church association doing something similar for volunteer managers, and it has since folded.

"So this is now, for churches, the one and only place for them to go get professional help with managing volunteers," he said.

That's one more church need met.



Michael D. Wailes, Northern Colorado Business Report

DOING GOOD WORKS — Thom Schultz's Group Publishing is regularly voted one of the best places to work in the region.

1998 WINNERS

Bravo! Entrepreneur, Loveland: Thom Schultz, Group Publishing Inc.

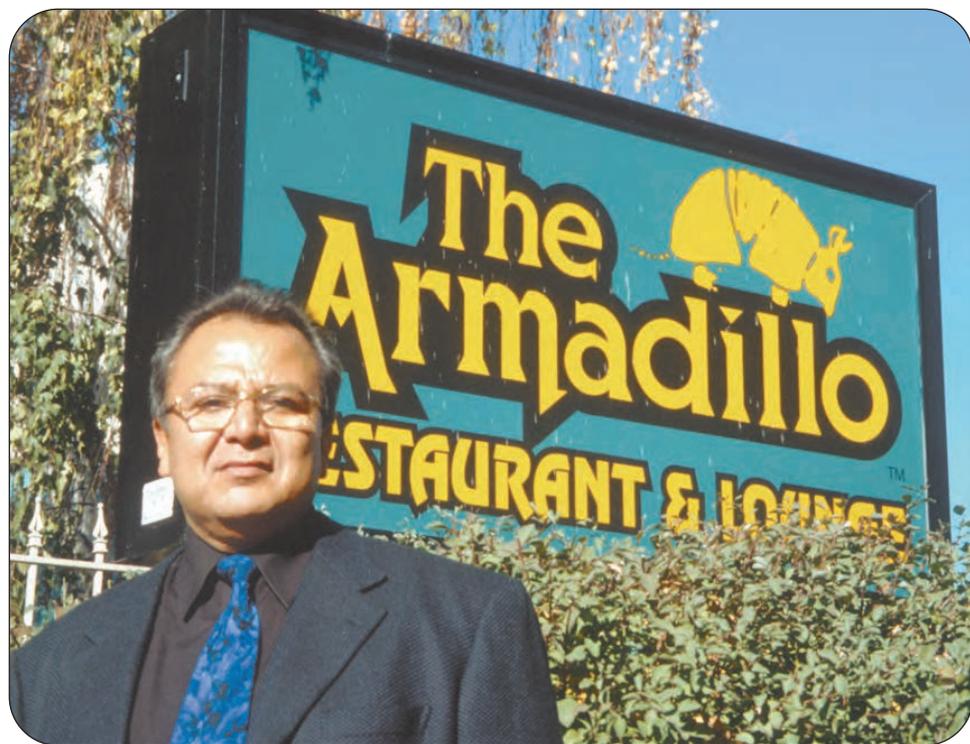
Greeley: Darrell McAllister, 1st Choice Bank

Fort Collins: Kent and Gloria Sampson, Value Plastics Inc.

Outlying Communities: Bill Coleman, Colorado Greenhouse Holdings Inc., Fort Lupton

Lifetime Achievement Award: W.D. Farr, water, cattle and banking pioneer, Greeley

Regional Spirit Award: Hewlett-Packard Co., Fort Collins



Business Report file photo

EXIT STRATEGY — Louis Lucio, founder of the chain of Armadillo restaurants, shown here in 1999 when he was named a Bravo! Entrepreneur, is looking forward to reorganizing the company before he retires.

Lucio bounces back in entrepreneurial fashion

By Kate Hawthorne
khawthorne@ncbr.com

Entrepreneurs know about setbacks. Louis Lucio, who founded The Armadillo restaurant chain, knows all about being an entrepreneur.

He took over his parents' pool hall, The Armadillo Club in LaSalle, in 1972, used his grandmother's Mexican recipes to focus on the dining side of the business, then opened the Fort Collins location in 1979. Lucio saw his chain take off, growing to a \$20 million business with 17 units along the Front Range by the time he was named a Bravo! Entrepreneur in 1999.

Then the growth and the national economy caught up with the company, and it filed Chapter 11 bankruptcy in November 2001.

By 2005, all \$8 million owed to creditors, vendors and the Internal Revenue Service had been paid back "100 percent, no discounts," Lucio said recently. The number of locations has been trimmed to 10, including restaurants in Greeley, Fort Collins and Longmont.

Lucio is still president of the company, now known as Armadillo Border Grill & Cantina and headquartered in Northglenn. He said he is focusing his efforts now on "remodeling, reshaping and redistributing" the Armadillo concept to better compete in the company's extremely competitive niche of the restaurant market.

The rising price of gasoline, which trans-

1999 WINNERS

Bravo! Entrepreneur, Outlying Communities: Louis Lucio, Armadillo, LaSalle

Greeley: John Todd, Toddy's

Loveland: Dave Duke, Duke Communications International

Fort Collins: Douglas Schatz, Advanced Energy Industries Inc.

Lifetime Achievement Award: Bob Everitt, Everitt Enterprises, Fort Collins

Regional Spirit Award: Eastman Kodak Co., Windsor

lates into higher prices for food as well as discouraging customers from dining out, isn't helping.

