



Newsletter

September 2010

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

*11<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting and Trade Show Was a Huge Success!*

*ACTIONS FOR TIMES LIKE WE HAVE NEVER SEEN*

This newsletter will take a look at the 11<sup>TH</sup> Annual Meeting and Trade Show from three different observations. First our President Charles Hunt, second is one of our founders, Charlie Broomfield; and third is a fairly new Board Member, Jara Mease.

Let's see what they have to say!

### **A word from MSSOA President Charles Hunt**

A recent INSIDE SELF STORAGE article said that "education is king" so there must have been a lot of royalty created at MSSOA's recent storage conference and annual trade show. Our goal was to try to beat last years best and from what I have heard from many attendees that was accomplished. The speakers were excellent, the exhibitors were informative and generous with their free drawings and give-aways and the accommodations at our new location were top notch. Personally, regardless of how many storage conferences I attend I always learn something new. This year was no exception. Thanks to all who helped make it the success it was. Mark your calendar now for next year's conference which will again be at the Country Club Hotel & Spa in Lake Ozark MO on August 3rd, 4th and 5th, 2011.

As Fall and Winter approaches now is a good time to spruce up your facility. Plan now for a final trim on your landscaping and plant some trees or shrubs to make your business more attractive and eye appealing. Paint where necessary. Have a great fall.

MSSOA President Charles Hunt

### **New Board Member Stand Point Jara Mease**

Jara is starting her second year as a board member and us currently the Secretary of the MSSOA

This years Annual Meeting and Trade Show was a great one! Caleb and I look forward to them every year. Each year we learn a lot and bring home some great ideas. We love how you come home feeling motivated again, and usually with a list of things you heard that you want to check on or follow up on. It is always nice to meet new people and catch up with everyone you have met in the past years. It is amazing how much you can learn from other fellow Missouri Self Storage Owners. This years speakers and vendors were very generous and informative.

I think every Self Storage Owner in Missouri should attend an Annual Meeting/Trade Show, you will want to come back every year.

I can't wait to see everyone again next year, and look forward to meeting new people.

Jara

## Co-Founder, Past Executive Director & Past President of the MSSOA Charlie Broomfield

What You Missed at the 2010 MSSOA Annual Meeting & Show.

First of all, of course, you missed meeting over 100 of your fellow [Missouri self storage owners](#), managers and vendors in person, where they shared good conversation about everything under the sun, particularly information about the storage business in their areas. Yes, they came from all over the state, plus several from [Kansas](#) and a couple from other states. This is only one of the valuable aspects of the meeting shared by attendees.

Annually for the past eleven years, MSSOA has sponsored the Annual meeting at [Lake of the Ozarks](#). All Missouri storage owners are invited, along with key storage owners from some of our surrounding states.

The main theme of this year's show was "Dealing With Issues In The Storage Business, In Times Like We've Never Seen Before." The title alone will give you excellent insights into several of the major topics we focused on. Of course we didn't need any one to tell us that the American economy is "under water," but a bit of good news was presented by our "Key-Note" Speaker, C. Ray Wilson. Ray Wilson has been one of the "Go-To-Guys" nationally, for details, values, appraisals, and statistics in the storage business for over 30 years and we were honored that he took time out his busy schedule to come speak to us this year.

Not only did Ray share some very valuable research with us, he also did some research on the storage business in Missouri. Ray is willing to share that information to any Missouri storage owner who contacts him. The MSSOA office is providing Ray with a list of attendees at the show and he will be sending the statistics out soon if he has not already. If you would like to receive the information, please contact the MSSOA office. Ray also told us that while all sectors of the real estate industry is suffering, and that once again, [self storage](#) is over-built, we are not nearly as bad off as all other real estate sectors. Some of the good news he shared is the fact that lenders are out there, that many banks and lending institutions have money and are still lending, if of course, "the deals are good." In other words, if a storage has, or can "put more skin in the game" deals can be made.

On the negative side, we learned that \$1.7 trillion of real estate loans are "ballooning" between 2013 and 2015, and if a storage owner built new facilities in and around 2005, they may have difficulty getting refinanced. Values are down in some of these newer facilities.

We were also fortunate to have a local Missouri banker speak to the gathering. Frankly, he was "a breath of fresh air!" He laid the "good news" and the "bad news" right on the line. Again, he said that money is available "for good loans," but naturally, if a business of any kind is in trouble, money will be hard to come by. One storage owner who attended the meeting said that, "he wished he had a banker like this one." Another point mentioned, that impressed a couple of attendees was the fact that some, if not many banks are in trouble also. The point was made that, "if your bank is not lending, it may not be around when your loan comes due." This is a sobering thought, to say the least.

A second major topic of great importance to many small storage owners was that of "high-tech" paraphernalia. "It's the way business, all business, is going, and if you are not on board, too bad," said one attendee. It is not just "computers," anymore, "it's all the "add-ons" and programs that are available, to help make your business run better, smoother and less costly.

One of the best panel discussions, and there were many, focused on "social media." Frankly, today if

you are not on FACEBOOK, [Linkedin](#), and several other social media venues, you are probably missing a lot of business. Vendors who are experts on all these subjects were at the show and not only presented great programs, they were there in the Exhibit Hall to "show and tell" about their services and wares.

