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Rick Heiberg Likes the “Rural Flavor” of Grant County



Rick Heiberg first came to Grant County as a kid with his family, vacationing at Sun Lakes. As an adult, he brought his children here, also to Sun Lakes from their home in Woodinville. He liked it so much, he moved here in 1999. Heiberg has been on the Board of Directors of the Grant County Economic Development Council since 2013.

Heiberg, who turns 70 this year, was born in Ballard, Washington and lived in Edmonds through his high school years. While he dreamed of going to California to get away from the rain and gloom of the west side of the state, he ended up working for Boeing for 37 years. In that time, he managed to never get laid off, though many of his co-workers were. In January 1970 he took a week's vacation in California, and when he came back, half the people he worked with were gone. "I survived," he says. "Hung on by the skin of my teeth" even through the SST cancellation in 1971 when there were billboards in Seattle saying "would the last one out of the city please turn off the lights?" Heiberg says that in '71 Boeing employed 120,000 people, but by 1973 it was 37,500.

"I worked at every Boeing site there is," Heiberg says. He traveled all over the country and all over the world working in the training organization for the company. "Best job I ever had at the company." At that time there were 1,000 people in training, Heiberg explains. Now he says it's probably fifty, he says. The most interesting place he worked was Bangalore,

India for a month in 1995. He found the "unbelievable extreme differences" there interesting. For example, the city was concerned that American restaurants such as Kentucky Fried Chicken were putting MSG in their food. But on the street he'd see a food vender cooking and selling meat that they would cut up on the curb itself and no one apparently cared.

In the early 1990s he and his wife Wendy started looking at real estate in the Coulee City area. In 1998 they bought a house in Coulee City and moved there in 1999. In 2002 he retired from Boeing.

Heiberg first served on the Coulee City Planning Commission and still does, now as chairman. He ran for mayor of Coulee City in 2009 and served from 2010 to 2013. He had read the state statutes and knew what a mayor in a strong mayor system could do. So he went to work and got money for the new water tower, paved some city streets, and got a grant for new boat docks.

Unfortunately, there was a group of residents who fought him the entire way. They brought a recall petition against him for eleven alleged violations. The petition went all the way to the State Supreme Court where it was thrown out by a vote of 9-0. But, Heiberg says, "They kept it up until the day I left office."

"I wouldn't want that job anymore," Heiberg says of being mayor. "I was an outsider, not from here," and a threat to the status quo, he explains, even if the status quo was going downhill.

"I still believe in the great unrealized potential of this area," he says. That was why, as mayor, he became a Director of the Grant County EDC. He joined so that he would "hear what's going on in the county" and "learn things I could share and report on anything to promote the town." Heiberg explains that in Coulee City, agriculture is the



Grant County Businesses Traveled to South Korea to Explore New Markets

Business owners from Grant County traveled to South Korea April 26 for a 8-day trade mission to explore export opportunities for Eastern Washington products ranging from flour to exercise equipment.



Ray Towry, president of Grant County Economic Development Council (EDC), headed the nine-person delegation. "This is an amazing opportunity to directly introduce five Grant County-based businesses to markets abroad," Towry said.

Towry said five business owners were part of the delegation, but they represented several other companies including Fresh Nature Foods, Cascade Mills Flour, Trinidad Lavender, Whiskey Gap Distillery, Bartelson Transport, Bowman Orchards and reACT Trainer.

Other members of the delegation include Vern Jenkins, an international trade specialist with the Washington Small Business Development Center (SBDC), and Allan Peterson, an SBDC business advisor located in Moses Lake.

"These companies have already been working on export opportunities in South Korea with recent market research provided by the Washington SBDC intern research team," Jenkins said, "so we know that the potential for export sales is there. This mission is an important step in developing the face-to-face relationships

that are so important in international trade."

The group visited various cities in South Korea, but most of their meetings were in Gunpo, which is just south of Seoul.

