

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Happy 75th Anniversary, Pella Engraving Company!

In 1934, Pella Engraving Company (PEC), an engraving shop for a local newspaper (*The Pella Chronicle*), became an independent company. PEC continued to engrave the letterpress printing dies that were an integral part of the newspaper printing press process and expanded their business to serve the prepress needs for numerous newspapers and agencies in Pella and its surrounding communities.

In the late 1930s, Ed Dupree and Duco Zylstra, who had worked for The Pella Chronicle before leaving to serve in World War II, joined PEC. After running the company as partners for several years, they invited another *Pella Chronicle* alum, John Vroom, to become a partner.

Changes in the printing industry and new technologies soon led to the expansion of PEC services. By the 1960s, the company also provided other aspects of the prepress trade, including preparing color separations, stripping together ads, and making negatives. PEC became known not only for its quality craftsmanship, but also for its commitment to customer satisfaction.

In 1976, Bruce Van Wyk joined the PEC team. Eight years later, as a junior in high school, John Vroom's son Jeff joined the company. By this time, Ed and Duco were transitioning leadership of the company solely to John.

John continued to run the company with the same vision that he, Ed, Duco displayed when building the company in the 1930s and 40s. John recognized that Bruce and Jeff had the same drive to serve customer needs and a commitment to quality. By 1990, the three men had formed a new partnership to lead PEC.

When letterpress printing was overtaken by offset printing as the industry standard, John worked with Bruce and Jeff to lead the company into new territory. Offset printing allowed many of the services printers outsourced to PEC to be done in-house. John, Jeff, and Bruce took the processes they knew well a step further and added the machines and capability necessary to apply a finish coat. Now, PEC was capable of making plaques, awards, and signage as well as letterpress dies.

So, in the 1990's, as many of the more than 400 engraving companies across the country were closing their doors, Bruce and Jeff helped continued to focus PEC on the plaque-making business. PEC changed marketing strategies and targeted a new customer base. The ability to adapt to customers' changing needs kept PEC a viable and successful business.

In 2000, John Vroom retired, leaving the company in the capable hands of Jeff and Bruce, who have captained the company for nine years.

Today, Pella Engraving Company is one of only 150 engravers in the country. The original staff of 3—Ed, Duco, and John—has grown to a staff of 14 people dedicated to their crafts and focused on quality and service. The company now has customers across the country and around the world.

“Pella Engraving has been able to change as technology has dictated major shifts in our customers’ needs,” said Bruce. “These needs could not possibly have been anticipated when Ed and Duco started the company, and that really puts into perspective how important it is to have the ability to adapt.”

But some things at PEC will remain constant.

“The commitment to customers and quality are two principals we’ve inherited from Ed and Duco, and they are two things that will never change,” said Jeff. “We have been extremely blessed over the past 75 years to have a good staff and wonderful customers, and because of those people, we can look forward to many more years in the awards and engraving business.”

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