"We have lots of options on the table right now," Lucio said. "I'm concentrating on finding the right combination of fast-food concept, franchising, and selling off some of the parts to a new company."

That's another thing entrepreneurs understand.

"That's what business is all about — nothing can stay the same," he said.

Lucio said his main focus is on recruiting the right people to take over so he can retire and travel the world. "I don't want to wait until I'm 80."

Bravo! looks back

A RETROSPECTIVE LOOK AT PREVIOUS BRAVO! ENTREPRENEURS



Business Report file photo

LAWN ORDER GUYS – The Walker family, from left to right, Bob, Max and Dean, shown here in 2000, still own and run the business founded by Max and his wife Martha in 1977. In 2006 Walker employees celebrated production of their 100,000th mower deck.

Walker Manufacturing still 100 percent family-owned

By Jane Albritton
news@ncbr.com

“We are interested in slow, steady growth,” said Dean Walker of Walker Manufacturing Co. “That’s how we maintain control of the company.”

Slow? Since members of the Walker family were recognized as Bravo! Entrepreneurs in 2000, the Timnath-based company has added 100,000 square feet of manufacturing space, more than 40 employees and two additional models of riding mowers to its line.

“Our Model-B was three years in production,” Walker explained. “It is a non-catching mower designed for the home owner.”

This fall, the Walkers introduced the Super-B, a bigger, faster commercial mower designed to compete in a turf-industry market dominated by mid-mount machines.

“Our deck is still in front,” Walker said. “We built 100 of the Super-Bs and have been field-testing them this spring and summer. We are conservative, and until you actually take that step to test your product, you can’t know where the bugs are.”

The Walkers have also seen growth in overseas markets.

“Having a worldwide presence, in Europe as well as in Australia and New Zealand, gives us some economic stability,” Walker said. “If the economy is weak here, it is likely to be strong in other parts of the world.”

There is also the matter of spreading out the risk of drought — no rain, no grass, no need to mow.

2000 WINNERS

Bravo! Entrepreneur, Outlying Communities: Bob, Max & Dean Walker, Walker Manufacturing Co., Fort Collins

Greeley: Bill Farr, Centennial Bank of the West

Loveland: Bill Beierwaltes, Colorado Memory Systems, Colorado Time Systems, OnStream Inc.

Fort Collins: Kim Jordan & Jeff Lebesch, New Belgium Brewing Co.

Lifetime Achievement Award: Ken Monfort, Greeley

Regional Spirit Award: Greeley Independence Stampede, Greeley

Emerging Entrepreneur Award: Tim Gan, OpenLCR.com, Fort Collins

Walker Manufacturing produced its first prototype riding mower in 1977 with Max Walker and his wife Margaret at the helm. These days, son Dean is in charge of product development and manufacturing operations while his brother Bob oversees business and marketing. And year by year, a new generation of Walkers joins the company’s ranks.

“Our parents are now 84 years old,” Dean Walker said. “They still live above the office and have a wonderful opportunity to be still involved in the business.”

Palmer’s business grows to include development



Business Report file photo

FLOWER POWER – Spiro Palmer has grown his business from a modest flower shop to a Northern Colorado development powerhouse in the few years since he was named Bravo! Entrepreneur Fort Collins in 2001.

By Luanne Kadlub
news@ncbr.com

2001 WINNERS

Bravo! Entrepreneur, Fort Collins: Spiro Palmer, Palmer Gardens

Greeley: Jerry Morgensen, Hensel Phelps Construction Co.

Loveland: Chad & Troy McWhinney, McWhinney Enterprises

Outlying Communities: Joe & Bob Raith, Morning Fresh Farms, Platteville

Lifetime Achievement Award: Tom Gleason, First National Bank, Fort Collins & Loveland

Regional Spirit Award: State Farm Insurance Co., Greeley

Emerging Entrepreneur Award: Jeff Whitham, Encorp Inc., Windsor

Spiro Palmer, named Bravo Entrepreneur for Fort Collins in 2001, is not one to sit back and rest on his laurels — though he certainly has enough to make for a cushy seat.

In 2005 he was the recipient of the prestigious Retail Florist of the Year Award given by the national Wholesale Florist & Supplier Association. Palmer Flowers has also been named Best Place to Work and Best Corporate Citizen as well as runner-up for Small Business of the Year in 2004 by the *Fort Collins Coloradoan*.

So what could he do for an encore? How about turning Palmer Properties into a successful family operation with his sons? Aki Palmer, an agent with Realtec Inc., handles the leasing while Jimmy Palmer, a recent graduate of the construction management program at the University of Denver, oversees construction projects. Both work the financing side as well.

In the last six years Palmer Properties has acquired and sold more than 200,000 square feet of commercial space, including the First Community Bank Plaza on JFK Parkway, just east of Palmer Flowers and Design Center.

Palmer Properties also recently closed on the historic Avery Block in Old Town Fort Collins.

“We’re pretty excited to take the company to the next level,” Spiro Palmer said. “We will do more buildings, more developments, more partnerships. We have a cou-

ple, three things in the pipeline.”

