

BUSINESS

Built to last

Kane custom bikes are lightweight, but offer a high-caliber ride

By SUZANNE ULBRICH
Daily News Staff

NO TWO Jack Kane Custom Racing Bikes are the same. Jack Kane, the owner of The Bicycle Shop and founder of Jack Kane Custom Racing Bicycles in Jacksonville will tell you that is as it should be when purchasing a high end bike. He has fashioned a rewarding career in designing, assembling and painting his own high-caliber custom racing bikes for racing teams and in-

dividuals who like to go the distance on their bikes. Kane said the businesses basically evolved out of a desire to have his own bicycle before he was 7 years old. "No one in my family got a bicycle 'til age 10. When I was about 7 years old I started dragging home old bicycles ... I would take them apart until I had enough good parts and pieces to make my own bike," said Kane, who also made bikes for his younger brother. His interest in mechanics grew and developed as he got older. In addition to old bicycles he would bring home old lawn mowers and take them apart to see if he could

make them run. "I was a really wacky kid; I did play sports and such, but I had nuts and screws, washers and bolts in bins," he said. "When the other kids, back in those days, were playing pool and pinball, I had lawn jobs. I spent the money I made on tools — everybody at Western Auto knew me by my first name." At 13, Kane began trying to mimic hot rod bikes, which led to an interest in giving his bikes a custom paint job using various materials, stencils and paints. During the '70s, when custom vans were popular, Kane began spending time at a custom paint shop in Fayetteville. "Blake Hollander Scooter was a custom painter and did some really cool vans. On weekends I apprenticed at his shop and sucked in all the knowledge from him I could. I learned to air brush, I learned gun control and I learned about automotive paints themselves. Basically I just began painting bikes for everyone and everyone; it was always and older bike they wanted restored or refreshed."

At age 17, he opened The Bike Shop. He carried several manufactured bicycles but still had a desire to build and customize bicycles. He would purchase raw frames from manufactures and paint them, add some new parts and sell them on eBay until the manufacturers stopped him, citing liability issues.

Kane's son suggested he do his own line. He spent several years developing aluminum, aluminum-carbon and full-carbon road and triathlon bikes. In 2005, he found a national market — and a team that used his work. In 2005 Manulife Financial Men's Cycling Team and Cheerwine Prop Women's team competed with Kane bikes. In 2007 - 2008 Texas Instruments DLP used Kane bikes in races all over the United States and Canada.

"It is one of six pro continental teams in the United States, that was a big shot for us," Kane said. With pricing starting around \$2,500 and averaging around \$5,000 his are generally not people's first bike, Kane said. "You can buy a great bike in my show room, but this is the next step up," he said. "It is not a cookie cutter bike, each

bike is different ... and it is not a lot of money for what a good bike costs. You'll give this bike to your great-grandkids — you'll replace the tires, chains, but this bike will last for generations." Kane bikes, which weigh between 13 and 17 pounds, are made from carbon fiber, which is one of the most advanced materials out there right now, Kane said. "The lighter the bike the easier it is — I'm 57 ... it allows me to be like Superman," he said. In an effort to grow the company Kane hired Zane Schweer as his brand marketing manager in December. Schweer earned his B.S. in business at Wake Forest University and, while there, revitalized the Wake Forest University

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Jack Kane, owner of The Bicycle Shop, is also the founder of Jack Kane Custom Racing Bicycles.

Custom Kane bikes start at around \$2,500 and average \$5,000.



Photos by John Althouse / The Daily News



Zane Schweer, is the brand marketing manager for Kane Bikes.

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John Althouse / The Daily News

Kane bicycle frames hang in The Bicycle Shop, awaiting customization for a lucky customer.

cycling team.

Schweer is responsible for sales, marketing, sponsorship and overall customer relations. Among Schweer's many aspirations is to enable Kane to dedicate his time solely to painting the bikes and have other staff build them.

"What I realized when I came on board was it was a very underground business," he said. "I redesigned and rebuilt the website, kanebikes.com, and it was just unveiled. For the past two weeks we have seen an uptick in traffic so we're starting to get our presence out there. We are on Twitter and Facebook now. It is really exciting to see the work start to pay off."

