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Glendenning helps build Collin County

Land Man

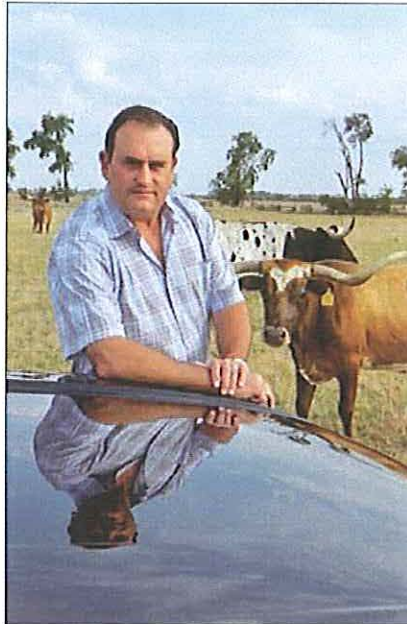
By Gail Bennison

Soft-spoken and unassuming third-generation Celina rancher Rex Glendenning is, by profession, a successful commercial land broker, having sold thousands of acres of prime land in the northwest quadrant of Collin County and across Texas. He owns Frisco-based REX Real Estate, which he founded in 1987.

Glendenning also is a tireless community leader and philanthropist, a devoted and generous member of his church, loving husband and father, and someone who readily gives credit to others.

"If you are in a conversation with Rex, you may be there to talk about real estate, but you will hear how God has blessed him, what a great wife and family he has, and 'how are you doing?'" said Corbett Howard, executive director of the Celina Economic Development Corp. and former Celina mayor. "And then he may say something about the Celina Bobcats, and then down to the business that he knows very well.

"Rex loves his community and has contributed a significant amount of time and money helping our schools and our city," Howard said. "He makes a difference; he doesn't just 'talk the talk;' he 'walks the walk.'"



Rex Glendenning.
Photo by Jon P. Uzzel

Glendenning learned the business from the ground up. His grandfather helped found and settle Celina. He farmed and ranched in the area before the turn of the 20th century. Rex's father carried on the tradition. Rex grew up farming the family land and working leased land in and around the Plano and Richardson areas. His grandfather and father were two of the most important influences in his life.

"My grandfather's 'early to bed, early to rise' work ethic was instrumental in my life," Glendenning said. "My father's teaching was integral in my sales abilities and negotiation skills through trading tractors and farm implements across Texas, Louisiana and Mississippi."

Glendenning's company specializes in acquiring and selling commercial, investment and development properties throughout Texas, with a focus on the major markets. This includes some of the nation's fastest-growing and most affluent areas – particularly in Plano, Frisco, McKinney, Allen, Prosper and Celina in Collin County – and encompasses the highly prized Preston Road and Dallas North Tollway corridor.

REX Real Estate's brokerage has resulted in sales of major projects such as Blue Star and Gentle Creek in Prosper, Starwood and The Trails in Frisco, Trophy Club in Southlake, Carter Ranch and Morgan Lakes in Celina, Plano's Granite Park, Starcreek in Allen, Sendera Ranch in Fort Worth, Viridian in Arlington and Platinum Ranch and Hidden Lakes in Gunter.

The company's retail and mixed-use corner sales include all four corners of Preston Road and U.S. 380; the northeast, northwest and southeast corners of Sam Rayburn Tollway and Dallas North Tollway (sold twice); and the northeast, northwest and southeast corners of U.S. 380 and Dallas North Tollway (sold twice).

Glendenning also has brokered large transactions totaling more than 50,000 acres in San Antonio, Houston and Austin.

Throughout the last decade and into the new one, Glendenning has stepped up to help his beloved Celina and its 78-square-mile footprint. In 2006, he led the Home Rule Charter Committee. Residents voted for the charter in May 2007, setting the governing rules for Celina.

Although he won't take credit for it, Glendenning is responsible for getting the land donations from U.S. 380 through Prosper to FM 428 in Celina for the Dallas North Tollway, according to area officials. He chaired the tollway committee that was established in the late '90s and accomplished the goal of getting the necessary right-of-way donations for the road.

Glendenning annexed properties he owned and influenced into Celina city limits to extend the city's extraterritorial jurisdiction boundaries to protect Celina from encroaching on municipal utility districts.

