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Success STRATEGIES

Membership Services, Inc.
www.HelpMembers.com

A Bulletin for Clients and Friends of Membership Services, Inc.

Three Membership Services, Inc. clients achieve success in a “tough year” for legislative initiatives.

New to Tallahassee, the Florida Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaus ends its first year of legislative advocacy with a resounding victory

The terrible events of September 11 created many challenges for the nation. In addition to thousands of profound personal tragedies and the threat to our national security, the economy was also dealt a serious blow. For a state like Florida, which relies so heavily on tourism and transaction taxes to fund government operations, the fiscal impact was

even more pronounced.

The effect of the terrorist attacks on one of the basic foundations of Florida’s economy—tourism—was devastating. Tourism is a \$50 billion industry that makes up 20% of the Florida economy and brings more than 70 million people to the state annually. They spend a considerable

sum of money and generate thousands of jobs.

For a long term recovery, bringing back those tourists who fly from greater distances—particularly overseas—is essential. These visitors stay longer and spend more while they are here. The Tourism Industry

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The Florida Movers and Warehousemen’s Association helps pass bill that protects consumers and movers

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For more than seven years, the Florida Movers and Warehousemen’s Association worked with the Florida Legislature as various lawmakers proposed the same recycled at-

tempts to regulate the industry. Administrators and lawmakers drafted one bill after another without any input from the moving industry. The final result of those efforts was a piecemeal of laws from other industries and county ordinances—bad ideas that would have little effect on the thieves masquerading as movers,

and that would have significantly damaged the way legitimate movers operate.

After all those years of successfully opposing the ill guided efforts of those lawmakers attempting to regulate moving in Florida, something

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New law provides expanded, managed use of off-highway vehicles on public lands

The “T. Mark Schmidt Off-Highway-Vehicle Safety and Recreation Act” provides for the expanded, managed use of off-highway vehicles on public lands.

This law was the vision of the late T. Mark Schmidt, past president of the Florida Motorcycle Dealers Association. Mark died tragically in a

hang glider accident in May of 2000. Mike Jones of Streits Motor Sports in Gainesville, along with the FMDA board of directors, continued to pursue this initiative through its completion this year.

The law provides a system of state-owned off-highway-vehicle recreation areas and trails within Florida, funded

through moneys generated from the titling and registering of off-highway vehicles. The law provides that all off-highway vehicles in the state, purchased after the effective date of this Act, or which are used on public lands, must be titled, and all off-highway vehicles in the state, which

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Corey Mathews Selected to Join Tiger Bay Club

In addition to his duties at Membership Services, Inc., Corey Mathews is an active member of the Tallahassee community. Since moving to the area he has served as a volunteer and member of several civic organizations. However, membership in the prestigious Capital Tiger Bay Club has eluded him ... until now. After nearly a year and a half on the waiting list for the "South's Premier Political Forum," Corey has been invited to join as one of the organization's youngest members.

At this point, most of you are probably asking yourself the same question, "What's a Tiger Bay?" The answer is perhaps more confusing than the name, since no one really knows.

The original Tiger Bay Club was founded in Miami in 1967. One of the founding members suggested that the name "was borrowed from a sleepy little town in southern Florida

where few people voted or took an interest in politics." Others say that it is a reference to the high-profile political speakers who are seen as "Tigers at Bay." Either way, there are now nearly a dozen such organizations throughout Florida. Many of them are also Tiger Bay Clubs, though there is no direct connection between them.

The Capital Tiger Bay Club has 400 members, with an estimated additional 100 on the waiting list. The draw of the organization is its commitment to diversity and its location in the capital of Florida, the state's political epicenter. Another important aspect of Tiger Bay is that for more than 20 years, it has fearlessly promoted democracy and free speech by laughing at politics and politicians, as well as themselves. Many prestigious speakers of national and international reputation have addressed the organization, including

three U.S. presidents, a British prime minister, several Florida governors, and candidates for public offices ranging from city and county commissions to president of the United States.

As a new member, Corey looks forward to supporting the traditions of Tiger Bay and being an active participant in its functions. "I am very honored and proud to have been asked to be a member of the Capital Tiger Bay Club. It is important to have a forum for political satire and discussion, and I can think of no better organization to provide such an arena." Congratulations to Corey on this significant milestone!



MSi President Recognized as a "Young and Aspiring Association Professional"



Association Trends magazine recognized Robert Skrob in its April 26, 2002, issue as a "Young and Aspiring Association Professional" for his extensive list of accomplishments as an association management professional and community volunteer. In the association world, Robert is known as a marketing guru. He accepts many invitations to speak at industry meetings to share his knowledge and experience with colleagues.

"It is an honor to be recognized by my peers," said Robert in response to the recognition. "The exceptional results are due to the association leaders who are willing to work and produce those results. Without the volunteers who serve as officers and board members, associations would lack the heart and purpose that give my marketing efforts a message." He quickly attributes the credit for MSi's achievements to his experience with and direction from the volunteers participating in committees, on the board of directors and as association officers.

Robert's other honors include being designated as a Certified Public Accountant by the Florida Board of Accountancy in 1995 and as a Certified Association Executive by the American Society of Association Executives in 1999.

changed after last year's legislative session. Senator Skip Campbell (D-Tamarac) and Representative Jack Seiler (D-Ft. Lauderdale) invited the FMWA to discuss the issue and propose ideas to eliminate the abuses of the consumer without damaging honest moving companies. The result of this collaborative effort was the creation of SB 2006 and its companion HB 1429.

