

Member Spotlight

Pro Rentals & Sales

Pro Rentals & Sales, Inc. was established April 1, 1998 in the state of Idaho. The first location was in Idaho Falls where we are still doing business and is now the Corporate Offices. Pro Rentals & Sales, Inc. has grown over the years and now has locations in Rexburg, Blackfoot, Pocatello and going to be building a 2nd location in Idaho Falls in the summer of 2007. The Officers are Doug Jones, President and Kim Fowler, Secretary/Treasurer.



Our Rexburg location was opened in March of 2004. Our Rexburg store has 3 Full Time employees and 1 Part Time employee. The store is located at 174 Moran View on Rexburg's North side. Our Rexburg store manager Sam Brinton said, "Rexburg is a great place to be, our customers have been great and have supported the business very well." He also stated that our focus for the business other than growing the business is the wants and needs of current and future customers. We're focused on customer service. Our staff is great as well as our customers. Our Rental store is a full service store, renting everything from large excavators and earth equipment, to lawn, and garden equipment, and also many items for the do it yourself projects or events (i.e. canopy, tables, chairs, etc.). We also provide delivery and pick-up services as well.

Here at Pro Rentals & Sales, Inc. we think the customer is #1 and we are here to help you in any way we can.

"Gotch'er Back"

As business owners and managers in Madison County, Madison School District would like to ask you to join with us in supporting a new campaign in the community to promote mental health awareness and education. We are sponsoring this campaign because of recent events in our youth community. The campaign is titled "Gotch'er Back."

The campaign will consist of several elements.

1. A series of events will be held at our schools where we encourage students to support each other and to look for positive assets in each other. The Madison High School Student Council is taking the lead in this effort and their assembly was held March 14.

2. At the assemblies, students were given two items -- a highlighter (to highlight their good qualities) and a sticker to be placed on the back of their activity card.

3. (This is where you as a business owner come in) We are asking businesses in the area to display a poster which we will provide and then offer a special "discount or deal" for the students who show their activity cards with the sticker on the back. This does not have to be anything different than your business is already doing, unless you want to. This campaign will run through April 15. You can choose how you participate.

4. Our AmeriCorps member, students or school district staff will be contacting you in the next week to bring you the poster and ask you to display it if you want to participate. We will be trying to get to all of the businesses, but to help out we would appreciate it if you would call or email Janet Goodliffe or Richard DeGraw at the school district office (359-3300) to let us know of your willingness to help.

We have had several events in our youth com-

munity which demonstrate the need we have to work together to address serious mental health issues such as depression, suicide, and self-harm. We have wonderful youth here and we want to do everything we can to show them that we have a community that cares and, if they do struggle, there are resources available.

Janet Goodliffe, Safe Schools/Healthy Students Project Director and Grants Administrator
Richard DeGraw, Madison School District Mental Health Collaboration Coordinator
Madison School District

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Older Workers: Betting on a Sure Thing

Flexibility Is Key to Recruitment and Retention

By Laurel Kennedy, President of Age Lessons, LLC

The debate rages on. Is there a labor shortage looming, or is it a skills shortage? In truth, it doesn't matter. Regardless of the math or semantics involved, the point remains: Outstanding employees are becoming an increasingly scarce commodity.

Economists agree on the underlying factors:

There will be more jobs than workers in just a few years.

The worker shortage will dial up the competition for good employees. Younger workers are less educated, prepared, and productive than older ones. Outsourcing capacity will likely fall short of the need. Institutional knowledge is rapidly exiting organizations. Immigration bandwidth will limit the number of incoming workers. The shortfall impact will be felt disproportionately across industry sectors. Fortunately, the solution to this dilemma is readily at hand: Recruit and retain older workers. A known commodity, older workers have already proven their mettle on the job and bring practical experience, academic credentials, and an admirable work ethic to the table.

Many obstacles to keeping older workers engaged have, in part, self-resolved. The average retirement age is beginning to rise, and market forces have conspired to create economic incentives for working longer. According to a 2006 Merrill Lynch retirement study, 71% of respondents expected to "work while retired," and 45% of those intend to work in some capacity as long as they can. Two words capture what older workers are looking for- "flexibility" and a "challenge."