Jenkins, who works with small business owners to build export readiness and export capacity, said Kyle Kim of the Korean International Trade Association (KITA) and Danny Kim, a representative with the Washington State Department of Agriculture Representative, were extremely helpful in setting up one-on-one meetings for this business-to-business trade event.

According to Peterson, this business-to-business trade mission was organized as a follow-up to a visit a Gunpo delegation made to Grant County in September 2015. Grant County and Gunpo have had a Sister City relationship since 2003, but when Peterson learned a group of business and civic leaders would be visiting in fall 2015, he offered to set up a small trade expo of Eastern Washington products. The trade expo was so successful that those involved wanted to keep the momentum going.

"The great thing about exporting, especially in rural areas, is that businesses are finding new markets or new customers outside the U.S., but the jobs are staying here," Peterson said.

According to Peterson, the business owners received STEP grants from the

Washington Department of Commerce to help defray the cost of airfare, but are otherwise paying their own expenses.

"Developing a strong export plan can really transform a business," Peterson said, "and it's exciting for the SBDC to be able to walk this journey with our clients."

Towry, who has been with Grant County EDC since 2012 and is director of Recreation, Tourism and Public Relations for the City of Ephrata, said he is excited to see a traditional Sister City relationship grow into an economic partnership and he credits the SBDC with making that happen.

"The work that Allan and Vern have put into this, to develop a traditional "sister city" relationship into an economic partnership, could pay huge dividends for our region," he said. "It was a great idea on their part."



The Washington SBDC is hosted by Washington State University and receives funding from the U.S. Small Business Administration. The SBDC in Moses Lake is also affiliated with the Grant County Economic Development Council, a non-profit organization.



Moses Lake Business Advisor Earns State Recognition



Allan Peterson, a certified business advisor with the Washington Small Business Development Network (SBDC), was named the network's 2016 Star Performer for his work with small business owners in eastern Washington.

The award was announced at the U.S. Small Business Administration annual gala May 4 at the Museum of Flight at Boeing Field in Seattle. Peterson and the Star Performers from each of the other SBDC networks around the country will be honored at the America's SBDC conference in Orlando, Fla., in September.

Praised by clients and co-workers

"I would recommend Allan exclusively to anyone who wants to start a business," said Darla Meise, an SBDC client since 2007.

She and her husband, Fred Meise, started meeting with Peterson when they needed help getting a loan to purchase their first business, Moses Lake Air Service. Now they have three businesses with annual revenue over \$1 million.

"We never would have got there without Allan," she said. "He's completely professional in everything he does."

Lateef Olaniyan, owner of Southgate Pharmacy in Moses Lake, agreed: "They don't come any better than him. He doesn't start what he won't finish." Olaniyan said Peterson routinely goes the extra mile to make sure his clients have the information or resources they need to move ahead.

Duane Fladland, state director of the Washington

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CBIS: The ROI of Training

Workforce training is just one of the many steps that organizations can initiate to improve its performance, profitability and to stay current with new technology. But, when money is tight, training budgets are most often the first to be sacrificed.

The Center for Business and Industry (CBIS) at Big Bend Community College is your local partner who has access to financial support for all of your workforce training needs. The Job Skills Program (JSP) and Customized Training Program (CTP) grants are offered by the State of Washington and available to industry located in the BBCC service area. These grant funds are available in partnership with CBIS – either supporting 100% of all training costs through an employee match program or as a reduction in B&O taxes.

So... Now that you've made the call to partner with CBIS for all of your workforce training needs, how do you know the impact of your efforts? What is the ROI or

the extent to which the benefits of training exceeds the costs?

Measuring the success of training is oftentimes the most difficult to follow through or analyze. As a partner of CBIS, you will receive assistance in measuring the results of your training efforts. Measurements of training can include areas such as: What are the numbers participating and how does that impact your overall knowledge base? Is cross training employees increasing communication and teamwork between those who work within different departments or regions? Are participants learning new or improved skills, knowledge or attitudes that will be measured by increased production or new efficiencies? And... what are the participant reactions?