For the first time, the FMWA was able to endorse a bill that has felony provisions for individuals who unlawfully hold the consumer's goods hostage, but is not restrictive to legitimate movers. While SB 2006 was moving through the Senate, however, HB 1429 had stalled in the House. The obstacle in its way was HB 893, sponsored by Representative Randy Johnson (R-Winter Garden), the same bill the FMWA had fought for the previous seven years.

Members of the FMWA, led by board member Jim Duncan, met with Representative Johnson to discuss HB 893 and its companion, SB 1452, sponsored by Senator Lee Constantine (R-Altamonte Springs). Representative Johnson said he was not tied to any of the language, but he was concerned about the consumers in his area and committed to passing legislation. He invited the FMWA to work with him on his bill to improve the language while insisting that statewide registration, not contained in Senator Campbell's bill, was necessary.

On behalf of the Florida moving industry, the FMWA continued to

negotiate and seek improvements to the bill that were consistent with the association's long stated goal of protecting consumers and the rights of Florida's movers. After tremendous work, a final product emerged that everyone could support. The bill won the approval of both chambers of the Florida Legislature, and was signed into law by the governor on April 19, 2002.

This law contains the following provisions:

- Requires mover to register in the county where its principal place of business is located (if applicable).
- Requires mover to register with the state of Florida annually and pay \$300 registration fee.
- Requires mover to display its registration number on all advertising.
- Requires certain specific language to be included in the contract.
- Requires mover to disclose and accept more than one form of payment.
- Requires mover to carry cargo liability insurance.
- Provides consumers with the right to request and receive a written estimate.
- Provides consumers with the right to be notified of the location of their goods within five days of written request.
- Provides consumers with the right to have their goods released for the amount of the written estimate.

- Provides a clear list of violations and a wide array of penalties that can be applied in a manner consistent with the infraction.
- Provides for felony charges against thieves who refuse to relinquish goods, while demanding exorbitant fees in excess of the written estimate.
- Protects mover's ability to lawfully withhold goods when the consumer has not paid the amount of the written estimate.
- Protects mover's right to pursue additional legitimate charges after the goods have been released to the consumer.

TOURISM RECOVERY continued from page 1

Recovery Act of 2002 amends s. 125.0104(3), F.S., to allow the additional local option tourist development tax, previously authorized to finance the construction of professional sports franchise facilities or convention centers, to be used to promote and advertise tourism.

This is a long term change that will provide local convention and visitor bureaus/tourist development councils the opportunity to increase tourism activity by increasing tourism promotion and marketing. This impacts not only local, businesses but also all programs and services of the counties that would benefit from increased sales tax, tourist tax and fuel tax revenue due to increased tourism in their cities.

MSi Establishes Client Advisory Council

Ensuring a client focus, Membership Services, Inc. is forming an advisory council of leaders from our associations. This council will be responsible for evaluating performance, economics and strategic plans for MSi, and will provide recommendations for continued success.

Volunteering imposes a tremendous burden on association lead-

ers, so there has been hesitation to create an advisory council because it would create an additional burden for interested volunteers to attend. It is important; however, to try this at least once so interested leaders can gain a better understanding of how we are organized to provide services, and we can learn what is working and where we can improve.

The first meeting likely will be held

in late October or November in the Orlando area for one day. The first step is to assess interest. We are looking for honest, frank input on our business practices and financial results. If you are interested in participating, please send Robert an e-mail at Robert@HelpMembers.com

OFF-ROAD RECREATION continued from page 1

are used on public lands, must be registered.

An Off-Highway-Vehicle Recreation Advisory Committee has been created within the Division of Forestry of the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (DACs) to:

- Establish policies to guide DACs regarding the off-highway-vehicle recreational program and the system of off-highway-vehicle recreation areas and trails;
- Make recommendations to DACs regarding off-highway-vehicle safety, training and rider-education programs;
- Review and make recommendations regarding DACs' proposed budget of expenditures from the trust fund;
- Make recommendations regarding all capital outlay expenditures from the trust fund; and
- Review grant applications requesting moneys from the trust fund to create, operate, manage or improve off-highway-vehicle recreation areas or trails within the state.

The Act creates the Florida Off-Highway-Vehicle Titling and Registration Act that establishes rules, regulations and procedures governing off-highway vehicle titling and registration. The Act also provides a fee structure to be administered by the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV).

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MSi Launches New Web Site with Public Information Focus

The first phase of our web site revision is complete. A new consumer information site, along with a new address, www.HelpMembers.com, has been published.

While the complete article, "Six Secrets to Association Success," is in the final editing stages, future revisions to the site will include reference documents, increased editorial content and examples and audio/video broadcasts from our education programs.

We are confident that a "Corey cam" of Corey Mathews working live



at his desk would have drawn more visitors; however, he is holding out for higher royalties.

If you get a chance to check out the site, let us know what you think.

Increasing the Value of Participating through Community



FAHRO family members gather for a group photo at the NAHRO Legislative Conference in Washington, DC.

When the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials held its 2002 Legislative Conference on March 18-20, Washington was well aware that Florida had showed up! More than 80 housing officials from the Florida Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials' member agencies represented our state at the conference and before Florida's congressional delegation.

One highlight of the conference was the inauguration of the FAHRO Neighbor Network. This program was

designed to facilitate Florida networking opportunities at regional and national programs.

Prior to the conference, FAHRO obtained a list of Florida registrants and mailed them an itinerary of locations and times when they could meet with their colleagues from Florida while they were in the nation's capital. Among those events was a Dutch treat networking lunch and dinner, as well as a morning reception at the Florida House to honor Florida's congressional delegation.