Business has been changing in the floral department as well. Palmer’s Floral School, operated by Spiro’s wife Angela, opened in 2001 and offers four 30-hour classes toward a certificate in floral design. The school has a 90 percent placement rate with students working up and down the Front Range, Spiro Palmer said.

And the floral shop still offers the gorgeous arrangements Palmer Flowers is known for, but now customers can also purchase flowers at wholesale prices.

Salazar: Man with van becomes man with plan

By Luanne Kadlub
news@ncbr.com

Israel "Izzy" Salazar always dreamed big. When he co-founded TSN Inc. in 1990 with Ted Nelson, it was a three-person operation delivering janitorial and cleaning supplies out of an Econoline van.

By 2002, Salazar and TSN had grown into the neighborhood of \$100 million in sales, and received the Bravo! Entrepreneur Award for outlying communities.

Fast forward to 2004. TSN had 234 employees in facilities in both Frederick and Richmond, Ind., delivering anything and everything that didn't create income to convenience and grocery store — cleaning supplies, paper products, rugs, squeegees, even nacho trays. Salazar held a 72 percent stake in the company, which still counts Wal-Mart, Sam's Club and 45,000 convenience stores nationwide among its clients.

That same year, London-based Bunzl Plc, attracted by TSN's 2003 sales of \$130 mil-

lion, made an offer too good to turn down — between \$50 million and \$100 million.

Salazar — ranked among the 75 wealthiest Hispanics by *Hispanic Business Magazine* — retired a year later, but has not been idle.

Along with his son, Jacob, he pursues real estate and restaurant ventures through TSN Investment Group. Benihana at Flatirons Crossing in Broomfield was one of the first projects, followed by a restaurant, hotel and condo project in Missouri.

"We will have a pretty diverse portfolio, but real estate will definitely be one of its mainstays," Salazar told the *Business Report* in 2004.

Salazar's 19,000-square-foot Cherry Hills Village mansion is listed at \$15.9 million by Legendary Properties Sotheby's International Realty in Longmont. Known as The Stone Towers, its long list of amenities includes a chef's kitchen with five ovens, a 1,250-bottle wine room, a two-story atrium/private gym, a 10-seat theater and guest/nanny's wing, 33-foot-by-55-foot



Business Report file photo

custom pool, 20-person hot tub, and built-in water and fire features.

Not bad for a guy with a van.

2002 WINNERS

Bravo! Entrepreneur, Outlying Communities: Israel "Izzy" Salazar, TSN Inc., Frederick

Greeley: Ruben & Scott Ehrlich, Ehrlich Motors

Loveland: Jack Devereaux, Home State Bank

Fort Collins: David & Jim Neenan, The Neenan Cos.

Lifetime Achievement Award: Bob Tointon, Phelps-Tointon Inc., Greeley

Regional Spirit Award: Long's Peak Council of the Boy Scouts

Emerging Entrepreneur Award: Maury Dobbie, MediaTech Productions, Fort Collins

REAL ESTATE MOGUL — Izzy Salazar has become an active real estate investor since retiring from his firm, TSN Inc., in 2004.

Erv Weinmeister passes torch to next generation

By Erin Hottenstein
news@ncbr.com

Erv Weinmeister was out of the office for a month when the *Business Report* called for an update. The former president of Super Vacuum Manufacturing Co. and winner of the 2003 Bravo! Entrepreneur Loveland award is now semi-retired, and was spending the month haying on his ranch in the Laramie River Valley.

"He'll be back down for the winter," said his son and current company president, Roger Weinmeister.

Not long after receiving the award, Erv passed the company torch to the fourth generation. Roger, his brother Ron Weinmeister, sister Tammy Sorensen, and brother-in-law Bob Sorensen bought the company from Erv, his ex-wife Kathy Weinmeister, and her mother Alma Zeiler. Zeiler's father had founded the company in the mid-1930s.

Super Vac started out making high-powered ventilators that remove smoke from a fire and increase visibility for firefighters.

Later, the company added the manufacture of custom rescue vehicles and robotic command lights to its operations.

The 68-year-old Erv still stays involved, Roger said. He does a lot of research and development, recently designing a new depth gauge for chainsaws that firefighters use to cut open roofs. He also helps make the manufacturing process more efficient through changes in product flow, Roger said.

Right now, Super Vac operates out of four buildings on seven acres on East 11th Avenue in Loveland, where it has been a mainstay since its founding, plus two rented buildings across the street. But earlier this year, the company purchased 80 acres in Wellington for expansion some time in the next five years.

In 2003, Super Vac employed about 100 people. Since then, the business has added two divisions and is up to about 150 employees.

Three years ago, the company added a graphics division that creates custom reflective stripes for police, fire and emergency rescue vehicles, according to Roger.



Business Report file photo

SUPER MAN — Erv Weinmeister, shown here in 2003 at the Super Vacuum Manufacturing Co. facility in Loveland, is now semi-retired.

Just a year ago, the company started making specialty rescue boats. The watercraft fight fires by activating a diverter valve that pumps and sprays water from a jet. The

2003 WINNERS

Bravo! Entrepreneur, Loveland: Ervin Weinmeister, Super Vacuum Manufacturing Co.

