

NEBA News

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May-June 2008

NEBA In Forefront On Politics And Issues

NEBA continues its role as a primary forum for politics and other issues affecting the Tallahassee business community.

Appearing at our luncheons the second Tuesday of each month this year have been General Bob Milligan (USMC Ret.), head of the state employees retirement fund and insurance ombudsman in the office of the Chief Financial Officer. He outlined the risk all policy holders are facing due to our state's reliance on the government insurance program, Citizens, should we experience another catastrophic hurricane season.

In March an overflow crowd at Lucy Ho's Restaurant heard Al Simpler of Simpler Solar Systems outline the pros and cons of sun-powered electrical systems on homes and businesses. Attention focused on the elaborate solar system Devoe Moore in-

stalled at his antique automobile museum, a system generating enough extra energy to be returned to the city's utility for credit.

April saw the start of our series of "meet the candidates" forums with four individuals seeking the District 8 seat held by retiring Rep. Curtis Richardson in the Florida House of Representatives. Hubert Brown, Sean Shaw, Anthony "Dr. V" Viegbesie and Alan Williams expressed their positions on key issues such as insurance, property taxes and education, all saying they oppose any property tax increases. District 8 covers parts of southern and western Leon County and most of Gadsden County.

May featured five candidates for the District 9 seat held by outgoing Rep. Lorraine Ausley. Appearing were John Brackett, John Shaw, Jerry Sutphin, Fred Varn and Michelle Vasilinda. District 9 is the primary Leon County seat

in the state House of Representatives. Peter Boulware, the lone Republican in this race, did not attend but has expressed interest in attending another NEBA meeting prior to the August primary elections.

Watch for announcements of the June and July meetings where current plans call for appearances by candidates for sheriff, county commission and the school board.

Questions from the audience indicate that property taxes and insurance rates are high-priorities among NEBA members. Other inquiries touch on the current home mortgage crisis, sales tax exemptions and the possibility of a tax on services.

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NEBA News

Editors:

**Maureen Thompson-Media Options-
Nancy Burns- Leon Co. Sheriff's Office**

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@leoncountyfl.gov or maureen@mediaoptionsinc.com. or FAX-850-893-4097.

For additional information phone Maureen Thompson at 850-668-0948 or Nancy Burns at 850-922-3331

Property Tax Issues

It really does make a difference when you voice your concerns about legislative issues. Following is a reply in response to messages sent out by realtors throughout Florida.

We are happy to report that your messages to the Florida Tax and Budget Reform Commission (TBRC) were heard. In just over 30 hours Realtors from around the state sent over 50,000 messages to the Commission! Today, the TBRC formally adopted CP002, which if passed by the voters in November will eliminate the state's required local effort for schools portion of property taxes in 2010. The proposed constitutional amendment also places a 5% assessment cap

on non-homestead property — beginning next year. It allows the Legislature to make up the \$9 billion to schools in a number of ways, including raising the sales tax by up to 1 cent. Past-President Nancy Riley, who is a member of the TBRC, voted in favor of the proposal.

This is a big victory for Realtors, property owners struggling under crushing tax bills and businesses who will see their tax bills limited by a lower, permanent assessment cap. Most importantly, Commissioners heard your voice and agreed with it — sending CP002 and other important proposals to the November ballot is the right thing to do.

Thank you for being a part of the solution to this property tax problem.

Safety Tips for Business Travelers

Stay safe on your next business trip by following some common sense guidelines.

*Leave unneeded credit cards at home and carry just the essentials when venturing out and about.

*Avoid wearing flashy jewelry into unfamiliar territory.

*Wear a money belt that you can tuck into your pants or underneath your clothing and carry your purse tucked under your arm instead of slung over your shoulder.

* If you must dress up for an important meeting, opt to take a cab instead of walking or using

public transportation.

*Don't tempt the hotel staff by leaving expensive items in your room in plain sight

*Make sure your hotel door is closed tight when leaving to ensure the room is secure.

*Keep your cell phone with you at all times, with its batteries charged.

*Ignorance is not bliss. Avoid trouble spots, the areas of town where rough elements are known to proliferate. Ask your hotel concierge for suggestions on where to eat and what areas of town to visit.

Top 10 Hiring Mistakes

Hiring the right people can make a world of difference in the success of your business. Yet, many business owners do not approach hiring in the right manner and often make the same mistakes. Here are 10 of the most common.

1. Not looking into candidates' backgrounds. No matter what candidates include on their resumes, you need to conduct some due diligence. If you are serious about specific candidates, make sure their work history is accurate, and check at least a reference or two. In addition, it's helpful to check their background. For sample background check permission forms and a reference check letter, see the AllBusiness.com Employee Hiring forms.

