

Jerry Horne: Economic Expert, Or Corporate Crook?

By Hanna Greenwood, Staff Writer

TWIN PEAKS, WA – Jerry Horne is man who's quick to quip, supremely self-assured and prone to pontification. In his former position at Horne Industries, he was primarily responsible for wooing foreign investors and initiating joint business ventures overseas – as a result, he has quite the diverse palate for exotic foods and a uniquely global fashion sense. Rather than shying away from his eccentricities, Mr. Horne embraces them proudly, touting them as one more reason why his experience as world-traveler and corporate go-getter will be boons to the town of Twin Peaks should he win the upcoming mayoral race.

But for all the emphasis Mr. Horne places on his corporate background and his campaign's focus on job creation, the extent of his interest in the business world remains somewhat unknown and his motives murky. His campaign manager, Catherine Martell, is the primary force behind the proposed Ghostwood development, a plan that Mr. Horne has repeatedly backed in his stump speeches. This potential conflict of interest has prompted many to wonder whether Mr. Horne has a financial stake in the project himself, though he maintains that he does not.

Even if Mr. Horne is taken at his word in regards to his stake in any ongoing development relating to Ghostwood Forest, a few questions remain regarding his recent departure from the floundering Horne Industries, not to mention the less than savory practices the company employed under his watch. When his brother Benjamin Horne stepped down as CEO of Horne Industries earlier this month, he nominated local business whiz Jack Wheeler as his replacement instead of anointing his younger brother to replace him. At the time, Jerry Horne told the Gazette that his



brother “made a grievous error in judgment,” and asserted that “the new Horne Industries is bad for business.” Mr. Horne contends that his departure was due to the disloyalty of his brother and the board of directors, and that the business would suffer without his steady hand.

Some wonder, however, if the departure of the Horne brothers was a byproduct of questionable behavior on their part, if not illicit business deals conducted on the side. Though nothing has ever been proven, there have long been rumors that both brothers frequented an establishment called One Eyed Jack's across the Canadian border, a house of ill repute with known ties to the drug trade here in Twin Peaks. Some even assert that the Hornes had ownership stake in the brothel, at least until recently when Horne Industries hit hard times.

Hearsay like this won't convict Jerry Horne in a court of law, but in the court of public opinion, it does not bode well for the mayoral candidate. Is Mr. Horne just an overzealous businessman who fell prey to some bad influences along the way, or is he an amoral opportunist who'd support any measure so long as it winds up lining his pockets? Twin Peaks voters will have to decide what matters more – letting Jerry Horne advocate for new jobs no matter the cost, or getting to the bottom of how Mr. Horne benefits from creating them in the first place.