Greeley: Tom Roche, Roche Constructors Inc.

Fort Collins: William Ward, Front Range Internet

Outlying Communities: Tom Gray, Gray Oil Co. Inc., Fort Lupton

Lifetime Achievement Award: Kathryn Hach-Darrow, Hach Co., Loveland

Regional Spirit Award: The Bohemian Foundation, Fort Collins

Emerging Entrepreneur Award: Tom and Kristi Johnson, Bingham Hill Cheese Co., Fort Collins

boats can also be made with a landing flap, which allows loading and unloading of a four-wheeler for search and rescue in difficult-to-reach areas, Roger explained.

Even with the growth, Super Vac has kept along the same path.



Courtesy Tim and Sally Warde

Wardes ride wave of future

By Luanne Kadlub
news@ncbr.com

A growing business population up and down the Front Range continues to mean good business for Northern Colorado Paper. In addition to showroom/distribution centers in Greeley — its headquarters — and Pueblo, there are plans for another in Denver.

Founded in 1978 by Tim and Sally Warde, recipients of the 2004 Bravo! Entrepreneur Award for Greeley, Northern Colorado Paper supplies businesses throughout the region — and the nation — with everything from toilet tissue and trashcan liners to food service packaging and cleaning supplies. They handle more than 10,000 items, to be exact.

The Wardes are still hard at work growing their business. "We've been shooting for and achieving 10 percent growth per year," said Tim Warde. Those mathematically inclined will quickly discern that means

NCP doubles its sales volume every 10 years.

Increasing fuel costs, however, have thrown a monkey wrench into operations, albeit one with a solution. Frequent deliveries in and around Denver — and associated fillups at the fuel pump — has Warde actively looking for warehouse space in the metro area.

"We've got a plan to have this happen in the next year," he said.

High fuel prices aside, it makes sense to have a Denver distribution center to serve the growing metro clientele.

"This whole area is growing and Centera/Loveland has just exploded. That's good for business," Warde said.

So good, in fact, that he has added three sales reps in the last couple years.

Warde also has taken a lead role in providing green products to his customers.

"It's getting bigger and bigger. It's the future and we want to stay on top of it," he said.

The Wardes continue to be active community participants and donors to organi-

2004 WINNERS

Bravo! Entrepreneur, Greeley: Tim and Sally Warde, Northern Colorado Paper Inc.

Loveland: Mark Burke, Burke Cleaners and Mister Neat's Formalwear

Fort Collins: David Bethune, Atrix Laboratories Inc.

Outlying Communities: Mark Hopkins, Peak Industries Inc., Frederick

Lifetime Achievement Award: Bill Neal, Wheeler Commercial Property Services, Inc., Fort Collins

Leo Schuster, Progressive Living Structures, Loveland

Regional Spirit Award: Monfort Family Foundation

Emerging Entrepreneur Award: Bruce Golden, Bernard E. Rollin & Ralph V. Switzer Jr., Optibrand Ltd. LLC, Fort Collins

FAMILY BUSINESS — Tim and Sally Warde, as they appeared for the 2004 Bravo! Entrepreneur Awards, are still hard at work growing their business, Northern Colorado Paper, which provides a variety of products to customers nationwide.

zations including United Way, the University of Northern Colorado, Colorado State University and Boy Scouts.

Bravo! looks back

A RETROSPECTIVE LOOK AT PREVIOUS BRAVO! ENTREPRENEURS



Donnan turns into angel in life after Factual Data

By Luanne Kadlub
news@ncbr.com

Jerry Donnan, 2005 recipient of the Bravo! Entrepreneur Award for Loveland, said he's busier now in retirement than when he was chairman and CEO of the mortgage credit services firm he co-founded in 1985 with his wife, Marcia.

Begun as Factual Data Corp., the firm was renamed Kroll Factual Data in 2003 when Kroll Inc., a leading risk consulting company, acquired it for \$115 million. Donnan stayed on board until the end of that year, leaving his sons, James and Russ, in charge as president and IT director respectively.

In 2004, Marsh & McLennan Cos. Inc., a global advice and solutions provider in risk, strategy and human capital, acquired Kroll Inc. as part of a \$1.9 billion all-cash transaction.

Donnan, however, hasn't been spending retirement in a rocking chair. He and his wife formed the Donnan Charitable Foundation, which supports the needs of children, including Project Self-Sufficiency and Boys and Girls Clubs.

He's put his experience to work as an angel — investor, that is — through Donnan Ltd., which invests in startup and existing companies. Donnan Ltd. also is involved in commercial projects, including an office building at Centerra, though Donnan chose not to elaborate further.

And he is having "a couple" hangars/office buildings built at the Fort Collins-Loveland Airport to house his private aircraft, a Cirrus SR 22 and a new light jet still on order. He plans to lease the office space.

Donnan often is in the pilot's seat when he and his wife opt to get away for a few days or a few weeks. They've enjoyed a two-week Alaskan cruise and often scoot over to San Diego and Las Vegas for a change of pace.

