

## EAGA Business Builder

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## Today's speaker was Ben Hoffman—Kinney Brick Company



Mr. Hoffman is a New Mexico native. He lived in the south valley for a very short time before the family moved to the east mountains. Ben attended San Antonio Elementary and Manzano High. He was also a three year participant in the Mechanical Engineering program at UNM before changing course (pun intended) and earning a Medical Lab Tech certification from CNM. He worked 4 years here, then 4 years there, before finally joining the family business to work with his dad at Kinney Brick. Before discussing the company, there is a little more about just who is Ben Hoffman... He was a baseball player in high school, but throughout the years has cultivated an interest in many different sports. He is currently involved, to one degree or another, in racket-ball, tennis, soccer, wrestling, Olympic Style weight lifting, and he plays on 4 softball teams. Ben is also a computer enthusiast, so at least occasionally he is sitting still for a short while. The only other times that he is sitting, it is not still. He is a motorcycle junky. Overall Ben estimates that he has ridden his various cycles 180,000 miles, through 15 states, in 12 years. His bike 'collection' includes a 1994 Honda Magna; a 2009 Yamaha Radian that he used to check off a bucket list item by riding up Pike's Peak; and a 2016 motorcycle that has taken him to Minnesota and Lake of the Ozarks. Those are, obviously, only a very few of the very many places that Mr. Hoffman has visited on two wheels. Going along with Mr. Hoffman's high energy lifestyle, he has managed to attract the eye of a young lady with similar interests. His girlfriend works for the D.O J.; is a Marine Veteran (there is no such thing as a 'former Marine'); and has two cats named after characters in the 'Sons of Anarchy' TV series. Ben is a New Mexico native, but has lived in a few other places too. Some because his motorcycle took him there, and some because of the interest and adventure of the time. He credits that part of his life to his mother. She is an Oncology Nurse and her work has taken her to many different parts of the country, and the world, to work with adults and children. Ben's father is currently a recovering accountant, and owner of Kinney Brick. The elder Mr. Hoffman has degrees in Accounting and Philosophy. He came to New Mexico from Minnesota and worked for a hair cutting chain before becoming comptroller of Kinney Brick Company. Kinney Brick was founded in 1928 (it was named New Mexico Clay Products in the beginning). The company has been in its current location for the entirety of its existence. In the early days, it was so far out of town that it was important to build housing for employees and to become heavily involved in the community that evolved. The Mountain View Community Center was one of the entities built by the company. Over time, business began to falter and about 30 years ago it had deteriorated to a point that the owner decided to close it down. Ben's father realized that there was potential, if the company was run correctly, so, in 1996, he talked the owner into selling the company to him instead of closing it. Under Hoffman family ownership and management, Kinney Brick is indeed doing well. They have expanded their operations into Louisiana, Texas, Utah and, a little bit, into California. There are currently 45 employees and the company produces over 12 million bricks per year. [That would be an average of 22,222 bricks per employee, per month, so there must not be any slacking going on, even with all the athletic activities and motorcycle riding]. Kinney's production involves only bricks (for building walls) and pavers (for walking or driving on). They aren't involved in cinderblocks. Strictly bricks and pavers. Cinderblock manufacturing takes an entirely different set of machinery and production process. It would be too expensive for Kinney to start up that type of operation, and it is likely that they wouldn't be able to compete with the other, already established, local companies that have been doing it for awhile. The majority of what Kinney Brick does is categorized as 'specialty blends' which requires a very precise matching of the color and texture of existing bricks. Often those existing bricks have been reclaimed from very old structures, and Ben's team is challenged with making brick with a visually exact match....and they do it all the time. The process is quite involved and difficult though. Kinney has three clay pits from which they extract the beginning materials. [It sounds like those quarries are interesting in their own right. Often the miners discover impressive things in the clay. Ancient shells, fossils and the like. In 2013, a very notable discovery was a six foot dragon shark fossil. The shark's official name is [Dracopristis hoffmanorum](#). It was named by paleontologists from the New Mexico Museum of Natural History and Science after their seven year research determined the creature to represent a new species. The first part of its name means "dragon shark" in Latin, and the latter hoffmanorum is a tribute to the Hoffman family that owns the quarry where the fossil was discovered. See more info at the [Smithsonian Magazine website](#)]. The extracted clay is ground up, then crushed, then put in 'pug mills' to mix with water and additives. Each batch is made with a specific color and texture that matches those existing bricks. After the new bricks are formed, they have to be dried. In order to dry every nook and cranny, the bricks are subjected to 450 degree temperatures for four days. Then the bricks are put into kilns where they are 'fired' at 2,000 degrees for three days. [Kinney Brick has two kilns. The largest is 40 feet high and can hold 130,000 bricks. The smaller kiln can hold 100,000 bricks]. The completed bricks are then hand sorted and stacked in groups that match the design needed. You can see examples of the company's bricks by visiting the [Kinney Brick](#) website. (FYI-That large house took about 35,000 white bricks.) If you are interested in quality, long-lasting building materials, give Ben a call at 505-877-4550. Not only can Kinney Brick manufacture the right bricks for your project, they are also distributors for 9 clay suppliers; 2 natural stone suppliers and 1 synthetic stone supplier. If Kinney Brick Company doesn't make what you need, they can probably get it somewhere. You should also talk Mr. Hoffman into letting you stop by the yard some winter evening for a little camaraderie and fun times roasting marshmallows from 50 or 60 feet away from that 2,000 degree kiln.