In the past year, CBIS has facilitated over 60 training sessions for our local industries. Over 1600 employees have



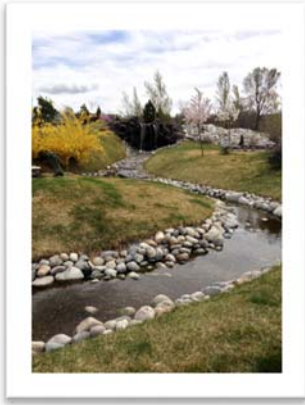
participated in various training areas including Leadership, Train the Trainer, Business Communications, Six Sigma or LEAN training, Industrial Maintenance skills, and Chemistry to name a few. Participant reactions to training are important because, if students react negatively to training, they are less likely to transfer what they have learned to their work and more likely to give bad reports to peers, leading in turn to lower trainee results.

Measurements of past training and the reactions from its participants are varied. Here are a few examples of the

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Quality of Life is Important in Grant County



"Grant County's ideal central location in Washington State, its diverse landscape, and over 300 days of beautiful sunshine

makes it an easily accessible attraction filled with opportunities for fun and sport," says Bev Shuford of the Grant County Tourism Board. "There are rich farm lands, abundance of water with 144 lakes and habitat making home to a diverse and abundant bird population. Those are just some of the factors that enhance our quality of life in Grant County," Shuford adds.

Raymond Gravelle, mayor of Soap Lake, says that quality of life in a small town is "being able to get away from the hustle and bustle of the city. To feel safe in your home and in parks. That's why I moved here from Seattle ten years ago."

Gravelle says that while Soap Lake has been in decline for decades, it has made improvements over the past four and a half years. A new police chief was brought in to enhance the safety of the community which, according to Gravelle, had "remarkable results in citizens feeling safer and reduced crime."

The city of Soap Lake held town hall meetings and found the citizens wanted the downtown area revitalized. Now, after spending \$2.4 million, Soap Lake has a "new" downtown, Gravelle says. And now the city is working on improving parks and has formed a parks and recreation committee which is holding public meetings to get citizen input. They sent out a survey in three languages with the help of the Grant County Health District, and received 172 responses. From that the

city has developed a 52 page park plan that Gravelle says is "nothing short of spectacular." The city is now working on applying for grants to pay for the plan.

Also, Gravelle adds, there are plans to improve the town's sewer and storm water system. "No glamor or sizzle but it's been ignored for decades," Gravelle says. "If your toilet doesn't flush," it hurts your quality of life, he adds.

Gravelle says that the "historic mineral lake" is a draw to Soap Lake and its "healing waters are famous world-wide." The waters are claimed to help with skin conditions such as eczema, Gravelle says. Two hotels in towns have bathtubs with two sets of faucets, he explains, one of which brings in water from the lake so people can soak in the waters in the privacy of their hotel room. There is also hiking and nature walking in the area and the Audubon Society recognizes the Soap Lake area as a significant bird watching site. Then he adds about the geology and beauty. "it's a unique area. It's all in one spot." And, Gravelle adds, the people are "very friendly" and Soap Lake is a "welcoming community."

I think the pace of life in a smaller town is a big draw," Ray Towry, Recreation, Tourism, and Public Relations Director for the City of Ephrata, says. "The ability to know your community leads to a sense of security," Towry adds.

Towry says that the open space is another benefit of living in a small town. He says bigger cities are trying to make open space that smaller towns naturally have.

In Ephrata, Towry says the mayor and the city council have made a commitment to public safety and infrastructure to improve the quality of life. The city has replaced eighty percent of the water lines, for example. Also, the city is committed to parks and recreation, Towry adds. It helps fund activities for the senior center and after school programs for kids. The city

operates sports facilities and helps with everything from ballet to flag football. "It's designed to bring the community together as much as possible," Towry explains. He hopes the next infrastructure the city tackles is improvements to parks and recreational facilities.

Ephrata is also working to enhance public safety. There are steps being taken to purchase a new rescue vehicle and to upgrade equipment for the fire department to give it "the safest equipment possible," Towry adds. The police department hired two new officers and is now at full capacity.