But there's something about that day-to-day work grind, Donnan said wistfully. "I miss it."



Business Report file photo

ONWARD AND UPWARD — Jerry Donnan, shown here in 2003, sold the company he founded, Factual Data Corp., but is as busy as ever in "retirement."

2005 WINNERS

Bravo! Entrepreneur, Loveland: Jerry Donnan, Kroll Factual Data Inc.

Greeley: Mark Kendall, Kendall Printing Co.
Fort Collins: Lori Schlotter, Colorado CustomWare Inc.

Outlying Communities: Tom Baur and Garry Gorsuch, Meadowlark Optics

Lifetime Achievement Award: George Hall, Hall-Irwin Corp.

Regional Spirit Award: Kim Jordan and Jeff Lebesch, New Belgium Brewing Co.

Emerging Entrepreneur Award: Paul and Nenita Pelligrino, NitaCrisp Crackers



Tom Hacker, Northern Colorado Business Report

WORKING TOGETHER — Larry Burkhardt, president and CEO of Upstate Colorado Economic Development, and Maury Dobbie, president and CEO of Northern Colorado Economic Development Corp., shown here addressing the Front Range Economic Update at Bixpo 2007 in September, continue to market Northern Colorado as a region.

Premier Colorado continues working together for NoCo

By Jessica Centers
news@ncbr.com

In 2005, Northern Colorado's two main economic development organizations decided to take a break from competing over business prospects and try working together instead.

Last October, Larimer County's Northern Colorado Economic Development Corp. and Weld County's Upstate Colorado Economic Development jointly debuted a new brand called Premier Colorado at a business-recruiting trip to Atlanta. That successful premier — and the vision that inspired it — resulted in Premier Colorado receiving the Bravo! Entrepreneur Regional Spirit Award in 2006.

One year later, Premier Colorado and the philosophy behind it are still going strong. Larry Burkhardt, president of Upstate Colorado, says the two organizations are now collaborating with the state, as well as the cities of Greeley, Loveland and Fort Collins, the work-force development organizations of Weld and Larimer counties, and Colorado State University and the University of Northern Colorado to produce an underemployment study for the region.

"This will give us a better understanding of the underemployment situation throughout our labor shed," he said. "As companies look to an area for a potential site for relocation and expansion, they don't look at labor from a jurisdictional point of view. So, if we stopped at the Weld County line, that's an artificial picture of what the labor potential is for area employers."

The economic development entities are also cooperating as part of the clean-energy

2006 WINNERS

Regional Spirit Award: Larry Burkhardt and Maury Dobbie, Premier Colorado (NCEDC and Upstate Colorado Economic Development partnership)

Greeley: Roger Knoph, Envirotech Services Inc.

Loveland: Susan Jessup, Sylvan Dale Guest Ranch

Fort Collins: Terry Drahota, Drahota Commercial LLC

Outlying Communities: Andy and Bob Brown, Harsh International Inc.

Lifetime Achievement Award: D.B. "Pete" Peterson and J. Barney Flood, Flood & Peterson Insurance

Emerging Entrepreneur Award: Kevin Brinkman, Brinkman Partners

cluster that markets to and provides commercialization support for the emerging clean-energy industry.

"Again, we are part of a larger group of public and private sector partners there to advance the Premier Colorado area," Burkhardt said.

Meanwhile, he and Maury Dobbie, chairwoman of the NCEDC, have started discussing how they can work together on work-force development issues.

"There's every reason to be regional in our scope," Burkhardt said. "It's to both of our advantages."

Water Valley gem part of Martin Lind's legacy



Quarry moonscape transformed within just single decade

By Tom Hacker
thacker@ncbr.com

WINDSOR — In the 1960s and '70s, Karla and Ted Lind watched parts of the plan for Water Valley hatch in conversations around the dinner table at their farmhouse south of Windsor.

"Martin was always, always trying to come up with some other way to use this ground other than farming it," Karla Lind said of her precocious son. "He had all sorts of ideas, none of them having anything to do with farming."

Three decades later, Water Valley is regarded both locally and outside the region as one of the most carefully planned mixed-use developments anywhere in Colorado.

It is also part of what makes Lind the 2007 Bravo! Entrepreneur Award winner for outlying communities.

"She's right," Lind said about his mother. "I wanted to do anything but go back and forth with a tractor. We thought about fish farms. We talked about apple orchards."

Through the 1980s, Lind watched other land developers at work, building tract neighborhoods on Weld County farm ground. He took lessons from each. Over



Tom Hacker, Northern Colorado Business Report

Finalists

Finalists for the Outlying Communities Bravo! Entrepreneur Awards included:

- Martin Lind – Water Valley
- Nick & Karen Sekich – Sekich Co.
- Karrol Steeves – Comfort Keepers

See OUTLYING, 15B

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AIMS: A community college with community in mind



By Noah Guillaume
nguillaume@ncbr.com

GREELEY — When Aims Community College was founded in 1967, it started with a promise to provide an affordable education to students in central Weld County.

Little has changed in 40 years except for Aims' growing commitment to students throughout Northern Colorado as opposed to just Weld County.

