



Finding the Road to Recovery

My 14 year old son Gabe and I were walking Bosco, our chocolate brown standard poodle pup, the other morning and he asked me, "When will the economy be getting better and how will we know when it's happening?" As we walked through the cold morning mist, I reflected on the depth of his question. We came upon a subdivision near our home in West Linn that had been developed over 2 years ago with the streets, utilities and infrastructure for 16 new homes that had been sitting dormant since the downturn in the economy. As we walked and kicked stones across the vacant streets, I thought long and hard about his question.

Having been in the building business for over 25 years, I know that a strong economy is based on a strong housing market. With housing and construction, comes new buyers and with them comes the stimulus for all the other market sectors from household furnishings, electronics, appliances, landscapers, plumbers, electricians, roofers and many other trades and industries that are stimulated by an upswing in the housing sector.

As I looked into his youthful eyes I realized that I knew exactly when the market would start breathing new life back into our economy. So I stopped in the middle of that desolate street, looked at Gabe, picked up a stick and through it across the street for the puppy to chase and said, "We will know that the economy is turning around when we see and smell the fresh cut wood rising from the foundations of these vacant lots." He looked back at me, smiled, paused and said, "Now I get it."

I arrived home last week and Gabe came out to greet me on the driveway with our puppy Bosco. He was excited and smiling from ear to ear and told me to follow him. We walked to the edge of our neighborhood and as we turned the last corner I saw why he was smiling. There at the edge of the vacant subdivision were the signs of a "new economy emerging."

Concrete trucks were roaring and tumbling the raw materials for the foundations to the new homes, carpenters were hammering away at the giant stacks of milled lumber

and there was laughter and promise in the air. My son looked at the glint in my eye and said, "It's turning now, isn't it dad!" I replied with a smile, "Yes son, it looks like we are on the road to recovery once again!"

So as the holidays fast approach, I would like to take a moment to wish for everyone a vision of the promise of a renewed economy and of better times ahead. A heartfelt thanks to all of you who have braved through the worst economic storm we have seen in decades. Thank you for your courage, strength, dedication and hope.

From our company and staff to all of yours, a healthy, prosperous and joyful new year in 2010. Peace, joy and good health to all in the days ahead. And know in your hearts that the signs of prosperity are on the faces of those carpenters hammering the boards of promise into the neighborhoods and commercial districts where we live and work.

Continued Success in 2010!

Jeffrey Weitz, President

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Jeffrey Weitz
President

Cell 503.358.7555
jw@NorthRimPDX.com

Happy Holidays!
503-525-1925

Matthew Schweitzer
Vice President

Cell 503.381.3134
Matt@NorthRimPDX.com



503.525.1925

819 SE Morrison Street, Suite 110 Portland, Oregon 97214

NorthRimPDX.com



Flowers By Dorcas

transplants itself into the bustling Hollywood District

For 25 years, Melinda Watzig has been designing floral arrangements for Flowers by Dorcas. And though her designs have always been unique and elegant and beautiful, she's never had a window to look out of for a little inspiration or even just a touch of natural light while she's designing.

But that's changed now.

In October, Watzig and her husband, Gerhard, moved Flowers by Dorcas from its longtime downtown Portland location to a new space in the heart of the city's Hollywood District. The new spot, in the built sustainable green K2 building at 4162 Northeast Sandy Boulevard, is roomier, more accessible and, yes, has more windows.

"This is the first time in 25 years that my wife has been able to look out a window while she's designing," says Gerhard Watzig. "We are totally thrilled with the openness and airiness of this building. This was definitely the right choice for the shop."

A full-service florist, Flowers by Dorcas specializes in unique fresh floral arrangements but also carries giftware, accessories, antiques and various handcrafted items. Watzig says the shop works with everyone from longtime individual customers to Fortune 500 companies. Flowers by Dorcas also provides flowers for special events, weddings and holiday celebrations.

Originally opened in 1948 in downtown Portland by the shop's namesake, Flowers by Dorcas was sold to new owners in the 1960s.



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Melinda Watzig joined the shop as a florist and designer in 1984. When the owners decided to retire in 2005, the Watzigs bought the business and kept a 60-year tradition alive.

"I think we're just really known in town and in the trade as the shop that has the most elegant and sophisticated arrangements," Gerhard says. "When you want to represent yourself well — or if you're in trouble — you go to Flowers by Dorcas."

He adds that Flowers by Dorcas is also known for its one-of-a-kind designs, courtesy of his wife.

"Our designs are very unique," he says. "We're not like some wire service where you order something from a book."

Although the shop was a familiar fixture downtown for more than six decades, Watzig says moving to the bustling Hollywood District was an opportunity not to be missed. Not only is there plenty of free parking and convenient access for deliveries, but the area has become livelier in recent years with new restaurants, shops and condominiums.

Throw in the fact that the Watzigs live in the nearby Roseway neighborhood and that loyal customers have followed the business across the river, and it's clear that Flowers by Dorcas has found itself a new home.

"It's vibrant here, it's neat and the logistics are a lot better for our business," Gerhard says. "We've had people from the neighborhood come in and welcome us and tell us that we're adding to the character of the neighborhood. It's really working out well." *By Jon Bell*

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