## Leads & Business Information:

None submitted this week

- ◆ When we posted congratulations to EAGA members recognized as recipients of this year's Albuquerque Journal Reader Choice Award, we inadvertently missed noting that Auto Glass Services was also a recipient. Congratulations to Joe Kirkpatrick and his crew.
- ◆ The 2022 Trap Shoot will be September 23rd. Get to the site between 8:00 and 8:15 to fill out forms and be ready for the mandatory safety briefing that will be held before the event. Shooting starts at 8:30 and is planned to finish around lunch time (then a few will probably reconvene at Rio Bravo for some refreshments and bragging). No shooting experience is required and loaner shotguns will be available if you need one. Signup sheets and more information will be available at our Tuesday breakfast meetings. There is not any charge for members. Guests can participate for a \$100 fee. There is a raffle again this year. Tickets (sold to members only) are \$100 each, and those will be available at breakfast as well.
- ◆ First announcement for a prospective new member:  
Anderson Air Corps  
Representative: Kenneth "Kyle" Redford  
Category: HVAC Sales, Service & Installation  
Sponsors: Rich Rosley

### First announcement for a prospective new member:

Ortega's Appliance  
Representative: Manuel Ortega  
Category: Appliance Repair Services  
Sponsors: Bobby Jackson and Raul Rodriguez

If you have an objection to either of these companies becoming a member, or if you have information that you feel should be considered during the review process, please contact our Membership Committee Chairman, Jack Zipper (via telephone number 505-259-5959 or email at [j zipper@comcast.net](mailto:j zipper@comcast.net)) as soon as possible.

## Badge Board Greeters

Aug 16<sup>th</sup> Scott Lardner—Rocky Mountain Stone  
Aug 23<sup>rd</sup> Jason Rockwell—Rebel Road Hot Rod Garage  
Aug 30<sup>th</sup> Scott Peck—MP Group, Inc  
Sept 13<sup>th</sup>  
Sept 20<sup>th</sup> Richard Reese—Blue Ristra

## Upcoming Speakers

Aug 16<sup>th</sup>  
Aug 23<sup>rd</sup> Paul Barragan—Yourson Construction  
Aug 30<sup>th</sup> Kevin Lorenzen—Aflac  
Sept 13<sup>th</sup>  
Sept 20<sup>th</sup>

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