

Family, faith bind JTM

Tony Maas heads the food business founded by his father in 1960

The Business Courier
Friday May 27, 2011

Tony Maas knows the challenges and the rewards of being part of a family business. As president and CEO of JTM Food Group, one of the largest family-owned businesses in the region, Maas goes to work every day with three brothers, his children, plus nieces and nephews. The business is always a topic of conversation, whether it's in the office or at home.

"It is 24/7, but we love that," Maas said. "It is who you are."

His father, Jack Maas Sr., founded the Harrison-based company in 1960, starting it as a butcher shop and growing the business into a processor of pre-cooked foods and baked items for retail and institutional markets. JTM now employs 350 people and has targeted revenue of \$150 million by 2015.

Retail sales make up about 10 percent of the company's revenue, with large portions of its business coming from the U.S. military, schools and restaurants.

"The idea is to stay close to family for life. This is a great way to stay close to my siblings, work as a team and be successful in business, as well as in life," Maas said.

As more family members enter the business, Maas said the plan is to keep JTM a family-owned company.

"None of us has worked for anybody else our entire lives," Maas said.

Not enough families in the United States hold the dream of owning and operating a family business, Maas said, for fear of jealousy and selfishness. There are going to be disagreements and arguments, he said, but that's part of working with family.

"You spend more time working than anything else," Maas said. "It's not just about making money, it's about making a difference in the lives of people, your family and the community around you."

Q: Why do you have the career you have?
I have this career because work ethic and faith were instilled in me from my parents and grandparents.

Q: What is the most difficult aspect of your job?
The most difficult aspect is balancing plant productivity with sales opportunities.

Q: What advice would you give a new boss?
Be a servant leader. For those who work with you, have their best interest in mind always but never at the expense of what is in the best interest of the entire company!

Q: What's your definition of a miserable, unsatisfying life?
Slothful, lazy, unproductive and not living for a higher purpose, which is living according to God's plan.

Q: What is your favorite vacation spot?

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My favorite vacation is boating with family and friends at Brookville Lake and snow skiing in Colorado with family.

Q: Describe your perfect life.

My perfect life is being obedient to God's plan for my life and living his commandments.

Q: You've just been given \$100,000 to donate to charity. Which and why?

I would donate the money to Ruah Woods because this ministry focuses on building the sacrament of marriage, which builds family in God's true order.

Q: What is the best book you've ever read?

The Bible.

Q: What trait do you most value in your friends?

Godliness and loyalty.

Tom Demeropolis