



Robert Kyne is spending a lot more time in his pickup than on the ski slopes these days

Kyne Landscaping, Inc. Building A Future In Landscaping

When Robert Kyne started his company, Kyne Landscaping, Inc., in 2001, he wasn't quite sure what to expect, but he relied on advice from other landscapers in the Clark County area of Southwest Washington to provide him with counsel and he got it in spades.

"I've found that other landscapers here are always more than willing to help, share equipment and share their knowledge," he said. "I continue to learn better ways to run my business through my association with these guys. They are my colleagues and friends."

Kyne built his professional relationships and continues to maintain them through his activity with WALP, where he serves as secretary of the Southwest Washington Chapter.

Fresh out of the University of Montana with a business degree specializing in information systems, Kyne found employment opportunities slim during the dot.com bust at the time. He needed some way to pay the bills and found employment with a home builder doing landscaping on new homes.

Kyne noted, "I had spent some as a kid mowing lawns so I had some experience. I started by doing one home and ended up doing all of his projects. It was fortunate for

me that I had hooked up with one of the best people around."

A native of Chicago, Kyne admitted he came to Montana because of his love of skiing and picked the Vancouver area because both the employment outlook and the prospects for skiing had been good.

He says was also fortunate to start out with a good crew initially. "My head guys were all brothers and have been with me since I started. They are in charge on the job and we learned together. I really like the consistency of having them around and my clients all like to build trust relationships with my employees."

His employee count varies between three and a dozen depending upon the time of year.

When asked about his business philosophy, he cites some wisdom his dad gave him early on that you can have price, service, and quality but not all three. "We go for quality and service and that means we shoot for the high-end projects," he said. "All the work we do is custom, no production home builders and we do a lot of remodels."

When asked what his biggest challenges have been in building his business, he cites the inconsistency of the fledgling enterprise, the "feast or famine" cycles. According to Kyne, it necessitates being quick and flexible and you need to go with the flow or it will stress you out.

One of the recent projects he has been most proud of is the Taylor residence. It was a 2-1/2 acre piece of property from a landscape design by Cark Matschek. (See accompanying photos.) One of the joys of doing the project was working with Matschek on the installation.

While he admits to being frustrated at the number of hours he is putting into the business, he also is looking forward to building and diversifying Kyne Landscaping.

In addition to his involvement with the Washington Association of Landscape Professionals, Robert is also active in the Building Industry Association. He is also a supporter of Young Life and spends lots of time with "Courts for Kids," a charity that builds sport courts for kids in developing nations. He recently spent time working on a project for kids in Costa Rica.

What gives him satisfaction on the job? "I really enjoy looking at the finished project. It's a tangible result that you can actually see," he said. "And, I like getting the work and having the owner commit to our firm to do the project. It's a great feeling."

If a good attitude, pride in quality, and hard work are indications of future success, Robert Kyne is on the right track.

Kyne Landscaping created this attractive entry area for the Taylor Residence



A sweeping lawn area provides a feeling of openness to the Taylor property



The Taylor's courtyard entry area features creative use of stone set amidst mature trees

