



The purpose of this newsletter is to give you an update and report  
on the "state" of your State Trade Association.

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## Missouri Self Storage Monitor

Quarterly MSSOA Newsletter

December 2010

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### A Message from your MSSOA President, Charles Hunt

Hello Everyone,

As excitement builds for the upcoming holidays and we begin to wind down for the year, it is a good time to take stock of what we accomplished in the first decade of the 2000 millennium and set goals for the New Year and the next decade to come.

Although the economy slowed in general these last two years, the self storage business for the most part has been stable and actually improved for the decade as a whole. Many industries would be delighted to say the same. The self storage business remains a great business to be in.

The Missouri Self Storage Association is finding more self storage owners are searching for ways to improve their business. This manifested itself in August with the MSSOA Conference and Trade Show's attendance and the level of participation of the attendees. It's been said this was our best show ever and we intend to repeat that record again in 2011. Since the show and throughout the 2010 year our association membership has increased nicely which is indicative of value received.

MSSOA has had a very good year and the Association is financially sound. As you know our board is a working board and for that I want to thank each of them for their willingness to take on tasks and give input and advice that help make operations run smoothly. Thanks to our officers in particular and to our Board Assistant, Janet Richter, who always does a yeoman's job.

We welcome new ideas from our membership and if anyone is interested in becoming a MSSOA Board member please let us know.

Here is wishing you a Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, and A Prosperous New Year!

Charles Hunt, President MSSOA

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### Meet your Board of Directors



This newsletter features Board Member Billie Oth. Billie is in her 2<sup>nd</sup> year as a board member. She, along with her husband Larry own River Bridge Storage located in Lake Ozark MO. They purchased this facility in November 2004. The next year they joined the MSSOA. They have 116 units which includes sizes from a 5 X 10 to 13 X 42; for housing boats and motor homes. The complex consists of 5 buildings, one of which is their personal building. It houses their 5<sup>th</sup> wheel, large garage and apartment. They are the onsite managers.

They enjoy camping and traveling around the country-side. They have 2 daughters 1 son in law and 3 grandkids. They own a RV lot in south Texas which they enjoy in the winter time.

**Mark Your Calendar NOW!**

**August 3-4-5, 2011**

**11<sup>th</sup> Annual MSSOA Meeting and Trade Show**

**Country Club Hotel and Spa  
Lake Ozark MO**

## Why should I get to know my State Senator & Representative? All they want is donation..... Not true!!

One day while working in the MSSOA office, I was speaking to an association member and the statements above came from him.

I know you all have heard or read in the newsletters that we encourage you to get to know your State Senator and State Representative on a personal level. We have good reason for this. When I answered this callers question he said, you need to explain it that way so we all understand why we need to be so involved.

So here is the answer.....

Getting to know your State Senator and State Representative in your district on a personal basis is a good idea in all walks of life. When you need help on the State level, be it personal or business, they want to be of assistance to you. It's their job.

Read the article below for a great example of how knowing a person in Jefferson City can be very valuable to you and a lot more people. In this case; the State Representative spotted legislation that would be harmful to the Self Storage Industry in Missouri. He notified Dale, who was the Vice President of the MSSOA at that time, Dale alerted our lobbyist who went right to work defending ALL Self Storage Owners in MO .....the bill was killed. We were ready and it paid off.

Another example on a personal issue, former State Representative who is no longer in office but I called him anyway. Since we had a good relationship I thought he might be able to help.

We had a young lady who had just finished college with a degree in Elementary Education. She graduated from HLG College in

May of 2009. She got a job teaching summer school locally. The school she was at offered her a full time job, but because she didn't have her "certificate" yet, they gave the job to someone else. She was called for a job at a different local school and was told, with no "certificate" no job.

It didn't matter that she was at the top of her class all through High School and College, and even finished college in 3 years. All that mattered was the "certificate".

She contacted Dept of Education and they told her that they had all her information but it would be 6-8 weeks longer before she would receive the "certificate"....by then school would be starting and all jobs filled.

This is where I came in, I contacted our former State Representative, he knew who to contact, this was on a Tuesday and she received the "certificate" in the mail on Friday. As a result of this; within 3 weeks she signed a contract and began teaching in August 2009.

So whether Business or Personal, It pays to know your State Senator and State Representative on a first name basis.

By the way; neither I nor the young lady has ever made a donation to either of these gentlemen or their political campaigns.

Please make it your goal to meet and tell him/her about your business. Ask him/her to look out for any legislation about Self Storage or any tax issues; be it good or bad. He/she notifies you, you notify the MSSOA office and we will take it from there.

I hope we do not have any issues, but if we do we must be ready to hit the ground running. Timing is not everything but it is very important; comparatively speaking.

We in Missouri have a very good State Statute; we need to be on our toes ready to protect it at a moment notice. Article from Lincoln Co. Journal



**Representative Ed Schieffer**

Rep. Ed Schieffer has been recognized for his outstanding efforts on behalf of the self storage industry in Missouri.

Speaking to a group of Schieffer's constituents, Dale Jordan of Winfield vice president of the Missouri Self Storage Association (MSSOA) congratulated the state representative "for the fine job he did for the 1,100 storage businesses in the state."

Jordan explained how Schieffer helped. "Ed contacted me and told me about HB 624 which was introduced by Rep. Larry Wilson. He explained that the legislation was designed to make the tax system fairer and help the county assessors collect taxes. I thanked Ed and contacted our executive director to tell him about the proposed law."

