

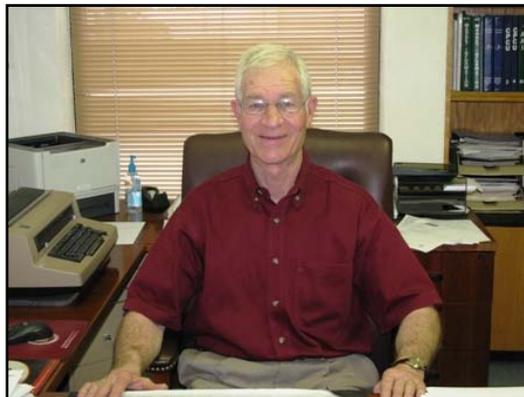
The Holt Insurance Agency

The latest installment of The Community Partner Road Trip hardly qualifies as a road trip at all. On this occasion, the road crew made the most of a cold and rainy afternoon to take the short walk across the street to visit our friends at The Holt Insurance Agency. While Leanna Holt and Mike Doughty were predictably reluctant to share their own successes, they were each eager to talk about the accomplishments of the other, and their office staff, as well.



With the help of her sister, Mavis Hansing, Leanna founded the business in 1962. In an era that saw relatively few women working outside the home, a young woman decided to capture the entrepreneurial spirit and venture out on her own. With a self-motivated attitude like that, it shouldn't surprise us that not only did she start the business, but a half-century later, she has the agency thriving and now celebrating 50 years of service to North Central Oklahoma. And don't overlook the family connection. Not only was the agency started with the help of family, but Leanna is quick to note that the amount of time spent together has made the entire staff become part of her family.

Mike arrived in the insurance business in a much different manner. After graduating from OSU, he and wife Sherrie arrived in Perry in 1971 and he began what was planned to be a long career as a teacher and coach. That career lasted nine years before his summer job of selling life insurance became his full-time occupation. And no biography of Mike is complete without applauding his 26 years of service to The Oklahoma National Guard, ending in 1996 with his retirement as Command Sergeant Major of the 45th Infantry Brigade. Hooah!



While each of the two agents have achieved various professional standards that are signified by what appears to be a jumbled alphabet behind their names, Mike was quick to emphasize that the CPCU following Leanna's name represented the highest designation that an insurance agent can achieve, and that few agents ever reach that designation. Dare we mention that self-motivated attitude again?

One of the interesting things we learned during our visit involved the advantages and disadvantages of being an independent agent as opposed to a captive agent. As an independent agency, The Holt Insurance Agency has the ability to compare coverage and rates from various insurance companies to best serve the individual customer's needs. Unfortunately, this means the staff must stay familiar with each of those various companies' guidelines and computer automation.

With a company history that spans the past 50 years, one would presume that a number of changes have occurred in the insurance industry, and one would be correct. When asked, Leanna immediately noted that their customers are much more aware of the need for adequate insurance than when the agency started in 1962. Mike added that the aforementioned computer automation has simplified the daily lives of agents, but has also been the catalyst for acquiring and generating much more information than in years past.

Mike stated that one of the great difficulties that he and Leanna face is educating the public of the need to increase insurance coverage as their assets grow. And with a clientele of about 1,300 individuals and families, and another 300 business concerns, that's a lot of educating. Mike added that with the ever-increasing diversification of that clientele, it's a challenge to stay abreast of the increasing insurance coverage needs.

The Holt Insurance Agency has always been willing to donate money and time to worthwhile causes in the community. Leanna and Mike have taken active roles, often in a leadership capacity, in local organizations such as The Chamber of Commerce, Mainstreet of Perry and Lion's Club. Mike remains very active as the public address announcer at all high school baseball games, and Leanna continues to work tirelessly with her church. And rarely does an event take place that you don't see at least one of them in attendance, supporting their local community.

Leanna emphasized on more than one occasion during our visit, that much of the Agency's success is attributable to its office staff. This group, with a combined 57 years experience at the Agency, genuinely cares about the welfare of their customers. While Leanna and Mike may be reluctant to discuss themselves, they are both eager to heap praise on Donna Whitehorn, Sharlott Davis, Nancy Wells and Sherrie Doughty. And if you're wondering, we noticed some more of those jumbled alphabet professional designations following those names, as well.



We could keep rambling, but as you might guess, we'll never be able to completely share the rich history of a company that's been serving this community for so long. One thing that we can share is how obvious it becomes that the staff of The Holt Insurance Agency has a genuine appreciation for their customers, their fellow staff members, and most notably, the community in which they live.



If you'd like the Road Crew to visit your business, please contact Yvette Dow at y.dow@bankfbt.com.