Ultimately the message the duo wants to convey is simple.

"If you pay \$5,000 for a bike, you don't want to see anyone else on your bike," Kane said. "That's what we can deliver. We don't want people to settle for an off-the-rack paint job when they can have a custom paint job for the same price. And we can put the parts on the bike unique to you or that you want instead of having to pay to upgrade later."

Becoming an avid biker with her husband after he had medical issues, Judy Costa decided to reward herself with a retirement present in September and purchased a Kane full carbon bike.

She calls the bike "Pearl" because of its pearlized paint job, and she said she has never regretted it.

Compared to her previous bike she said, "It was like going from an old

Chevy pick up truck to a Cadillac."

"There is that much difference," she said.

And the bike weighs only 15 pounds so she can easily transport and handle it on her own.

"The bike just has this fluidity to it; you can shift gears and you don't even feel like you are shifting," she said. "It is the most comfortable bike I have ever ridden. (Kane) measures you and he fits the bike to you ... The minute I got on it, it was perfect. I don't know anyone who has had one who hasn't absolutely loved it."

Kane bikes are available at The Bicycle Shop, located at 909 North Marine Blvd.

Schweer can be reached at 910-455-1011 or through email at zane@kanebikes.com.

Business Briefs

Food safety course completed in Duplin

Twenty food service staff from area businesses recently graduated from a food safety and preparation course offered recently in Duplin County.

North Carolina Cooperative Extension and Duplin County Environmental Health collaborated in providing the ServSafe class held in April, according to a news release from the Duplin County Cooperative Extension office.

ServSafe is a food safety certification course developed by the National Restaurant Association Education Foundation. It offers food safety training for service managers and supervisory staff in restaurants, hospitals, residential care/nursing homes and other similar establishments.

The staff of the following area food service establishments participated in ServSafe: Mainor Magnolia Market Place, Montrina Boney; Piggly Wiggly of Wallace, Sheila Cavenaugh; Hardee's of Pikeville, Ashley Darlington; Rosemary Rest Home, Edna Dixon; Hardee's of Beulaville, Suzanne Fennell and Stephanie Whitfield; Hardee's of Kenansville, Rita Harrell; Subway of Wallace, BJ Jones; Jackson's IGA of Beulaville, Shawna Jones; Subway of Wallace, Shana Maquire; Jackson's IGA of Kenansville, Jessica Martinez; Duplin General Hospital, Katina McKiver and Diane Mobley; Jackson's IGA of Beulaville, Sharon Norris; The Country Squire Restaurant & Winery, Robert Smith; Shawn's Restaurant, Kimberly Southerland; Kenansville Health and Rehabilitation, Debra Tyler, Grace Whaley and Marcella Williams.

The ServSafe workshop facilitators included Wanda Clay of Duplin Cooperative Extension Family & Consumer Sciences and Duplin County Health De-

partment and Environmental Services Resources staff members Mary Cashwell, Jessica Jones, and Pam Lindsay.

A certificate is awarded to those who successfully complete the course and written examination.

Sea Grant offers coastal property guide

An updated information guide is available for anyone interested in buying property near North Carolina's shoreline.

A new edition of the coastal real estate guide "Questions and Answers on: Purchasing Coastal Real Estate in North Carolina" is now available to the public, according to a North Carolina Sea Grant announcement.

Developed by North Carolina Sea Grant, N.C. Real Estate Commission and N.C. Division of Coastal Management, the brochure addresses general questions that individuals might have while considering an existing building or an undeveloped lot.

"Coastal real estate differs significantly from inland property. The brochure highlights the location-specific hazards and regulations that a buyer or owner may find when considering coastal property," said Spencer Rogers, North Carolina Sea Grant coastal construction and erosion specialist.

Topics include erosion, good construction features and insurance.

The new version has updated information about recent regulations, such as new setbacks for larger buildings.

Online copies of the brochure are available from Sea Grant's Living on the Coast page or from ncrec.gov. Printed copies are also available from North Carolina Sea Grant offices in Raleigh, Manteo, Morehead City and Wilmington.

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