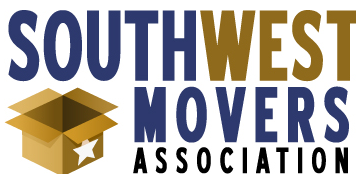


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MOVEFAX

February 19, 2010

Dear SMA Member:

April Meeting: The SMA/GHMA luncheon with guest speaker John Esparza, golf outing and SMA member meetings are April 14-16 in Sugar Land, TX. These meetings are not just for board members and not just for committee members; they are for all members; they are for the effectiveness of SMA; they are for the industry; and most of all, they are for you as the integral part of all of these. Please mark your calendars, rearrange your appointments and commit to the GHMA Charity Golf Tournament on April 14, the SMA member and committee meetings and luncheon on April 15, and ending before noon on April 16 with the committee chair reports and board of directors meeting.

Register for the April Meeting: All members are invited to attend and participate in every meeting; these meetings are your forum; we hope you will use it. When members speak, we listen! We will issue a registration form for you to let us know you are coming so that we can have your name badge made, your chair available at the meeting tables, and your lunch reservation made. Don't miss us because we will surely miss you if you don't come! See survey paragraph below for when the meeting registration form and agenda will be issued.

Membership Directory and The Bulletin: The 2010 membership directory is printed. The spring issue of The Bulletin will go to press shortly and both will be mailed out in March. We appreciate the advertising support given by members in both publications. Keep your publications handy; they give you member names, phone numbers and email addresses. When you need help with a move, call a member mover; when you need supplies or equipment to provide the most professional move anyone ever had, call an associate member. Members help members; that's the way SMA works.

Survey: The SMA Long Range Planning Committee

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(LRPC) met in January and made many excellent recommendations. So that all members can participate in implementing those recommendations and help establish priorities for these programs, staff will be sending out a survey which will ask for your comments, agreements, disagreements, and suggestions. Immediate return of those surveys will facilitate additional committee appointments by Chairman Crocker and dictate agenda items for the April meeting.

SMA's 2010 Calendar of Meetings: The SMA Calendar of meeting dates will be found at the end of the weekly MOVEFax. The calendar is updated as meeting dates and places are finalized.

The MOVEFax is a weekly bulletin of immediate information for SMA members. To the extent possible, staff attempts to provide industry news and ideas to keep the membership informed, however, news from the members of acquisitions, promotions, awards, etc., are welcome and they will be published as space is available.

Thanks,

Dorothy Brooks
Director of Operations

GHMA Announces Mover and Associate of the Year

At its February meeting, the Greater Houston Movers Association recognized GHMA and SMA member David Tripp, A Better Tripp Moving & Storage Co. Inc., as the Mover of the Year. GHMA and SMA member Sean Streckfus, Aegis Insurance Services, was recognized as the Associate Member of the Year. Congratulations David and Sean!!

Two New Pinnacle Movers

SMA is pleased to announce two new Pinnacle Movers. All My Sons Moving & Storage of Houston, Robert Luke, and Albert Moving & Storage, Wichita Falls, Bobby Albert, have been certified as new Pinnacle Movers. Congratulations Robert and Bobby. Thank you for your support and participation in SMA's programs and for maintaining the standards and philosophy in the operation of your businesses to qualify you as a Pinnacle Mover.

Small Claims Court

Small Claims Court is a convenient, non-expensive avenue for members to use in attempting to collect on monies owed. Last week, a member took a customer to small claims court to collect on a move where the credit card payment had been rejected. At court, the attorney for the customer arrived, without the customer, and challenged the member on his authority to present his case if he were not an attorney. The customer's attorney alleged that if one side had an attorney, the other side, especially a corporation, was required to have one. The Judge did not know the law and postponed the hearing. If you find yourself in the same situation, Attorney Paul Angenend has furnished SMA the following information:

"§ 28.003 Jurisdiction

- (a) The small claims court has concurrent jurisdiction with the justice court in actions by any person for the recovery of money in which the amount involved, exclusive of costs, does not exceed \$5,000.
- (b) An action may not be brought in small claims court by:
- (1) an assignee of the claim or other person seeking to bring an action on an assigned claim;
 - (2) a person primarily engaged in the business of lending money at interest; or
 - (3) a collection agency or collection agent.
- (c) A person may be represented by an attorney in small claims court.
- (d) This section does not prevent a legal heir from bringing an action on a claim or account otherwise within the jurisdiction of the court.
- (e) A corporation need not be represented by an attorney in small claims court."

