

Womack puts Copies & Fax on the market

Health issues prompt owner's decision to sell

By Erick Bengel
Cannon Beach Gazette

Jeff Womack, who has co-owned Copies & Fax located at 171 Sunset Boulevard, with his wife Gladys Womack for 19 years, has put the business up for sale and is looking to hand it off to "the first guy that's got money," he said.

He has listed the business — which mainly deals in printing, shipping and other business services — with Jeff Etchison, a realtor with Duane Johnson Real Estate. Jeff Womack is aiming to get \$100,000, which includes about \$70,000 for the equipment (printers, copiers, computers, a paper cutter, etc.).

It would be nice, he said, if the buyer is "somebody that's really established in town..."

'Life's too short'

The decision came about because of a recent medical emergency.

On Jan. 29, Jeff Womack almost died of a heart blockage, he said. He had to be revived 12 times through 12 rounds of CPR and spent time at Providence Seaside Hospital, and then at Providence St. Vincent Medical Center in Portland.



Jeff Womack, owner of Copies & Fax, conducts a transaction with customer Kristi Mathena, of East Wenatchee, Wash. Womack and his wife, Gladys, have owned the business for 19 years.

ERICK BENDEL PHOTO

"I'm still recovering from that," he said, adding that he still feels weak, "but I'm back to work."

That near-death experience, he said, "kind of opened my eyes that maybe it's time for someone else to have fun here," and made him realize that "life's too short to work the rest of my life like this."

Courtland Carrier, executive director of the Cannon Beach Chamber of Com-

merce, said he is always disappointed when a business is put up for sale because of the owners' health issues. "I'm really sad to see that happening," he said.

Asked if he's looking forward to leaving the business, Jeff Womack replied, "Some days yes, some days no."

"When you've been doing something this long, some days you're tired of it and want no part of it.

Some days you miss it," he added. "It's kind of a quandary, I guess, for me, but I'll figure it out. It'll be nice not to work."

'A necessary business'

Copies & Fax opened in 1989, and, when he bought the business, Jeff Womack became the fourth owner. He has people on call who occasionally help him out with the business "if he gets in a jam," but he has no employees.

Though Jeff Womack said he isn't sure what's next for him, he said he and his wife may travel together. Gladys Womack, who is retired, is certainly on board with his decision; she is "already making a list of stuff I've got to do around the house."

In addition, Jeff Womack said he will remain the board president of the Tolovana Arts Colony. He is still a Cannon Beach

Chamber of Commerce board member.

"We wish Jeff well, and, you know, it's a very good service for Cannon Beach," said Chris James, a lawyer based in Portland who owns shares in the corporation that owns the building and property. "We've been happy to have Copies & Fax in the building."

"It's a necessary business, I think, for our little town here," Jeff Womack said.

Longtime Cannon Beach candy company offering 'Schwiet' franchises

By Mike Williams
EO Media Group

A longtime city sweet spot took its business model nationwide in 2014 by offering franchises.

Schwietert's Cones & Candy has five solid leads to open stores, owner Jeff Schwietert said.

"It's a big financial commitment," he said. "It takes people awhile to get all that in order."

Being the new franchise kid on the block can be tough, he said. There are so many companies for prospective owners to choose from.

"Once we get a few franchises off the ground we'll be ready to run," he said. "Those first few will be the hardest for us."

It's basically like starting a whole new business, he said. It has to have its own legal framework. Schwietert chose to get some help with taking the business, known as The Picnic Basket for 28 years, beyond the Oregon coast.

He worked with Francorp of Chicago to get the franchising business structured. There's a lot to know.

Schwietert's abides by federal franchising guidelines. Some states, including Washington, Oregon and California, require separate registration and approval before franchises



Jeff Schwietert hopes to transplant the cones and candy business model beyond the North Coast by selling franchises.

MIKE WILLIAMS PHOTO

can be sold there. It takes a little more finesse to get legal in those states, Schwietert said.

They're ready to go in all but 20 states.

"Eventually we'll be legal in all states," he said.

The company is registered in Northwest states and California.

"In franchising, you want to focus on concentric circles of growth," Schwietert said. "Although we're getting lots of interest from California. We think it will do really well there."

He's excited about going into more urban areas that are less susceptible to the seasonal swings the North Coast experiences.

Re-imagining The Picnic Basket

Schwietert brought in a designer to give the franchises a uniform, high-end look. The interiors will have cotton candy clouds and gumball pillars. There will be icicles around the ice cream cases.