These were only a few of the "good things" you missed if you missed the 2010 Annual Show and Meeting of MSSOA at the Lake this year. If any of these topics are of interest, or if you just want to get acquainted with some of the nicest people in Missouri, perhaps you should attend the 2011 Show next year. So right now, get out your 2011 calendar and reserve the 3<sup>RD</sup>, 4<sup>TH</sup> and 5<sup>TH</sup> of August so you will be able to attend the show. Hope to see you there next year.

Charlie B



**Frank Eggering,**

along with his wife Bev, own Foristell Storage, in Foristell, Missouri, which they purchased in 1999. That same year they attended the first MSSOA meeting and every one since. They have an on-site manager at the facility, which consists of 104 mini units, 15 RV

*Meet your  
MSSOA Board  
of Directors*

garages, and five free span buildings for boat and RV storage, as well as outside storage. Five of the buildings were built since 1999. Frank is a former teacher who owned an insurance and investment business for 35 years. He and Bev live in Lake St. Louis and own farms in Randolph and Adair Counties. They love to travel and visit their three kids and four grandkids in Kirksville, Chicago and LA. Frank became a Director of MSSOA in 2009. He credits the organization and especially the contacts he made at the annual meetings for the help and encouragement in growing their storage business.

The following article is reprinted with permission from Inside Self-Storage magazine, the premier magazine of industry professionals. Visit [www.insideselfstorage.com](http://www.insideselfstorage.com) for more free articles.

## **Project 'Picture Storage': Posting Your Self-Storage Facility Images on Google Maps**

**JimChiswell**

07/04/2010

Among my personal treasures from years ago are a bunch of campaign buttons, bumper stickers and signs for various political candidates I helped to get elected. Now I'm declaring a new campaign I've been thinking about for almost a decade. The timing is finally right. Unlike any campaign I've been a part of in the past, it doesn't require me to worry about raising contributions, writing speeches, kissing babies, walking in any parades, or debating any opponents.

I've nicknamed my crusade "Project Picture Storage." The goal is to get 5,000 facility pictures (representing approximately 10 percent of all U.S. storage sites) posted on Google Maps by Jan. 1. The goal is achievable, and the purpose is to get our industry—and, in particular, *your* self-storage facility—more attention nationwide.

I'm calling on every store manager and owner to grab a camera and join the biggest joint marketing effort in our industry's history. The best part is posting facility photos on Google Maps is completely free.

## **Show Off Your Facility**

First, let's talk strategy. We're all searching for ways to promote our businesses and recover some of the occupancy losses we've suffered over the past several years. However, we've also been faced with the reality of limited financial resources to crank up the marketing machine.

For years, Google has allowed people to post pictures of locations around the world through its Panoramio program. To check it out, go to Google Maps and take a look your facility. (Make sure you have the photos option checked under the "more" tab.)

If you don't find your facility's photo, there are several ways to post one. The easiest is to go directly to Panoramio.com. If you don't already have one, you'll need to set up a Google Gmail account, which is free and easy to do. Next, if you haven't taken any digital photos of your facility recently, take 10 or 15 shots. Download them from your camera, and then pick the best images, including one of the entrance, another of the office, and one inside the facility. Once you have two or three quality pictures, make sure the images are in JPEG format and less than 10 MB each (the maximum size that can be uploaded to Panoramio).

The instructions for uploading are straightforward. On the upload page, you'll hit "browse" to access the images on your computer's hard drive and insert the file locations. A couple of clicks later, and your images are on one of Google's servers. Now the real fun starts. Panoramio allows you to insert captions, search tags and even marketing info about your facility's features, hours or security. (Note: There's no spell-checker, so be careful.)

Next, you get to map your actual location directly on Google's master map. When you upload your images, you're agreeing to be bound by Google's terms of service and the Digital Millennium Copyright Act. (You can find details about the legalities on the Google site.) Once approved by Google, your facility photo will appear on Google's map pages.

## **Get Noticed**

The Picture Storage campaign has a simple objective. The next time someone is searching in your neighborhood on Google maps, your facility photo will be referenced, enabling a potential tenant to view it and your comments. Adding an image of your facility at your exact location just might help to get you a phone call or walk-in, and the opportunity for you to earn a rental.

If you're successful with posting your facility images, please drop me an e-mail so I can keep track and report on the campaign as we move toward our Jan. 1 deadline.

*Jim Chiswell is the owner of Chiswell & Associates LLC. Since 1990, his firm has provided feasibility studies, acquisition due diligence and customized manager training for the self-storage industry. He has served for a number of years on the Inside Self-Storage Editorial Advisory Board, is a moderator on the SelfStorageTalk.com online community, and is an instructor of the Self-Storage Training Institute. He can be reached at 434.589.4446 or [chiswell@earthlink.net](mailto:chiswell@earthlink.net). For more information, visit [www.selfstorageconsulting.com](http://www.selfstorageconsulting.com).*

**Don't forget to fill out our questionnaire and send it to the MSSOA office.....**

**We want to have all the correct information on the web site. Please fill it out whether your information on the the webs site is up to date or not. We will be shutting down and starting new!**