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NEBA News

Editors:
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The North East Business Association publishes NEBA News bi-monthly. Articles of interest are welcome. Publication of submitted materials is subject to review and space available. Article deadline is the 1st day of the month of publication.

Send articles, letters, photos or suggestions to: NEBA News at the following email addresses: burnsn@mail.co.leon.fl.us or mo@mediaoptionsinc.com. or FAX-850-893-4097

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President's Corner

From Alan Null:

As we head into the hot, sticky months of summer I'm pleased to report that your Board is as energetic and enthused as ever - and planning to make the next six months as informative as the first.

Ted Thomas continues his leadership as Program Chair and brings in outstanding speakers every month. These monthly meetings are key to the success of our organization, as they give our members (you!) the chance to be heard, while keeping you informed about major issues. We strive to balance political issues with other areas that affect us all as small business owners. If you have an idea for a speaker, or wish to hear a topic debated at a NEBA luncheon, please call Ted at 894-5500.

I mentioned in our last newsletter that we are moving towards communicating more through email and via the web. Our website (www.nebaonline.org) was down for a few months, but we're in the process of contracting with a new host company, and it will be back up shortly. You'll be able to access member names and phone numbers with this site, as

well as read past newsletters. I'd again like to encourage you to forward your email addresses to me at: alannull@nettally.com. Your Board is committed to creating a comprehensive database that will enable us to communicate with you effectively and advise you of issues that may affect your business in a timely manner.

We're also committed to keeping NEBA the strong political voice that it has always been and to aid in that effort we'll be conducting straw polls on various issues that affect our community. The polls will be conducted at monthly meetings and if you miss the meeting - you can't vote! We'll make sure that our local politicians know exactly where our members stand on the issues that affect us most deeply.

Finally, a reminder that your dues are due now! Invoices were included in the May/June newsletter; if you missed yours we'll be happy to print you another. At only \$35 NEBA is still the best value out there.

Have a safe and successful summer, and we'll talk again in September.

Leon County School Board Is Making The Grade

Mr. Montford opened the May meeting by announcing that recently released FCAT scores rank our district in the top 9 in the state in every subject, every grade level. He attributed this outstanding success to our great teachers and community support. As an example he cited the way the Chamber and business leaders rallied in support of the ½ cent sales tax.

To make sure the ½ cent tax is administered properly, a Citizen's Oversight committee has been selected, and is currently meeting. The School board has bonded \$61 million to begin construction, at the historically low rate of 2.73%. Some of the things funded with this bonded money include: construction/remodelling of area schools, technology, and transportation infrastructure (new

busses). During the question and answer period, Mr. Montford addressed the following:

What impact will the class size amendment have on Leon County? Montford stated that although he opposed the Class Size Amendment, it's impact in our county should be less than others. Over 6 years ago the School Board approved moving money from High Schools and Middle Schools to Elementary - for the express purpose of lowering class sizes in K - 2 grades. This visionary action by the Board is one of the reasons we have such good FCAT scores today, as those kids who benefited from smaller classes are in middle and high school now. Since our class sizes are already low district wide, it should be easier for us to meet the Legislature's average class

size mandate. What are you considering cutting to accommodate budget shortfalls? Mr. Montford was very candid in sharing the issues he has - reluctantly - had to put on the table. He indicated the Board may be forced to reduce support for: Community based programs, like after-school programs; District supported training; athletics; art/music/PE (which is currently not funded at the elementary level); and we might have to give up the 7th period in High Schools permanently.

Finally Mr. Montford was asked what his political aspirations for the future were. His answer was short and sweet: If Alan Boyd runs for the Senate, then Montford may run for his Congressional seat. If not, he's perfectly happy doing what he's doing.

"MAYOR" from front page

with Leon County Commission Chair Tony Grippa and believes that we will soon have functional consolidation of some services, like recreational and storm water management.

What efforts are being made to convince builders to build affordable housing? The Mayor referenced a recent Tallahassee Democrat article heralding the opening of a Fannie Mae office here in Tallahassee. The office will have \$10 billion available to low-income people - and they have to lend the money, so our community will certainly benefit.