Aims has kept its promise of affordable education and made it easier for students to take classes by opening new campuses in Fort Lupton and Loveland. The college also keeps a close watch on what's happening around the area in terms of community growth and employment.

"We concentrate on a regional approach within a 50-mile radius," said Marsi Liddell, president of Aims Community College.

What this means for students is more convenient locations and a curriculum that

"I think programs that are attractive to students will bring students in."

Marsi Liddell, president
Aims Community College

reflects and supports the employment trends in the region.

For its commitment to providing affordable training courses to students and a reliable pool of educated workers for Northern Colorado businesses Aims Community College is the recipient of the *Northern Colorado Business Report's* Regional Spirit Award 2007.

In response to the growing shortage of nurses throughout the United States, Aims administrators talked to local hospitals to determine labor needs and made sure the nursing courses Aims offers match up with the needs at area hospitals.

"We try to be proactive instead of reactive," said Liddell.

That proactive approach has its benefits. Students now have a choice of over 120 programs and 2,000 courses, and Aims is just one of two community colleges in the state that grew in enrollment, including a small but still growing enrollment of international students taking online coursework.

"I think programs that are attractive to students will bring students in," said Liddell.

Having the second lowest tuition for a community college in the state probably helps, too.

Full classes and a full curriculum do not mean Aims is without struggle. With just 19 cents for every education dollar going to community colleges there is the challenge of having enough resources to accommodate the demand by students, Liddell said. Funding shortfalls have led to a waiting list of multiple years for some programs.

To address this issue Aims has secured land for a new campus along the Interstate-25 corridor in Berthoud. Expected to



Michael D. Wailes, Northern Colorado Business Report

open in three to five years, the new campus will serve the Johnstown, Milliken, Berthoud, Mead and Loveland communities. Aims also is looking to add classes that

would let students work with fuel-cell and hybrid vehicle technologies — classes with impacts well beyond Northern Colorado's boundaries.

Past winners — Regional Spirit

- 2006 Premier Colorado, Fort Collins
- 2005 New Belgium Brewing, Fort Collins
- 2004 Monfort Family Foundation, Eaton
- 2003 The Bohemian Foundation, Fort Collins
- 2002 Long's Peak Council of the Boy Scouts
- 2001 State Farm Insurance Co., Greeley/Evans
- 2000 Greeley Independence Stampede, Greeley
- 1999 Eastman Kodak Co. (Kodak Colorado Division), Windsor
- 1998 Hewlett Packard Co., Fort Collins

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To commemorate this event Mountain States has made a contribution to the Afghan Academy of Hope, a charity dedicated to educating the orphaned children of Afghanistan for peace. Please visit their website at www.aah.org

Seastrom takes New Frontier to top of banking list

"Hire great people who work hard and are dedicated to great customer service."

Larry Seastrom, president and CEO, New Frontier Bank

By Kate Hawthorne
khawthorne@ncbr.com

GREELEY – As the *Northern Colorado Business Report* staff was preparing for the very first Bravo! Entrepreneur Awards in 1998, Larry Seastrom was preparing an application for a brand-new bank in Greeley.

It was to be called Rocky Mountain Bank, but when the charter came before the Colorado Division of Banking, that had been changed to New Frontier Bank. Bankers at some of the 22 other Greeley institutions predicted Seastrom, his 180 investors and seven employees would have a hard time attracting customers, even with \$6 million capitalization.

Then the market boomed along with the state economy, national banks bought up a number of local competitors, and New Frontier appeared for the first time on the Mercury 100 list of the region's fastest growing companies in 2001. Its revenues grew 242 percent between 1999 and 2000 and its employees to 49.

Now the latest figures from the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. show that, as of June 30, New Frontier's three branches held the largest share of the deposit market in Larimer and Weld counties — \$1.36 billion — up 75 percent over 2006.

For presiding over this phenomenal growth, Seastrom has been named the Bravo! Entrepreneur for Greeley this year. How did he do it?

"It's no secret," Seastrom said. "Hire great people who work hard and are dedicated to great customer service."

It helps to bring experience to the table. Seastrom was a 17-year veteran of the banking industry when he started New Frontier. He moved to Colorado from Kansas in 1981



Courtesy New Frontier Bank

to work at the Bank of Colorado (then Bank of Windsor), then Union Colony Bank, followed by the Bank of Greeley and finally Eaton Bank, where he helped establish the branch on 47th Avenue.

It also helps to have a diverse loan portfolio, Seastrom said. With 45 percent of its loans in agriculture, 30 percent in real estate, 20 percent in construction and only 5 percent in commercial lending, the bank has recently benefited from high commodity prices while avoiding mortgage-lending turmoil.

But the philosophy that people bank with people, not brands, is the core of New Frontier's success, in Seastrom's view.

"We have a full-time receptionist in the lobby who greets and welcomes every customer," he said. "There are 12 full-time people answering the phones, and we have no plans to add an automated system. People want to talk to real people."

New Frontier also has no plans for adding branches beyond those in Greeley, Windsor and Longmont. Its work force of 195 has been remarkably stable, and Seastrom is proud of maintaining an environment where "everyone is treated exactly the same."