Next, Towry says, are the parks, trails, and the recreation center. "Beezley Hill is just a hidden gem," Towry says. A grassroots biking community is working to improve and develop trails there. "Phenomenal trails," Towry says. "It's close yet challenging and so easy to get to."

"From outdoor open space, facilities, to great schools to the fastest internet in the world," Ephrata has it all, Towry says. In addition, there's fishing twenty to thirty minutes away and hunting right outside of town, Towry explains. "What the Basin has to offer people is just phenomenal."

Spencer Griggs, Director of Parks and Recreation for the City of Moses Lake, says quality of life "means a lot of things to a lot of people." He adds that Moses Lake provides a great quality of life with its available water recreation and twenty-five parks. "An active lifestyle is what we're all about," Griggs says. He points out that Moses Lake has the Spring Festival, the Farmers Market, and the Fourth of July celebration. "In small towns, quality of life seems to hinge on an active parks and recreation department," Griggs explains.

"I think our parks are very unique," Griggs says, pointing out that Yonezawa Park has exercise stations. Two parks, including Blue Heron, have disk golf courses. There is the Surf and Slide Water *Continued on Page 7*



Heiberg Cont.

biggest driver of the economy, but tourism is number two. So he tried to promote the "biggest thing" the city has going which is Memorial Day weekends with the Last Stand Rodeo that attracts 3,000 people. The city also has a "Cow Pie Jog" that's five kilometers long and a parade down Main Street that weekend.

Heiberg is also involved in the Coulee Corridor National Scenic Byway and Grant County Tourism. He says it's important to support the Grant County EDC "because we need to do whatever we can do to promote trade, jobs, and development in the county. The EDC has done a great job, he says, and been an "enabler and promoter" of development.

"There are a lot of things people don't know about the EDC," Heiberg says, including how it works not only in the county but nationally and internationally such as going to the Paris Air Show to help

bring in business. They "reach out all over the world to spread the word about what we have here," Heiberg says.

The biggest change Heiberg says he's seen in Grant County from an economic development standpoint is the emerging focus on data centers. Also, he says, another change is the growth of the wine industry in the county with orchards being replaced by vineyards. He also likes how Big Bend Community College has an "increased effect" on the area by "providing greater educational opportunities for the people of Grant County and beyond."

"I'd like to see more economic development in smaller towns," Heiberg says, acknowledging that "that's hard" with the limited resources of small towns, including labor availability. "I don't know how you do it," he adds. Coulee City, he

says, has a population of 650 people but "it's sort of dying on the vine."

Heiberg managed to go back to school and get an undergraduate degree in 2006 from Northwest University in Kirkland. Then he decided to get his masters, achieving an MBA in 2009. But, he says, he was stupid because if he had done it when he worked at Boeing, the company would have paid the entire cost.

What Heiberg likes about living in Grant County is the "300 days of sunshine" and "I like the rural flavor." Heiberg says he's "into politics." "I'm into being as informed as a private citizen can be." He says people need to get their news from multiple sources. He is a State Committeeman for the Republican Party and Precinct Committee Officer for the Coulee City precinct. He is also thinking about writing a book about his experiences of being mayor.

CBIS Cont.

testimonials and training results from past BBCC JSP programs:

- A significant decrease was cited in turnover for an industry with employees who participated in a yearlong training program through a JSP Grant. Overall turnover was 13.4% at the industry. After the training program where 132 employees voluntarily participated... the turnover for that specific group of employees at this industry was just 2.3%!
- "We have enrolled team members from all levels of the hierarchy and they are now speaking the same language and recognizing different behaviors up and down the leadership chain."
- "11 employees achieved Lean Six Sigma Green Belt status this year.

This status will help the hourly employees promote to the highest pay level in their respective categories."

