

## Featured Alum: Ken Lain

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**Years Attended:** 1983

**Area of Study:** Business

**Email:** waters@cableone.net



Ken was a local boy who graduated from Prescott High School and used Yavapai College as a stepping stone onto bigger and better things. Working his way through college, Yavapai gave him the opportunity to keep the cost down through lower tuition and living at home. He graduated from ASU in 1986 with a BS in Business Management. Yavapai College set the stage for his business savvy and he feels he could not have moved up the university ladder without the College's help. Rising to Director of Marketing in the corporate world his Yavapai College sweetheart and he began to miss their small town of Prescott. They moved back

in 1992 and began working in the family business. You guessed it, his wife's maiden name is Watters and they now own Watter's Family Garden Center.

Ken is known by his friends as 'The Garden Guy'. He's been gardening in the Prescott mile high cities for 30 years, and knows the best techniques for gardening in the high mountain climates of Northern Arizona. His local garden advice is published each Saturday in 'The Daily Courier' and can also be heard Saturdays as the host of 'Gardening in Granite' talk show on KYCA radio and again on KJAZ 89.5 FM each Sunday. Ken is passionate about plants, proper landscape designs, and spreading the good news that gardening can be easy and fun.

Ken's gardening credentials are those of Master Gardener, Certified Nursery Professional, and owner of Watters Design and Garden Centers located on Iron Springs

Road in Prescott. Ken is currently serving on the YC Alumni Outreach Steering Committee.

### **In the News: Ken Lain, Class of 1983**

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#### **Watters Garden Center Gets USCA Award**



The U.S. Commerce Association recently chose Watters Garden Center, 1815 Iron Springs Road, Prescott, for its 2009 Best of Local Business Award Program. Watters Garden Center is owned by YC Alum Ken Lain. The Washington, D.C.-based association promotes local businesses through public relations, marketing and advertising, according

### **In the News: Ken Lain, Class of 1983**

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*Yavapai College has always been heavily into green issues as exemplified by our "green" Construction Program. Our alumnus Ken Lain did his part by*



*offering our community the possibility of recycling poinsettias. Read below:*

As written up in The Daily Courier, Friday, January 08, 2010.

This year, there's no reason for people in the tri-city area to stuff poinsettias into plastic bags and send them off to gorge landfills. Watters Garden Center is asking residents to bring their poinsettias into the garden center to be recycled.

"More families are caring more about the environment and are looking for ways to recycle

everything, but especially living things," said Ken Lain, the owner of Watters Garden Center. "A great place to start is with that wonderful Christmas poinsettia, which we can turn back into vegetation that can be used as mulch.

"Those who bring in their poinsettias to be recycled will receive \$5 toward a new fresh plant of their choice from the garden center."

Poinsettias will be accepted for recycling throughout the month of January at Watters Garden Center, 1815 W. Iron Springs Road. For more information about Watters Garden Center or for details on Poinsettia recycling, call 445-4159 or visit [www.wattersonline.com](http://www.wattersonline.com).

### **Outstanding Alum 2010-Prescott: Ken Lain, Class of 1983, General Studies**

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We were honored to present Mr. Ken Lain for the President's Outstanding Alumni Award. Ken is a man who possesses the attributes worthy of this distinction. He is committed to his community - and to his family. He is an inspiring leader - who gives of his time and efforts to make his community a better place in which to live.

I met Ken when

he stepped up to the plate as we initiated the Alumni Outreach Program back in 2007. He helped to provide valuable input into the new bylaws - creating an infrastructure and identifying leadership roles, as well as defining other policies and

procedures for Alumni Outreach. He continues to serve on the current Alumni Outreach Board.

Ken is a local boy who graduated from Prescott High School and used Yavapai College as a stepping stone onto bigger and better things. Working his way through college, Yavapai gave him the opportunity to keep the cost down through lower tuition and living at home.

Yavapai College set the stage for his business savvy and he feels he could not have moved up the university ladder without the College's help. He graduated from ASU in 1986 with a BS in Business Management.

Rising to Director of Marketing in the corporate world his Yavapai College sweetheart and he began to miss their small town of Prescott. They moved back in 1992 and began working in the family business. You guessed it - his wife's maiden name is Watters. When Harold and Lorna Watters retired, the second generation of garden center owners stepped in. Ken & Lisa have run and owned the family business since the turn of this century - with their children following closely in their footsteps.

Ken is known by his friends as 'The Garden Guy' He's been gardening in the Prescott mile high cities for 30 years, and knows the best techniques for gardening in the high mountain climates of Northern Arizona. Ken's gardening credentials are those of Master Gardener, and Certified Nursery Professional.

Watters typically wins yearly honors in their industry – the most recent was announced in the January issue of Today's Garden Center Magazine - listing Watters as "The Revolutionary 100 National Winner"2010. The 48 year old family garden center was selected as the best garden center in the country by their peers, the press and fellow garden center owners. Selection of Watters was made for their community involvement in raising over \$51,000 last year for our community, for their employee training, their green practices - like rain harvesting and recycling, the marketing, and of course - profitability. This award Ken says "is the pinnacle of achievement in the nursery world, the industry's highest recognition of merit", and never won by anyone from Arizona in the past." Nationally Watters Garden Center has been awarded most cutting edge by their vendors for several years in a row. They are also recognized throughout the county.

They have been awarded the Chino Valley 'Business of the Year' for 2009 for their work and support.

Ken and his family feel a commitment to give back to the Prescott area and to all of the people who have worked so hard for them over the years. They support selected organizations financially and with their time - organizations such as the Prescott Fine Arts Association, Rotary International and Rotary's summer Math & Reading Clinic, Soroptimist International, Prescott's Community Pregnancy Center and the Yavapai Humane Society.

Ken places value on partnering with local non-profits. They give the garden center away for an evening as the venue for fundraisers and everyone at the garden center gets to do something good for the causes they care about.

Locally Ken serves on the board of directors of the Prescott Chamber of Commerce, Northern Arizona Council of Government's Labor Work Force Investment Board, Independent Nurseries of Arizona, President of the Prescott Frontier Rotary Club and active member in the Prescott Valley Chamber of Commerce, Chino Valley Chamber of Commerce and many others.

Of course, he is most proud of his 21 year marriage to Lisa of and their four children. Second generation Yavapai College attendees are their daughter Katelyn and son James. Soon to be attendees are their 14 year old identical twins Meghan and McKenzie who were in attendance to honor their father.