

SEATTLE BUSINESS
DECEMBER 2017
2017 FAMILY BUSINESS AWARDS
SEATTLE ARENA
BIKE COMMUTERS

EXEC Q+A
EXPEDIA'S NEW CEO
LAYS OUT HIS PLAN

TRANSPORTATION
BIKE COMMUTERS WANT
MORE EMPLOYER SUPPORT

BRIGHT IDEA
'PLIMP' AIRSHIP JOINS
THE DRONE PARADE

Seattle Business

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**2017
FAMILY
BUSINESS
AWARDS**
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**IF WE
BUILD IT,
WILL
THEY
COME
?**

ART THIEL
WEIGHS SEATTLE'S
COMPETING ARENA
OPTIONS FOR
WINNING BACK
THE NBA.





WINNER

WOODS COFFEE

Location: Lynden

WES AND DIANE HERMAN gave a challenge 15 years ago to their four home-schooled teenagers: Create a business plan that eventually supplied the grounds for Woods Coffee. “We wanted to teach them how to start a business,” says CEO Wes Herman. Three of the adult children work in the company, while the fourth is “our insurance agent,” Herman says. In 2002, Woods opened the first shop in Lynden, and after six months, a second store there. Now the company has 19 locations: 15 in Whatcom County, two in Skagit, one in King and one in British Columbia. Herman says family operators keep best practices in mind, from quality control of ingredients to belief in its more than 250 employees through supportive benefits. The company has a 401(k) plan, health care coverage at 30-plus hours and advancement oppor-

tunities. Woods roasts its own coffee in Bellingham and operates a scratch bakery, making goods daily and delivering fresh to stores. Each warmly decorated location caters to what Herman describes as “the relationship aspect around coffee.” The company contributes to numerous charities and schools, including Western Washington University. For each bag of WWU Viking Blend sold, \$1 goes to scholarships. Community giving centers on groups that fight human trafficking, support foster children, and help at-risk and low-income students. This year, Woods is collecting \$2 on every bag sold of its Anniversary Blend to donate to charities. Customers in another program can load a gift card for drinks ordered by police officers. Woods Coffee’s mission statement puts it simply: “To serve others, make a difference and have fun.” ■

SERVING THE COMMUNITY.
Wes and Diane Herman, center, run Woods Coffee with their children, Taylor Herman, far left, Connor Herman, gray jacket, and Kelly Spiker, second from right.