



Claire and Shawn Donovan are the owners of Bung-hole Liquors on Derby Street in Salem.

HEATHER MANCINI/
Staff photo



Biz names run from witty to a little dirty

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Wigglebums isn't the name of a dance studio or a gentlemen's club — it's a dog training company in Salem, and it's among various North Shore businesses whose names you can't help but notice, or forget.

"People always remember the name, whether they think it's stupid or not," said Jo Jacques, owner of Wigglebums, which she named for her perpetually happy pup, Snickers.

"It's for my English cocker spaniel whose bum never stops wiggling."

Local business owners believe the secret to a successful business lies, in part, with the name. Just ask Scott Woods, owner of Pane in the Glass.

"If you own a home with old wood windows, you know exactly where the name comes from," said Woods, who restores old windows. "I was told that you should find a catchy name that works well with your company and

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LINSEY TAIT/Staff photo

Marie Felmannova and her husband, Steve Feldmann, opened the Gulu Gulu Café in Salem in July. The couple met at a café with the same name in Prague.

NAMES: Some businesses sport unusual monikers

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describes your service."

As for marketing, you can't go wrong with a catchy name — and a double entendre — according to the owner of Bung-hole Liquors in Salem and Peabody.

"That's kind of why I bought it," said Shawn Donovan, who has owned the business since 1991. "My big thing was that (previous owners) never capitalized on the whole name."

The original definition of a bung hole is a hole in a cask — and the bung is the cork. But over time, bung hole has taken on a cruder meaning of an anus. Bung-hole Liquors opened in Salem in the 1930s, presumably under the original meaning.

Donovan has developed a successful merchandising arm of his business, selling T-shirts, mugs, hats, keychains and corkscrews — and he runs an online gift shop.

"We don't compete with Gap or anything, but as far as liquor stores go, we sell a heck of a lot of T-shirts," said Donovan, who owns the business with his wife, Claire.

Bung-hole Liquors' motto also plays on

Gulu Gulu literally means "glug glug" in French and is "the sound you make when you drink a beer," according to café manager Laura Potter Walton.

the theme: "We're not #1 butt we're right up there."

"It's not X-rated. There are no swears or curses," Donovan said. "It's semiclean humor — that's kind of how we've pushed it along."

Even businesses named for sentimental reasons can catch on, like the Gulu Gulu Café on Essex Street in Salem. Steven Feldmann and his wife, Marie Felmannova, had a chance meeting 10 years ago at a Gulu Gulu cafe in Prague, Czech Republic. They later held their wedding reception there, too.

Gulu Gulu literally means "glug glug" in French and is "the sound you make when you drink a beer," according to café manag-

er Laura Potter Walton, who said customers ask about the name.

"When they come in, they may ask how it's pronounced and what it means," she said. "A lot of people just shorten it to 'the Gulu.'"

Gulu Gulu, which opened in Salem last summer, merchandises mugs and T-shirts.

"We did a lot of sales, especially during the Halloween tourist season," Potter Walton said.

When it came to naming his business, Bruce Whear wanted to be different. He owns Wire 4 Hire in Salem.

"The way my industry works, it's usually 'Bruce Whear Electricians,'" said Whear, who opened Wire 4 Hire in 1980. "I'm an electrician, but my favorite part of the business is marketing."

Whear put the company name in the phone number (631-WIRE), and he doesn't spell out "4" in honor of his favorite sports legend, Boston Bruin Bobby Orr.

"I find (the name) has an amazing retention rate for today's memory," Whear said. "Any time a name can tell people what you're doing and they remember it — that means I'm doing my job. To me, the name just makes sense."