Business Activities Tax Simplification Act

A hearing was held Feb. 4 before the Subcommittee on Commercial and Administrative Law of the Committee on the Judiciary of the U.S. House of Representatives on proposed legislation (H.R. 1083) called the Business Activities Tax Simplification Act (BATSA) of 2010. This legislation, which has appeared in similar forms in the last several sessions of Congress, is gaining support as the effects of overreaching state taxation on interstate businesses, especially small ones, is made clearer. The bill would restrict any state from imposing any general business tax on an interstate business that did not have strong physical contacts with that state. Properly framed, in other words, it would solve the motor carrier industry's so-called "nexus" problems with states such as New Jersey that stop and hold trucks for ransom, and certain others that claim many years of back taxes from carriers with very slight contacts with the state. ATA is working with the coalition backing the legislation and submitted comments for the record. ATA testimony highlighted the administrative as well as tax costs of state impositions, and the fact that the trucking industry is primarily made up of very small fleets, many with potentially very large state tax exposures. *(This is particularly good news for SMA members who have had their trucks held for ransom by states through which they were incidentally traveling to make a delivery.)*

Foreign Energy Reliance Study

America's reliance on foreign energy will grow by 19 percent over the next 20 years, expanding the transfer of U.S. wealth to the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) by more than \$600 billion, according to a report by the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC). The two-year study broadly examined the social, economic and environmental impacts of continued restrictions on developing America's oil and gas resources.

The study predicts the economic results of maintaining current restrictions on accessing America's federally owned onshore and offshore energy resources. The results, when compared with the effects that could be expected from a reasonable energy policy on federal energy resources, will include:

- Import costs for crude oil, petroleum products and natural gas will be \$1.6 trillion higher;
- Imports from OPEC nations will be 4.1 billion barrels higher, resulting in increased payments to OPEC of \$607 billion;
- U.S. production of crude oil - 9.9 billion barrels lower;
- U.S. production of natural gas - 46 trillion cubic feet lower;
- Energy-intensive industries will produce close to 13 million fewer jobs;
- Housing starts will be 200,000 fewer;
- Annual average natural gas prices will be 17 percent higher;
- Annual average electricity prices will be 5 percent higher;
- Real disposable income will be a total of \$2.34 trillion less;
- Energy costs to consumers will be \$2.35 trillion higher;

· Gross Domestic Product will be \$2.36 trillion lower.
To view the study, visit: www.truckline.com

Toll Violators to be Prosecuted for Non-Payment

Starting this week, vehicle owners who have ignored multiple requests for payment of tolls may receive a "last chance letter" that explains how to avoid legal action by paying overdue tolls within 30 days.

Failure to pay toll bills is a violation of state law. TxDOT depends on toll revenue to make payments on the bonds that financed toll road construction and to fund the roadway's maintenance and operation expenses.

The Toll Violation Recovery Program offered a 90 percent reduction in violation fees in exchange for full payment of outstanding tolls and opening a TxTag account. During the three-month-long program, TxDOT received nearly \$850,000 in payments on over 265,000 overdue toll transactions.

What's Your Status With TxDMV

For members wanting to check the TxDMV status of any operator moving hhg's in Texas, including their own, here are the steps to navigate the DMV website:

1. Go to the TxDMV website www.dmv.state.tx.us/
2. Go to Motor Carriers (highlighted in red)
3. Select Records, Searches, Tracking
4. Select Motor Carrier Registration Database
5. Click on the gray bar marked (Enter the MCR Database)
6. At this point you can search by the company name or dba, or the motor carrier number.

Add this address to your favorites list.

SMA Foundation Scholarship Application Due May 14

The SMA Foundation application for scholarships is posted on the SMA website. Members who have students (family, employees and employee families) who will be headed for colleges and universities at the end of the current school year are asked to encourage their students to file their application for SMA Scholarships. Download an application at www.mytexasmover.com. The new deadline reply date for submitting scholarship applications is May 14, 2010, so schools should be asked now for a sealed copy of the mid-term transcript to send with your application.

In Memoriam

Bill Smith, owner of Baytown/Dotson Moving and Storage, long time member of SMA and a faithful attendee of SMA annual meetings, passed away on February 3, 2010, following heart by-pass surgery. Our condolences to wife Geneva, family members, friends and employees of Baytown/Dotson.

Jean Boatright passed away February 1, 2010. Jean was the wife of Jim Boatright, former owner of Empire Warehouse in El Paso, who served several terms on the SMA Board of Directors. Jean had been ill for a very long time. Our condolences to husband Jim, family members and friends.

SMA Event Calendar for 2010

AMSA Education Conference & Expo - Feb. 21-24 - Phoenix, AZ

SMA/GHMA Combined Meeting & Golf Tournament- April 12-16 - Marriott Town Square

Hotel, Sugar Land, TX (Watch for MOVEFax to provide specific details)
National Council of Moving Associations - June 8-10 - St. Louis, MO
Summer Membership Meeting - July 11-13 - Embassy Suites in Hot Springs, AR.
Annual Membership Conference - Sept. 22-24 - Lost Pines Resort and Spa in Bastrop, TX

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