- From a participant in that same Greenbelt Training: "...The best part of the training was seeing how all of the teams had support of their projects members and management. We all participated and that was team building at its best."
- "...The training we were able to accomplish through the JSP has helped us to provide standardization and consistency to our organization."
- At one local manufacturing industry, internal positions were filled because of the training initiated during a JSP program. 21 employees received the skills to fill higher level positions and were promoted at least one level

toward Lead or to a Supervisory level. 3 employees were promoted from an Operations level to a Trainer, and 53 employees progressed to the next level of operations – resulting in an increase in wages and employment retention. Many promoted from direct labor to support labor.

- Productivity outcomes from a yearlong training program focused on teamwork, communications, and On the Job training included reducing scrap by 48%.

If you have areas that you believe training will have a positive affect or need some attention... call Beth Laszlo at The Center of Business and Industry Services (509) 793-2425.

CBIS... Your Partner in Workforce Training!



Moses Lake Advisor Cont.

SBDC, said these client testimonials echo what Peterson's colleagues within the network say about him.

"Probably the key word here is commitment," Fladland said. "He's committed to his clients and to the small business community, as well as to the SBDC network and our mission."

Advisors draw on depth of colleagues statewide

Fladland said Peterson's talents shine bright in a constellation of fellow SBDC business advisors who assisted more than 2,655 clients in 2015. Those clients reported that SBDC advising helped them secure more than \$42.5 million in financing and save or create more than 1,000 jobs.

The Washington SBDC network includes more than two dozen SBDC advisors and two international trade specialists in communities across the state who work with small business owners who want to start, grow or transition businesses. The Washington SBDC (<http://www.wsbdc.org>) is supported by Washington State University and the U.S. Small Business Administration and receives additional support from local institutions of higher education and economic development.

Peterson's work in Moses Lake is supported by the Grant County Economic Development Council (EDC), but he is also available to meet with clients from Adams and Lincoln counties. In addition, Washington SBDC business advisors collaborate frequently on behalf of their clients, ensuring that every SBDC client has access to the entire network's depth and breadth of expertise, no matter where they live.

Helping develop new markets

Jonathan Smith, former head of the Grant County EDC and president of the Yakima County Development Association, said Peterson is always looking for ways to support and bolster the small business community in rural eastern Washington. In 2008, he said, Peterson was the driving force behind a conference for business owners in Grant County that included representatives of Google and Intuit.

More recently, Peterson spearheaded an effort to develop trade relationships between business owners in eastern Washington and South Korea. In late April, he and SBDC colleague Vern Jenkins, an international trade specialist, were part of a trade mission to Gunpo, South Korea, sponsored by the SBDC and the Grant County EDC.

"The great thing about exporting, especially in rural areas, is that businesses are finding new markets or new customers outside the U.S., but the jobs are staying here," Peterson said.

Growing with his community

A graduate of the University of North Dakota, Peterson started working at a national chain drugstore just out of college and became manager of the Pay 'n Save in Moses Lake in 1988. He left the corporate world after 26 years in management positions at Pay 'n Save, Payless and Rite Aid where his responsibilities included strategic planning, marketing in rural and urban areas and personnel policies.

He joined the SBDC in 2004 and began advising small business owners who already knew him as a familiar face at Chamber of Commerce functions. The



transition took some getting used to, Peterson said, but has been worth it.

"I didn't realize how much fun it would be because we work with so many different people with different ideas," he said. "Over the years, I've found that there are a ton of brilliant people walking around our community."

He said he learned early on not to make his own prediction about whether a client was going to succeed or not: "I don't prejudge," he said. "I take the journey with them."

Peterson lives in Moses Lake with his wife, Cindy, and has two adult children, Troy and Mackenzie, as well as a son-in-law, Jon, and a grandson, Teddy.



Quality of Life Cont.

Park and the art museum, he says, plus great ball parks that have hosted the Babe Ruth youth baseball world series three times. There are soccer fields and parks with boat launches and some with picnic shelters that are very popular. There are sixteen playgrounds and the skateboard park. And the city just added a dog park which is, according to Griggs, a safe place for dogs to socialize and get some exercise.

