

# The BUSINESS Journal

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## The Bottom Line

### Nominations due for 1999 LUCI Awards

The deadline for nominations for the Business Journal's second annual LUCI Awards is approaching.

Nominations forms should be completed and returned to the Business Journal by Friday, June 25.

The program is designed to showcase women in business who are Leading Us in Commerce & Industry. It is endorsed by the Lake County Women's Coalition, Women's Business Exchange, Lake County Association for Home & Community Education and the American Business Women's Association.

Nomination materials are available from The Business Journal. Call Cassie Wagner at (847) 836-2400, ext. 13, fax (847) 836-9656 or e-mail biznews@businessjournalonline.com.

### Cardinal launching new Internet service

McGAW PARK — Cardinal Health Inc. recently announced the introduction of Cardinal ScriptNet Services, a collection of Internet-based services for retail pharmacies.

Cardinal will offer the new services exclusively to its customers, which comprise about 25 percent of America's 51,000 retail drug stores.

The first of these services, Leader Online, is a turnkey program that enables independent and chain pharmacies to establish their own Web sites that allow patients to interact with pharmacists.



Photo by Robin F. Pendergrast

Roy Miller, rear, owner of Dog 'n Suds in Ingleside, watches as employee Margie Strow serves up some root beer. Miller said seasonal businesses offer opportunities not available to year-round businesses.

## Summer businesses offer challenges, opportunities

By DANIEL RAMAGE  
The Business Journal

For most of us, summer means vacations and good times in general. Seasonal businesses, however, must follow the old adage "You have to make hay while the sun shines."

Roy Miller, owner of Dog 'n Suds in Ingleside, knows this well. His drive-in restaurant is open from mid-March to the end of October. During his busy season, Miller typically works 60-hour weeks, overseeing a seasonal staff of about 18 employees, mostly high-school age workers.

Although the work is seasonal, Miller finds employee loyalty to be high. Turnover is low — all of his employees from last year are returning this year — and job satisfaction appears to be a large part of that. That is by design, according to Miller. A former school band leader, Miller has experience deal-

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## Inside:

CEO Profile of Orren Pickell, owner of Orren Pickell Builders in Bannockburn  
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## Deregulation powers change

By DANIEL RAMAGE  
The Business Journal

WADSWORTH — Illinois is a pioneer in utility deregulation, so other states will be watching to see how it unfolds, according to representatives from three major utility companies.

Peter Larmon of Nicor, Frank Jiruska of ComEd and Terry Appenzeller of Ameritech addressed questions concerning utility deregulation during the Lake County Chamber of Commerce monthly Power Breakfast, hosted by Midlane Country Club in May.

"Illinois is on the front end. It's the only Midwest state to pass deregulation laws, so Illinois is ahead of the curve," Larmon said.

Illinois passed the deregulation proposal — House Bill 362 — late in 1997. The bill calls for a four-year phase-in of open access to utilities.

Existing utility providers are trying to define their new role in the marketplace. While competition is widely seen as being a benefit to consumers, providers are must change their perception of the marketplace to be competitive.

"Regulators tend to look at the future as a continuation of the past. We look at it as a convergence, a transformation, and we're asking ourselves 'What is our place?'" Appenzeller said.

Their place, according to Jiruska, is the same as any other company in a free enterprise system. He said the key point is that utilities are "not much different from any other business." ComEd will put that theory to the test soon, and businesses may give an

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## Orren Pickell

Owner,  
Orren Pickell Builders,  
Bannockburn

Age: 44

**Education:** Attended  
Bradley University,  
Peoria.

**Professional  
affiliations:**  
Homebuilders  
Association of Greater  
Chicago, Young  
Presidents Organization,  
TECH

**Hobbies:** Sailing

# CEO Profile

## Perspective plus pride equals peace

Builder says  
happiness is  
more than a  
business

By **DANIEL RAMAGE**  
*The Business Journal*

BANNOCKBURN — To Orren Pickell's way of thinking, the only thing that should be fried to a crisp is bacon. Burn-out is something he actively avoids.

Pickell, owner of Orren Pickell Builders, makes sure he takes time to enjoy himself and his family, achieving a perspective that leaves him more satisfied than he could be with business success alone.

"Most of my colleagues are burnt to crisp because their lives are unbalanced," Pickell said. "Success isn't business, it's being happy."

He knows plenty about both success and happiness. Although he is only 44, Pickell's company turns 25 next year, marking a quarter century of solid growth and widespread industry recognition. The happiness comes from doing a job he loves.

"I always liked building things. I built my first house when I was 20, and I worked 7 days a week, 12 hours a day. It was like going to an amusement park to me. I still have that passion," Pickell said.

What has changed since the early days, however, is that Pickell has developed other passions as well. His Elden 54 sailboat — named Jessie, after his mother — is one of them.

Pickell spends between 18 and 20 weeks each year sailing, a sport he fell in love with during a family vacation. He has sailed extensively along the eastern seaboard and the Caribbean, and once even captained a halibut boat in Alaska.

He craves the adventure, but even more he craves the time it gives him to spend with family.

"(Sailing) is one of the greatest things I can think of. We have three meals a day at the table with the family, we go hiking and exploring. I love the adventure and the time to focus on what's really important to me," Pickell said.

Adventurers have provided inspiration in Pickell's life. He particularly admires Sir Ernest Shackleton, an Antarctic explorer who led a failed expedition to the South Pole in 1914. Shackleton's boat was lost to the ice floes, stranding himself and his crew in a desolate location hundreds of miles from help. Shackleton braved treacherous seas in an open boat to bring help, eventually saving his entire crew against



incredible odds.

Pickell admires Shackleton's leadership, and draws a parallel between a recent attempt to recreate Shackleton's journey and business. The modern expedition failed, and Pickell believes he knows why.

"You'll make it if you have to, and with (the recent expedition) their lives didn't depend on it. That's the key," Pickell said.

That attitude sustained Pickell in the early years. Pickell's youth put him at a credibility disadvantage — one customer in the early days actually told him he needed a good spanking after he disagreed with Pickell on the placement of a thermostat — but he understood that respect is never granted overnight.

"You have to earn respect and credibility. Once you've got them people don't question you much unless you start talking about things you don't know," Pickell said.

One thing Pickell does know is how to get the most out of his employees and keep them happy at the same time. The company recently was named one of the eight best builders in the country to work for by Builder, the magazine of the National Association of Homebuilders. The magazine calls Pickell an engineer,

"Not of things, but of teams of people."

"I decided 12 years ago to build a team, and it's the best thing I ever did. I try to take the stress out and I try to let people do what they do. We've attempted to build a culture of inordinate pride," Pickell said.

His philosophy has been validated by literally hundreds of building awards. The company also has been featured in numerous publications, including the New York Times.

Part of the reason for this success is Pickell's perspective on the business. He considers it an honor that people choose him to build their homes because it is such a personal venture. He realizes that while building or remodeling he is entering the customer's comfort zone, so he has tried to make the process timely and entertaining.

The wisdom of his approach is born out by the bottom line, but despite his business success, Pickell has a vision of success completely removed from his occupation.

"I feel I can top it with my children," Pickell said.

**"I try to take the  
stress out (of the job)  
and let people do  
what they do."**

**Orren Pickell,  
Orren Pickell Builders**