Finally, the Mayor indicated that he certainly has enjoyed his job so far but that he hasn't sold his golf clubs yet.



Winning is Easy!

Come to our monthly NEBA meetings for your chance to win a gift certificate in our free raffle. Drawings for the prize are provided to members only. So join today, enjoy lunch with us, listen to interesting speakers and become part of the fun and camaraderie.

Calendar

NEBA meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month at the Old Town Cafe on Timberlane Road from 11:45 am - 1:00 p.m. Cost is \$10.00 per person

July 8 – Doug Barr of the NW Fla. Water Management District, will discuss water management in our region.

August 12- Tony Carvajal-lobbyist/consultant, will give us a motivational speech about our businesses.

September 9- Gary Stallings from the Talquin Electric Co-Op., will discuss the effects of consolidation on Talquin's service.

Board Meetings are held at 12:00 pm the last Thursday of each month at 3606 Maclay Blvd.

Business Tips....

Some Tips from Ray and Peggy Munroe-Mays/Munroe Appliances

We go on-line at <http://www.fdle.state.fl.us/index.html> (Florida Dept. of Law Enforcement) to check out prospective employees. They charge you a fee of \$15 which can be put on a credit card. Request your perspective employee to provide copies of their driver's license & social security card. These will give you all the information you need to have the person checked out. Some of the results are shocking!

Being a drug free workplace will give you a 5% Workers' Comp. discount. We are currently paying \$45 per drug screening but think it is well worth it. One person we screened put bleach in his urine to try to beat the test. They will try anything sometimes.

If you have a fleet of vehicles, another good tool for businesses is a GPS system. I did not expect to catch one of my best technicians parking OUR truck at Hooters on Thursday afternoons, then driving it home to Crawfordville 4 or 5 hours later! That came to a quick halt!

If you have any Tips that have helped or improved your business, please forward them to burnsn@mail.co.leon.fl.us. We'll gladly publish them in the NEBA News!



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NEBA News

WWW.NEBAONLINE.ORG

July- August 2003

Mayor Marks' Vision For Tallahassee

Mayor John Marks spoke to us at our April meeting, and said that he was going to repeat some things he'd said many times before in our community. But he thinks his message of economic diversity and growth is important enough to repeat until our community gets it right.

The Mayor told us what we already know - that Tallahassee has historically been too dependent on State Government as an economic engine. Evidence of this is right downtown - where the historic homes on Park Avenue have all been turned into law firms that deal with state government. Our roads are not built to handle commerce, because over the years our leaders weren't worried about commerce - they believed State Government would always drive our economy.

Governor Bush has made it clear that he has a vision of state government that does not mesh with Tallahassee's. And his determination to do what he wants with State employees does not help us economically. Mayor Marks believes he was elected to help our community move forward, and beyond the "State employee" mentality.

How do we do that? Tallahassee has a huge unused resource in our institutions of higher learning, and the Mayor feels they will be crucial in our future. Individually FSU, FAMU and TCC have not done much for us in the past. But collectively he is working to bring them together to shape our future.

Tallahassee could easily become a regional center for medical research and treatment, similar to Shands Hospital in Gainesville, based on the strengths of FSU and FAMU's medical and research schools. We could also be a regional center for the arts, based on the performing resources of all three institutions.

To help facilitate these three great institutions working together, Mayor Marks hosted an economic summit recently, attended by the three university Presidents, the Secretary of State and representatives from the Governor's Office City and County Commissions.

Next the Mayor fielded questions from our always informed members: How can we change our reputation for being anti-business? Mayor Marks pointed out that we received much publicity from the

recent economic summit, all over the country and that helps show that we're evolving. He also pointed to Southwood as a positive economic force in the community. Then there is also the opportunity to position ourselves regionally, bringing in the workforce in Gadsden and Wakulla counties as potential workers for new companies.

How can we as a group help get the community behind the FSU/FAMU University Park? The Mayor indicated that we could help move the process forward with proactive actions and language that helps both institutions get past whatever historical problems they might have.

What about Consolidation? He's for it (as anyone who followed his campaign knows)! Mayor Marks has developed a good relationship

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