2. Being overly influenced by advanced degrees. Candidates with plenty of letters after their names have certainly worked hard to earn their degrees. But there is no substitute for real-world business experience and people often make the mistake of overlooking candidates with track records but not degrees. Note: this does not apply, however, to specialized fields that require advanced degrees.

3. Not having a long-range plan. Hiring someone to fill a current need can help you

through a busy time. However, unless you're hiring someone on a temporary basis, you need a long-range plan for that employee beyond your immediate need, including how you plan to develop him or her, and how he or she fits in with your company's long-range plans.

4. Making promises you cannot keep. It can be a very costly mistake to make promises that are not well thought out. Know ahead of time what you can and cannot offer a prospective employee.

5. Hiring someone for all the wrong reasons. Unfortunately, this is a common mistake. Whether you're doing your cousin a favor or are impressed by the way someone looks or talks, hiring should not be done for the wrong reasons. Your focus should always be on the best candidate for the job.

6. Not conducting a good interview. Conducting a good hiring interview is a skill that many people do not possess. It's important to ask the right questions to determine whether a candidate is right for the position and fits into your company.

7. Not looking for a good fit. In most businesses there needs to be a rapport among employees. If you hire someone who does not

fit in with the team's chemistry, you may find yourself with unnecessary problems.

8. Not giving employees offer letters. Offer letters list all the important details, including the starting salary, bonus structure, start date, at-will status and benefit information.

9. Not being prepared. You can easily make a hiring mistake when you're not prepared for the interview and hiring process. Know the questions you want to ask and the type of employee you're looking for. Also be ready to explain the position and answer questions about the company.

10. Expecting way too much. A common problem these days is looking for one person to save a sinking ship. An unrealistic, lengthy list of qualifications and background requirements as frequently seen in employment ads creates a situation where you settle for someone whom you think can do a little of everything, but does not excel in the key areas. Narrow your focus to the most important aspects of the position.

For further information and resource guides on these tips visit Allbusiness.com

Source: All business.com

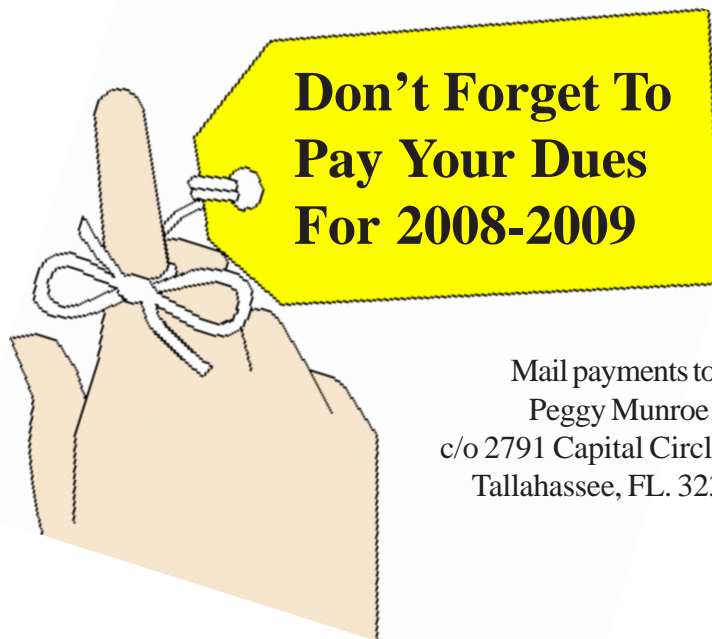
Calendar

NEBA meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month at Lucy Ho's-
1700 Halstead Blvd.
from 1:00 p.m.- 2:00 p.m.
Cost is \$9.00 per person

March 11- Political Forum- District 9 House of Representatives

June 10 - Political Forums for County Commission and Sheriff races

July 8 - Political Forum- Leon County School Board



Mail payments to:
Peggy Munroe
c/o 2791 Capital Circle N.E.
Tallahassee, FL. 32308

Printing By:

Tallahassee Technology Group Inc
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Richard Maus, President

Copiers * Engineering Systems * Printers * Fax
1949 Raymond Diehl Road, Suite B
Tallahassee, Florida 32308
850-385-1772 Phone
850-385-0087 FAX
850-524-3323 Mobile
rich@tlhtech.com



Website Content Updates By:

Curt Heshner, President
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850.980.2571

Curt@CURTECHIT.com



North East Business Association
c/o 2791 Capital Circle N.E.
Tallahassee, Fl. 32308