"It will be very bright and exciting," he said. "[It will be] a place people will want to return to. More corporate than the current store, but still our own."

The Cannon Beach store will eventually get the same makeover.

The stores will be 3,000- to 5,000-square-foot. The company may offer smaller stores even-

tually, but the size is part of the attraction, Schwietert said.

Think Mr. Magorium's Wonder Emporium except with candy.

The right fit

The company needs the right franchisee for



Manager Ryan Eckstrom dips a foam cake in milk chocolate.

MIKE WILLIAMS PHOTO

mindful. You've got to love kids and family."

Franchisees will spend six to eight weeks training at Cannon Beach before opening their own stores.

Quality control

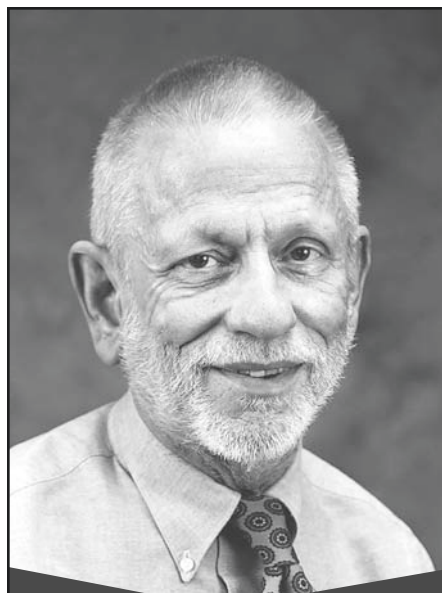
Once a franchise is up and running, the company will keep track of the fledgling business.

"We live in a great age in a way," Schwietert said. "We'll have cameras installed in the stores that I can look at."

Once a franchise is operational, the business will get quarterly visit from a corporate representative, plus they submit regular reports on machine maintenance and cleaning.

"We'll have a lot of ability to make sure standards are maintained," he said. "You want to make sure the customer gets the same experience wherever they go. We're not going into this half-heartedly."

For franchise information: Call Trevor Weber, director of franchising, 503-436-1470.



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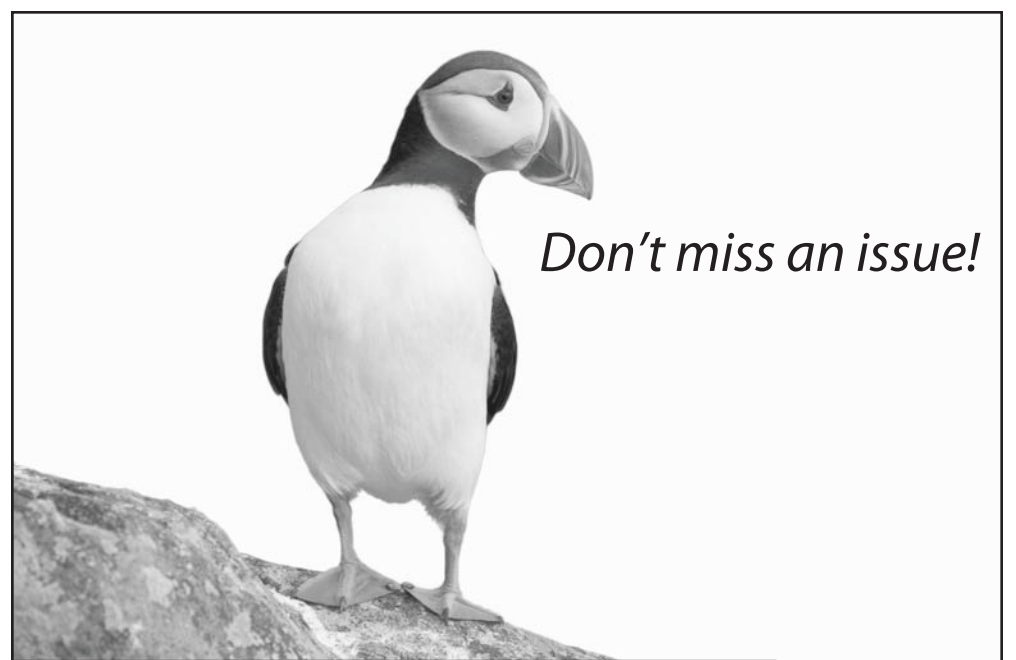
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