"We take our jobs seriously, but we don't take ourselves seriously," he said.



Finalists

Finalists for the Greeley Bravo! Entrepreneur Awards included:

- Larry Seastrom – New Frontier Bank
- Lee and Warren Yoder – Weld County Garage
- Mike Ketterling – Ketterling, Butherus, Norton Engineers

Past winners – Greeley

- 2006 Roger Knoph, Envirotech Services Inc.
- 2005 Mark Kendall, Kendall Printing Co.
- 2004 Tim and Sally Warde, Northern Colorado Paper Inc.
- 2003 Tom Roche, Roche Constructors Inc.
- 2002 Ruben & Scott Ehrlich, Ehrlich Motors
- 2001 Jerry Morgensen, Hensel Phelps Construction Co.
- 2000 Bill Farr, Centennial Bank of the West
- 1999 John Todd, Toddy's
- 1998 Darrell McAllister, 1st Choice Bank

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Stacey guides PVHS expansion with steady hand

By Steve Porter
sporter@ncbr.com

FORT COLLINS – For Rulon Stacey – as with all good leaders — it was a matter of being the right person in the right place at the right time.

By 1996, Poudre Valley Hospital System had seen a new CEO come and go nearly every year for the previous four years. Poised for huge change, PVHS was hungry for a leader who could put behind its years of turmoil and lead it into a brighter future.

The stage was set for the modest man from Provo, Utah, to take the reins and get the horse back on the track.

“I think the board (of directors) in ’96 knew the right path (and) sometimes the right path takes some political heat, but they’ve been very supportive,” said Stacey, president and CEO of PVHS for the last 11 years. “I couldn’t have done it without them but they probably could have done it without me.”

Stacey, 47, has been guiding PVHS with a steady hand through enormous growth in employees, services and facilities, including the opening of a brand-new hospital, Medical Center of the Rockies, earlier this year. Those accomplishments have earned him the *Northern Colorado Business Report’s* Bravo! Fort Collins Entrepreneur of the Year Award for 2007.

For Stacey, his years with PVHS have been a gratifying professional journey. “It has been an extraordinary experience to be here when that all happened,” he said. “The board of directors knew what had to happen. (PVHS) was ready to explode and they



Finalists

Finalists for the Fort Collins Bravo! Entrepreneur Award included:

- Rulon Stacey – Poudre Valley Health System
- David Carson – CBW Automation
- Rayno Seator – Egg & I

gave me the task of leading it.”

But it wasn’t just presiding over the addition of new facilities to the PVHS network. Along the way, the hospital system has won award after award for its care, competitive prices and services. Stacey gives credit to a community that loves its hospital and vice versa.

See FORT COLLINS, 15B



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"The only reason, honestly, that we're in business is to provide world-class health care."

Rulon Stacey, president and CEO
Poudre Valley Health System

FORT COLLINS, from 14B

"I think it's our commitment to the community," he said. "We are a locally owned organization so it brings a focus on the community and we don't have to send money to other places. It allows us to focus on quality and not money and when you do that, good things happen."

Terry McNeal, a broker associate at The Group Inc. Real Estate who nominated Stacey along with her fellow associate, Ralph Waldo, said she did so because of Stacey's commitment to the community.

"He has added much needed stability to a position that was once a revolving door,"

LOVELAND, from 4B

"I didn't follow the conventions," Ligon said. "I didn't have the business skills or a business plan."

Ligon said the secret to her success was that she hired people to do the things she didn't know how to do — sales being the first. Now, Ligon serves the as creative director for Interweave, which allows her to get her hands in all of her favorite parts of the publishing industry — the parts that inspired her to start Interweave in the first place.

Ligon is quick to usher praises away from herself and onto the Interweave staff and management, but Aspire Media's Hall feels that the success of the company really originates with her.

"It's her leadership that's done it," he said. "She is a one-of-a-kind person."

Hall has been in publishing for more than 30 years. He knows that Ligon is a shining star in the industry and feels proud to know her and work with her.

"It's one of the highlights of my career," he said.

Ligon said that decision to sell to Aspire was made because the company was in a position of strength at the time and that

EMERGING, from 6B

division," Byers said.

The company is also looking to expand its reach into the existing home market. As Byers put it, there are a lot more existing homes than new ones. The growth into these new markets means dealing with different customers, but that is not a deterrent. Maggi describes herself and Byers as risk-takers, and Byers said that not all of the company's ventures have panned out.

"We tried a remote office, and it went badly," Byers said. The "try-and-fail" approach has been a great tool for EnergyLogic, so much so that the company is growing its consulting arm by teaching other energy rating firms the tricks of the trade. Byers said that by consulting with other firms throughout the country, EnergyLogic is able to spread its message without having to grow geographically.

Past winners – Fort Collins

- 2006 Terry Drahota, Drahota Commercial LLC
- 2005 Lori Schlotter, Colorado CustomWare Inc.
- 2004 David Bethune, Atrix Laboratories Inc.
- 2003 William Ward, Front Range Internet
- 2002 David & Jim Neenan, The Neenan Cos.
- 2001 Spiro Palmer, Palmer Gardens
- 2000 Kim Jordan & Jeff Lebesch, New Belgium Brewing Co.
- 1999 Douglas Schatz, Advanced Energy Industries Inc.
- 1998 Kent and Gloria Sampson, Value Plastics Inc.

