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by JENNIFER MACK, Pilot-News Staff Writer

LAKE LATONKA -- Tom Crowel is a dreamer. From humble beginnings he started and built wealth through his fascination with sales.

With the backdrop of Lake Latonka pictured in the sliding glass door of his color coordinated, Ethan Allen decorated living room, it's easy to see that Crowel strives for the best in himself and others as he tells story after story of his business, his family and his life. Always willing to learn more and relate his knowledge, Crowel has never been satisfied with less than the best.

In 1965, he established Crowel Agency, Inc., which deals with property and casualty insurance. Since then, Crowel has developed Capco, a financing company, Crowel Training Center, an accredited training school for sales people and a chain of car washes called Spot Not.

To share his secrets of success, which he believes aren't such a secret, Crowel has written a book entitled **Simple Selling: Common Sense That Guarantees Your Success**. The proceeds of the book go to help Hoosier Boys' Town, a development center for underprivileged youth. "I feel life's been very fortunate to me so I thought if I could write a book and share my knowledge, I'd give the money away." Crowel said concerning why he wrote the book.

Originally from Hammond, Crowel started selling door to door when he was 20 years old and has since worked his way up. According to Crowel, he enjoyed door to door sales because it was a gamble with never knowing what type of person would answer the door. "I'm fascinated with the unexpected," Crowel noted.

He also feels that sales is comparable to the "high" a performer might feel in response to the applause he or she receives after a successful performance.

After quitting high school as a junior, Crowel attended Purdue University at age 38 and received a degree in clinical psychology. He also attended the University of Chicago for graduate work. "Psychology is no different than selling," Crowel said of why he decided to major in psychology. "You just learn the labels," when learning psychology as opposed to sales. "Psychology is about people, and selling is about people," he noted.

Though he loves sales, Crowel admits the business has a bad reputation for dishonesty. In the book he stresses the point that sales people need to be honest, and notes sales people got the reputation from the old day swindlers saying, "Hurry, hurry, hurry! Step right up!"

"Sales people over the years have been dishonest and there are still some of those people out there," Crowel said. "If they're going to do it right, they have to be honest. There's a big difference between conning and selling."

Other topics included in Crowel's book include appearance, motivation, the ability to listen and much more. Though the book is written specifically for sales people, **Simple Selling** can be related to virtually any profession because most of the points Crowel makes apply to any type of work. The book is a quick and easy read and never dawdles for too long. Crowel makes his point and moves on to the next topic.

According to Crowel, there are three traits a sales representative must have in order to succeed, though he says he won't say. He would rather one know how he operates his business through reading **Simple Selling**. He would rather become a friend while conversing instead of talking shop.

According to Crowel, the book is a good office companion and can be ordered by calling 877-999-THOMAS, with the \$14.95 directly benefiting Hoosier Boys' Town.