Growing Celina

Plano businessman Jeran Akers, former mayor of Plano and former president and CEO of the Celina Chamber of Commerce, says Glendenning does all of these things because of his love for the community.

"Rex is quietly involved within the community, particularly with the Bobcats football team and the Celina Independent School District," Akers said. "He has, for years, not only used his painted hay rolls to extol his passion for the Bobcats, but he also uses his giant billboard on Preston Road to proclaim his affection for his alma mater."

Glendenning is a member of the Celina Chamber and a major contributor to the annual Celina Balloon Festival. "He donates the use of about six acres for the festival to park cars during the event as well as allowing the City of Celina to use the land during the July 4th fireworks extravaganza," Akers said. "He also generously donates his land to the city for right of way to be used for roads or placement of water and sewer lines."

Glendenning graduated in 1975 from Celina High School, where he was captain of the football team that won Celina's first state championship in 1974.

His coach, G.A. Moore Jr., says that Glendenning was a pleasure to be around in those days and has

treated him like a king ever since. "You can look at a person and the way they play sports and you can see what they'll be like when they get out in the world," Moore said. "Rex came back to help me, and if I need anything, he'll stop whatever he's doing and come help. He's one of the big supporters of the Celina football team and the city."

Moore recalled Glendenning's 26 tackles in that 1974 championship game that ultimately led to a football scholarship to the University of North Texas in Denton.

"Rex did things in high school football that he didn't have any business doing," Moore said. "Coach Fry looked at that game film and said, 'Man, don't let anybody else talk to him.'"

Moore was referring to the legendary Hall of Fame college football coach Hayden Fry.

Glendenning was co-captain and special teams captain of Fry's 1977 North Texas team. They were ranked 16th in the nation with a record of 10-1. He also co-captained the 1978 team, which finished 9-2.

"Rex Glendenning was one of the greatest leaders that I ever had the privilege to coach in 47 years of college football," said the now-retired Fry. "I love him like my own son. He was just outstanding and highly recognized by his teammates. We had some great teams and great records because Rex did such a fabulous job."

"North Texas was one of the best teams in the nation but never received a Bowl bid," Fry continued. "I called the NCAA and asked them why. They said, 'Well, coach, evidently nobody wanted to play you.'"

Fry said he didn't have any humorous stories about Glendenning. "He was so serious on the field and not so much about making it fun. He just wanted to hit people."

For his part, Glendenning said, "Now that's not totally true. I always thought I was a softie."

Glendenning calls Fry one of the great motivators. "He also gave an undersized middle linebacker from Celina a chance to play college ball.

"Hayden was a true visionary coach that saw what was changing in our society and college football years before the rest of the college coaching ranks," Glendenning said.

Glendenning met his future wife, Sherese, in the late '70s. They have three children. Clay, 27, is a graduate of Southern Methodist University and works as a film producer at G-Men Media in California. Alex, 24, is a graduate of Texas Christian University, and Madison, 21, is a senior at TCU.

The couple is actively involved in supporting Celina athletics and the Celina community, as well as the UNT football program.

They also are committed to the life and ministries of First United Methodist Church of Celina. "Rex and Sherese are extremely kind and compassionate folks," said senior minister John Baldwin. "Rex worked hard to help the church acquire the 21-plus acres as a future site for our church family. He and Sherese gave generously to relieve the church of the debt and help us create a vision for a place of worship and spiritual growth that will stand as a testament to the glory of God and the commitment of families like the Glendennings."

The Glendennings started raising longhorn cattle as a hobby in 1986, after one of his clients traded them for partial payment of a real estate commission. "We really didn't want them, but began studying the heritage and blood lines of the iconic Texas animal," Glendenning said. "We ended up attached to them and bought more cows."

They bred and raised a bull named G-Man, who at the time was the longest-horned longhorn bull in the world, until his offspring, Heavy Hitter, developed horns that spread over 7 feet. Portraits of the bulls are prominently displayed over the fireplace in the Glendennings' ranch home.

Glendenning says his best real estate decision was buying land along Preston Road and the Tollway. "The Golden Corridor always works," he said.

The worst decision in real estate, Glendenning said, is biting off more than you can chew. "The real estate crash in the '80s was a tough time to work in the real estate business as a broker or an

estate crash in the 80s was a tough time to work in the real estate business as a broker or an investor. We've obviously made it through it. With a good wife, a good Lord, and hard work, everybody is healthy and happy today."

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