Griggs says economic development such as SGL coming to Moses Lake has "absolutely" helped with the quality of life there. The growth in population allows the city to qualify for more grants than they could before because some are dependent on demographics. Also there are more people to volunteer to be coaches or officials in youth programs.

"The desert has a unique beauty," Griggs says. And there are "wide open spaces and incredible waterways" available to residents. He says there are two places residents and visitors may not know about one being the Japanese Garden. "It's a unique facility," Griggs says. Because it's next to a wetland, a visitor can forget they are in downtown Moses Lake, Griggs explains. He also says a lot of people don't know about the Moses Lake Museum and Art Center.

For Peggy Nevsimal, Chamber Manager at the Grand Coulee Dam Area Chamber of Commerce, the "pros" of being an area with small towns are the "unlimited open spaces and to be outside." The spring, summer, and fall are lovely, Nevsimal says. "We all know each other and have a good neighbor support system," she adds. "Love the no traffic, wide open spaces," she says. "It's a kinder, gentler world."

The cons are the struggles of living in an area where to get what you want, you often have to travel to Moses Lake, Wenatchee, or Spokane. The total population of the Grand Coulee Dam area is about 4,000, according to Nevsimal, spread over four towns that each has

their own mayor, city council and struggle with having their own identity. The four towns, Electric City, Coulee Dam, Grand Coulee, and Elmer City, are spread over four counties, also. The town of Coulee Dam itself is in three counties. Also, since the biggest employer is the Bureau of Reclamation, the towns also have to deal with the Federal government.

Nevsimal says each town tries to improve their parks but they also need "beautification" of their main streets.

The biggest draw, Nevsimal says, is the two lakes: Roosevelt and Banks Lakes that have year-round fishing. Also in winter, there are opportunities to spot eagles in the area.

In May there is the Colorama Rodeo which this year is celebrating its 60th year. And, Nevsimal says, on the Fourth of July, 15,000 people will visit the area for the fireworks show that are shot off the top of Grand Coulee Dam. "Definitely a sold-out town," she says.

Tim Snead, City Administrator for the City of Quincy, says quality of life has to do with "good infrastructure" such as water, sewer and roads. Also, Snead says, a good police department so the "community feels safe."

"We've been blessed with revenue," Snead adds, because of the data centers built in the city. That has allowed the city to enlarge parks, build a new library, and there are plans for a new recreation center for the youth. Also, the city is providing School Resource Officers to schools and a gang resistance program.

Quincy, Snead says, has a tradition of community volunteerism to help with beautification and youth sports. "It's just a neat community," he adds. "People step up and provide a neat quality of life in Quincy."

"What I like is how diversified we are," Snead adds. The primary economic driver is still agriculture, he explains, but now

there's high tech, too. "Where agriculture meets technology," he says.

Snead adds that Grant County has lots of opportunity for hunting and fishing and more freshwater shoreline than any other county in the state.

Shuford of the Grant County Tourism Board says quality of life "means the same thing to the whole county" and that's growth and prosperity, employment, good schools for children, and the natural surroundings. She adds that the weather adds to the quality of life.

"Recreation is huge," Shuford adds. "We have everything here. Mother nature has been very good to us."

Shuford says that there are fifteen golf courses in Grant County, eleven wineries, and two breweries. And "we have great people," here she says.

The Tourism Board, which Shuford has been on since 2006, uses the revenue from the motel/hotel tax to advertise Grant County to bring in visitors. The board is also providing funds for information kiosks about the county. They are installing two per year. This year they want one in the Grand Coulee area and at the Grant County Fairgrounds. They also produce a tourism book.

Non-profits can ask the Tourism Board for grants money, Shuford says. The grants usually total \$40,000. This helps local communities to advertise their events and get more people to them. "The arts are huge for people in Grant County," she says, and that "recreation has a huge impact to the county."

Shuford says economic diversification is good so there is the tax base to make improvements to the quality of life in the county. "I think quality of life is important. If you don't have that, what do you have?"



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