McNeal said. "His commitment to excellence is never-ending and has been proven by the numerous awards mentioned in the nomination."

Those awards include the 1999 Robert S. Hudgens Award from the American College of Healthcare Executives as "Young Healthcare Executive of the Year."

For Stacey, it's all about helping provide PVHS's 3,200 employees with a great place to work and help people in need.

"The only reason, honestly, that we're in business is to promote world-class health care," he said.

Past winners – Loveland

- 2006 Susan Jessup, Sylvan Dale Guest Ranch
- 2005 Jerry Donnan, Kroll Factual Data Inc.
- 2004 Mark Burke, Burke Cleaners and Mister Neat's Formalwear
- 2003 Ervin Weinmeister, Super Vacuum Manufacturing Co.
- 2002 Jack Devereaux, Home State Bank
- 2001 Chad & Troy McWhinney, McWhinney Enterprises
- 2000 Bill Beierwaltes, Colorado Memory Systems, Colorado Time Systems, OnStream Inc.
- 1999 Dave Duke, Duke Communications International
- 1998 Thom Schultz, Group Publishing Inc.

Hall was the right person to sell to. The company's position has grown under the new management. Since Aspire acquired Interweave — its first acquisition — it has closed on four other major deals in the crafting publications market. The company now employs about 140 at its three offices — including about 70 in Loveland.

Past winners – Emerging entrepreneur

- 2006 Kevin Brinkman — Brinkman Partners
- 2005 Paul and Nenita Pelligrino — NitaCrisp Crackers
- 2004 Bruce Golden — Bernard E. Rollin & Ralph V. Switzer Jr., Optibrand Ltd. LLC, Fort Collins
- 2003 Tom and Kristi Johnson — Bingham Hill Cheese Co., Fort Collins
- 2002 Maury Dobbie — MediaTech Productions, Fort Collins
- 2001 Jeff Whitham — Encorp Inc., Windsor
- 2000 Tim Gan — OpenLCR.com, Fort Collins
- 1999 Eastman Kodak Co., Windsor
- 1998 Hewlett-Packard Co., Fort Collins

OUTLYING, from 11B

the years a vision for Water Valley, a residential development unlike any other in the vicinity, began to emerge.

It would be something vastly different than "a bunch of streets pushed into a cornfield," as Lind often says about tract development.

"The very word 'developer' deserves a raised eyebrow," Lind said. "So many of them take shortcuts, and don't follow through in a responsible way. The reputation of this industry is marred by the predecessors who took the shortcuts."

Before getting into the land development business, Lind and his former partner, ex-Denver Bronco Steve Watson, got into the sand-and-gravel business. Poudre Tech Aggregates Inc. rearranged the landscape of Windsor's southern flank in a way that made it the perfect canvas for the artistry that many people say resulted in Water Valley.

Five manmade lakes totaling 300 acres — "my favorite kind of open space," as Lind says — wrap around the careful arrangement of Pelican Lakes Golf Course and the nearby neighborhoods. Lind and Watson formed Trollco Inc., the umbrella company for development of Water Valley and subsequent projects.

"He's very resourceful and very creative, and has always been an innovator," Watson said about Lind in a 2001 interview. "For me, it was a real learning experience. It was exciting."

The Lind-Watson partnership dissolved in 2001 with Watson returning to his first love, football, as a member of the Broncos coaching staff. Lind bought out Watson's interest, and pursued other endeavors.

Water Valley South, and its Pelican Falls nine-hole golf addition, took shape. Lind

Past winners – Outlying communities

- 2006 Andy and Bob Brown, Harsh International Inc.
- 2005 Tom Baur and Garry Gorsuch, Meadowlark Optics
- 2004 Mark Hopkins, Peak Industries Inc., Frederick
- 2003 Tom Gray, Gray Oil Co. Inc., Fort Lupton
- 2002 Israel "Izzy" Salazar, TSN Inc., Frederick
- 2001 Joe & Bob Raith, Morning Fresh Farms, Platteville
- 2000 Bob, Max & Dean Walker, Walker Manufacturing Co., Fort Collins
- 1999 Louis Lucio, Armadillo, LaSalle
- 1998 Bill Coleman, Colorado Greenhouse Holdings Inc., Fort Lupton

and partners secured a Central Hockey League franchise for the hugely successful Colorado Eagles, a team that consistently sells out the Budweiser Events Center.

Lind's far-reaching plans encompass Eagle Crossing Business Park, stretching eastward from The Ranch and the Budweiser Events Center, and new commercial development plans for Fort Collins-Loveland Airport's southern edge.

Lind and his employees are also weathering a real estate downturn caused by a regional oversupply "of every product on the market," Lind said.

"But anybody who knows me knows that I'm the eternal optimist. I'm also a realist," he said. "This oversupply is going to be very hard on a lot of people, and it will be no different for us than anybody else. The only difference is that we have a little wider wheelbase."

Chad Collins Artist

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