Flexible work options should accommodate changes in work-life balance as retirement nears. Challenging work will stimulate creativity and open avenues for intellectual growth and exploration. Leveraging the valuable older worker resource involves a two-prong approach: tweaking benefits and presenting creative employment opportunities.

Benefits. When crafting options for older employees, consider the relative utility and age-appropriateness of each offering. Elder care benefits such as subsidized adult day care, home care referral services, or long-term care insurance can be as appealing

to older workers as childcare benefits are to younger employees. Perhaps less obvious, financial planning, career counseling, and professional education could resonate with employees planning for a working retirement well into their 70s.

Elder employees interested in part-time work solutions might be wooed by a retention bonus or some form of pro-rated access to retirement savings, health care coverage, and prescription drug support.

Employment. Flexibility takes many forms telecommuting, changing work hours by shifting the employee to an Asia-Pacific or European work team, month's on/off project schedules, and phased retirement. The list goes on. More innovative employment approaches include offset employee matching, a version of job sharing that pairs an older worker with a younger employee to ensure culture and knowledge transfer. Another model approaches recruitment and retention strategies as a corporate brand marketing exercise, applying the same techniques used in the consumer product sector, from research through promotion.

Laurel Kennedy is president of Age Lessons, LLC, and a boomer-consulting firm offering recruitment, retention, and working retirement solutions. The firm is located at 2834 N. River Walk Drive, Chicago, IL 60618, 773-252-0123 (HYPERLINK "mailto:lkennedy@agelessons.com" lkennedy@agelessons.com).

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NOTE !

If you think your business could use some extra help this summer, give us a call at the Rexburg Area Chamber of Commerce at 356-5700 and we will put you on our web site.

If you would like to earn some extra money this summer, give the Rexburg Area Chamber of Commerce a call at 356-5700 and we will put your information on our web site.

Stop in to visit us and see how we can help you.

Board Member Spotlight

Donna Benfield



Our spotlight this month is featuring the Executive Director of our Chamber, Donna Benfield. Born in a small beach community in Southern California, Donna and her family moved to Rexburg, Idaho in January 1979. After falling in love with Idaho, its great outdoors and recreation, on a family vacation, they decided to move to Rexburg and opened a Coast-to-Coast Hardware store. She and her husband and two children owned and operated the business for 23 years. Working together with Ken and their two children was an opportunity of a lifetime. "Those were special times that the family will remember and cherish forever."

"About eleven years ago, I left the family business to become the Executive Director of the Chamber of Commerce and the Idaho International Dance and Music Festival. I truly love my job. I really don't like to call it a job or work because it is too much fun! There is something new and different every day and that is what I like."

When asked what the best part of my job is I have to say, "Seeing the Dance Festival come together every summer after working with each of the teams for so long. It is the highlight of the year for me!" Some of the countries work for 2-3 years in order to be able to finance the trip to the United States. When they finally get here it is all worthwhile! That is one of the best parts of my job.

When asked what is the hardest part of the job I would have to say, "Trying to keep up with all of the businesses in town". We have over 900 businesses in Rexburg, over 400 are Chamber members and I like to visit or talk with each one at least once a year to let them know we care about them and how they are doing. I have always said I like a challenge and that is my big challenge.

In 2000 I was elected to the Rexburg City Council and am currently serving my second term and am serving as Council President. I am serving in an advisory position on Senator Craig's Regional Advisory Committee. In addition to serving on several community committees and boards, I have been asked by Governor Kempthorne to serve on a state committee. Probably the hardest task I have been asked to perform was when Governor Kempthorne asked me if we could bring the Dance Festival to Boise one summer and present it to all of the Governor's when the National Governor's Association meet there in 2002. We did it!

I love Idaho and have no problem telling people why they should come to Idaho to visit or better than that to relocate their business and reside. One of my favorite quotations is from Ernest Hemingway who said, "When a man (or woman) feels at home in a place he wasn't born, it's where he's supposed to be."

We love Idaho and consider it "home". We love the people and the community. It is where we are supposed to be!