

# Tews family directs Graphix Products

Daily Herald, June 13, 2003



Brothers Chris, Henry and Jason Tews know their mother is boss. When they arrive at work, the men don't call Diane Tews "mom." They call her Diane, as family is left at the front door when running their growing company, Graphix Products Inc. of West Chicago.

Diane Tews serves as president of the high-end commercial printing company she started with her husband, Henry, in the garage of their Glen Ellyn home in 1971.

Henry Tews Sr. built Graphix into a million-dollar company and then left it to his wife and children in 1990 so he could start a half-way house for alcoholics.

Three of Henry Tews' five children grabbed a firm hold of the West Chicago company that expanded for the fourth time about three years ago to its current location at 399 Wegner Drive.

Brochures, reports, posters and other offset printing account for about half of the Graphix's business. Clients include Motorola, Allstate and Nicor. One of the first products Graphix produced was the paper name badges that stick onto your blouse or jacket.

The Tews sons say their father is a positive and driven person. He was in sales prior to launching the company when he didn't think people were getting the service they deserved in the printing industry. "he's a man with vision and structure" Chris Tews said.

Batavia resident Henry Tews, 42, joined the company after high school. At the age of 18 he was plant manager. While growing up, he recalls printing the "contract pending" and "Sold by MLS" (multiple



listing service) labels slapped on real estate signs.

Brothers Chris Tews, 38, of Wheaton, and Jason Tews, 34, of North Aurora, started at the family business in 1990. Chris recalls that when he was in college, his father taught him sales.

Henry Tews Sr. dropped his son off in an industrial park with

a three-ring binder filled with business cards and told him to sell.

"He said the only way to teach sales is to do it," said Chris Tews, who now handles sales and front office duties.

In addition to teaching the day-to-day operations of running a business, the Tews sons say their parents taught them about developing a work ethic.

"We learned from Day One that you have to work on the weekends," Chris Tews said.

When the kids were young, they would often work together with their parents on a Saturday to complete a job.

The men say the family-run business is attractive to clients. "The family part brings out an honesty and reality," Henry Tews Jr. said.

Henry Tews handles plant operations and Jason takes on marketing. The company continues to grow.

Sales have topped \$10 million while the firm features a six-color Heidelberg press with aqueous coater and direct-to-plate prepress system.

## Graphix Products, Inc.

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