

"WHITEHEAD INSURANCE SPOTLIGHT"

Whitehead Insurance

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auto insurance."

The company dropped its other insurance coverage in the mid-1980s and has specialized in high-risk auto ever since.

But a year ago Whitehead teamed up with the Safeco carrier and now offers a line of good and preferred coverage for drivers as well, she noted.

"I'm happy with what we're doing now," said Teske. "We're very specialized and we know what we're doing very well. I like it that way, being an expert in one field. I'd rather do that than have a little knowledge in a bunch of areas."

Being a specialist in high-risk coverage has helped, she noted, by building a reputation as the place to go when you're having a hard time getting coverage.

"The high-risk coverage is for people who have maybe had license suspensions, tickets, accidents or have never had insurance," she said. "They need a place to go for coverage, and that's what we're good at."

"Being an independent we're not locked in with one carrier. We represent about five companies, so when we're giving price quotes we can plug in the information and see what all those companies have and give people the best price we can get."

Whitehead's current carriers are Safeco, Viking, Dairyland, GMAC, FIC and Sagamore, she said.

"When someone calls and wants to



Sisters Helen Teske and Stella Whitehead-Hubbard now run the agency started by their parents 50 years ago. Their mother, Joan, still helps out at the Yakima office.

know what we can do for them, we run their information through a program that gives comparative rates, so we can see all the companies and know their rates and pick the best," she said.

The family connection is still a key to the company, she is quick to point out. Besides working with her sister and having their mother help out, Teske also puts her teenagers (Julia and Devin) to work at times helping with the electronic scanning and filing.

And the family feeling goes beyond the family itself, she stresses.

"We have some long-term employees here. There are five of us and it just feels like a family. It's a great work environment.

"I love the fact that I have complete confidence in the staff. They know what they're doing. I don't have to look over their shoulder every moment wondering what's going on. I have every confidence they're doing an excellent job."

The agency is at 611 N. First St. in Yakima.

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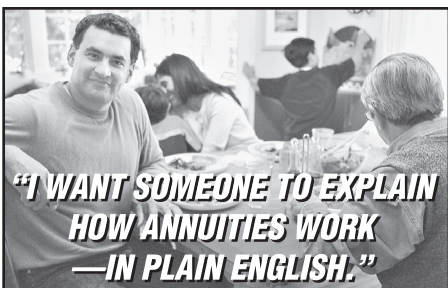
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