MSSOA's executive director read the bill, contacted the association attorney and concluded that the bill as written would be harmful to self storage businesses in the state. Steve Hurst, executive MSSOA, then contacted Rep. Schieffer and Rep. Wilson to discuss the bill. "As a result of the tenacious support of Rep. Schieffer and committee chairman Larry Wilson. The bill has been modified to treat self storage facilities fairly," said Jordan.

On behalf of the self storage owners, Jordan thanked Rep. Schieffer and said "thanks to Ed we have avoided the passage of bad legislation and protected small businesses in Missouri.

Taken from the Lincoln County Journal, Troy MO

**Winter Blues.....**We all know those winter days get long and lonely at the facility office, here are some suggestions to keep you busy during the "slow" months.

As the year draws to a close, once again it is time to look at a few things to do now that will help you be ready for spring rush! Let's be optimistic and hope spring brings new customers, we want to be our best when they arrive!

It is a good time to get set up for the coming year, whether it is your budget or your grounds, everything needs to be looked at. A good place to start is to look at your American Flag, it may make it through winter but it usually needs to be replaced in the spring.

Look at your facility and grounds, does it need fertilizer? We want a nice green lawn and pretty flower beds; give them the head start they need now so they will make you proud in the spring. Take a good look at your office, is it clean, look from the customers side of the desk. Do the walls need repainting; are your floors striped, waxed and buffed?

Drive past your place and look at it from all directions, not as the owner/manager but as a potential renter. Do this in the day time and again at night. Are the curbs painted, how does the door numbers look, are they nice and flat or curled from wear and tear, are all the lights working? Did you know that 60% of storage units are rented by women? They must feel safe and comfortable inside your facility.

Access to your facility must be in good working order, how is your gate operating, does it need grease or a new battery on the safety strip? Are your doors adjusted correctly and do they all have a good rope? Again, with women being our biggest renter we don't want her to have to fight with the door every time she uses the unit. The rope needs to be the right length and in good shape.

When you look at your buildings, remember we are looking from a potential renters' point of view. Are there any dented or bent corners that need repair or replacing? How about the lot, drive through all your gravel and asphalt areas, are they in good repair, do you need to order gravel or sealer?

As you drive by, can you easily read all the signage or are some of the signs faded and need to be repainted or touched up? Use the winter months to get new signs made. When spring gets here you'll be ready to install the new ones.

The winter months are a good time to get all your tools serviced. Before spring, be sure to have your lawn mower, weed eater, blower etc. serviced and ready for spring.

If you sell boxes and moving supplies, this is the time to stock up. Be ready for that spring rush!

If you do these things you should be ahead of the game when all those customers come calling!

Happy Renting!!

Submitted by Dale Jordan

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## **The Results Are In**

The Board of Directors is always looking for ways to improve the service we offer to the membership. With that in mind we handed out a questionnaire to all the attendees at the 2010 Annual Meeting and Trade Show. The theme of this was, **"how can we better serve you?"** There were 15 questions pertaining to the show, speakers, presenters, location etc. There was also space for additional comments. Below is a copy of that questionnaire with the average answer for each question. We used a scale **1 being "strongly agree"** and **5 being "strongly disagree."**

**After taking all answers and getting an average this is the results we came up with.**

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|---|---|
| 1. <u>1.31</u> Was this MSSOA Annual Meeting and Trade Show beneficial to you?  | 9. <u>1.96</u> Do you feel the expense to attend the MSSOA Annual Meeting and Trade Show is reasonable?   |
| 2. <u>1.5</u> Was this MSSOA Annual Meeting and Trade Show a good value for the money spent?  | 10. <u>1.21</u> If you are a member, do you feel it is of value to belong to the Missouri Self Storage Owners Association?  |
| 3. <u>1.38</u> Concerning the Speakers/Presenters; Do you feel you left with a better knowledge and understanding of your business? | 11. <u>1.21</u> Registration Process; Do you feel the registration process was handled in a professional and courteous manner.  |
| 4. <u>1.41</u> Concerning the Speakers/Presenters; Do you feel you are motivated to do an even better job for your customers.       | 12. <u>1.19</u> MSSOA Office; Do you feel your questions and comments were handled in a professional manner?  |
| 5. <u>1.93</u> Concerning the Country Club Hotel and Spa; would you want to hold our Annual Meeting and Trade Show here next year?  | 13. <u>1.68</u> Knowing that there is strength in numbers in Jefferson City, will you take on the task of signing up one new member before the beginning of the year? |
| 6. <u>2.18</u> Concerning the Entertainment; Do you feel our time for relaxation and entertainment was appropriate?                 | 14. <u>2.33</u> Vendors/Exhibitors; Do you feel your exhibit area/round table was adequate for you to properly represent your business/products?                      |
| 7. <u>1.64</u> Concerning Round Table Subjects; Do you feel our topics were beneficial, interesting and timely?                     | 15. <u>1.67</u> If you are a Vendor/Exhibitor, The MSSOA had the perfect set up for my booth.   |
| 8. <u>1.75</u> Concerning Round Table Subjects; Do you feel the time allotted for each table was adequate?                          |   |

### **Attendee comments –**

Love the new location – more vendors with greater variety – excellent job as usual - more time to attend round tables – survey members for new topics – this assoc. has a lot of good members with valuable information – need more ways to share that expertise – facility was neat and clean – need continental breakfast each morning – and our favorite:

"Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! This was my first meeting and trade show and I am so very thankful that I came!"

Overall we came up with a total score to 1.62. Not bad, but room for improvement.

**The Board of Directors will take these results into consideration as they prepare for the 2011 Show**

