



Nevada News

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Combining WOTC and WWTC will help business

The House voted to combine the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) with the Welfare to Work Tax Credit (WWTC) and end the marriage tax penalty in the same bill, H.R. 4626, late last month. The bill now moves in the Senate.

Under this legislation, the WWTC would become a category under WOTC, giving employers a larger tax credit during a worker's first year in the program, currently 35 percent of wages earned that year. The credit for the second year, currently 50 percent, would decrease making it 40 percent for both years.

The graduated credit of up to 25 percent for workers with fewer than 400 hours that is currently given only for WOTC, would apply to both WOTC and WWTC. The credit applies to the first \$10,000 in earned wages.

The bill also calls for an earlier date for the phase-out of the "marriage penalty" tax. The phase-out is scheduled to begin in January 2005 under the tax cut package President Bush signed in 2001. Under H.R. 4626, the phase out would begin in January 2003

and be completely phased out by 2009, at which time married taxpayers will receive the same deductions as given to two single taxpayers.

H.R. 4626, named the Encouraging Work and Supporting Marriage Act of 2002, passed in the House by a vote of 409-1.

CDC study shows teen smoking rate decline

The teen smoking rate is declining, according to a Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System. Surveys are school-based and use data collected from students nationwide in grades 9 - 12.

According to the report, 28.5 percent of high school students in the U.S. currently smoke, down from 36.4 percent in 1997. In these surveys, smoking is defined as having smoked on one or more of the 30 days preceding the survey.

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Short Takes

Taxing military personnel

When military personnel purchase vehicles for use in this state, they are not exempt from paying the state sales tax. Military personnel may present the dealer with a letter from their commanding officer stating that they are exempt from taxation, but the Soldiers and Sailors Relief Act does not exclude the state of "temporary residence" from taxing tangible personal property purchased for use in the state of "temporary residence."

Look for it on the net



There's not much that can replace the welcoming smell of knowledge in a library, but when it comes to quick info, the Internet is a great tool. Following are reliable sites for research.

www.lii.org: It may not be the library, but librarians use this index to get information. It's searchable, annotated and organized by subject with 40 categories ranging from business to geography to language.

www.chasmgroup.com/underthebuzz.htm: If you need technology information, this site is for you. It offers a free electronic newsletter from Chasm Group, a Silicon Valley consulting company. It features well-researched tech equipment news and much more.

FMI introduces new Fight BAC![®] campaign

Fight BAC![®] *It's Worth the Time*, is the theme of a new campaign in the Food Marketing Institute's (FMI) popular food safety program. The program is designed to reinforce what store associates learn in a company's existing food safety training.

Campaign kits include:

1. Signs to remind associates of their role in reducing food safety risk factors in four key areas – time and temperature control, personal hygiene, cross contamination, and equipment sanitizing. Signs are available in English and Spanish.
2. There are 14 different messages in four separate kits. To keep the information fresh, buyers will receive a new kit with different messages every six months for two years.

Three different kits are available. If you want to handle the printing and be able to tailor the campaign materials to your needs, order the comprehensive CD-ROM, which contains all the art work and messages in both English and Spanish.

For more information, contact FMI at 202-220-0723, or visit FMI's website at <http://www.fmi.org/pub>. Member and nonmember prices apply.

This campaign is designed to help your company meet the FDA challenge to reduce food safety risk factors, says FMI.

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tgoff@tedgoff.com

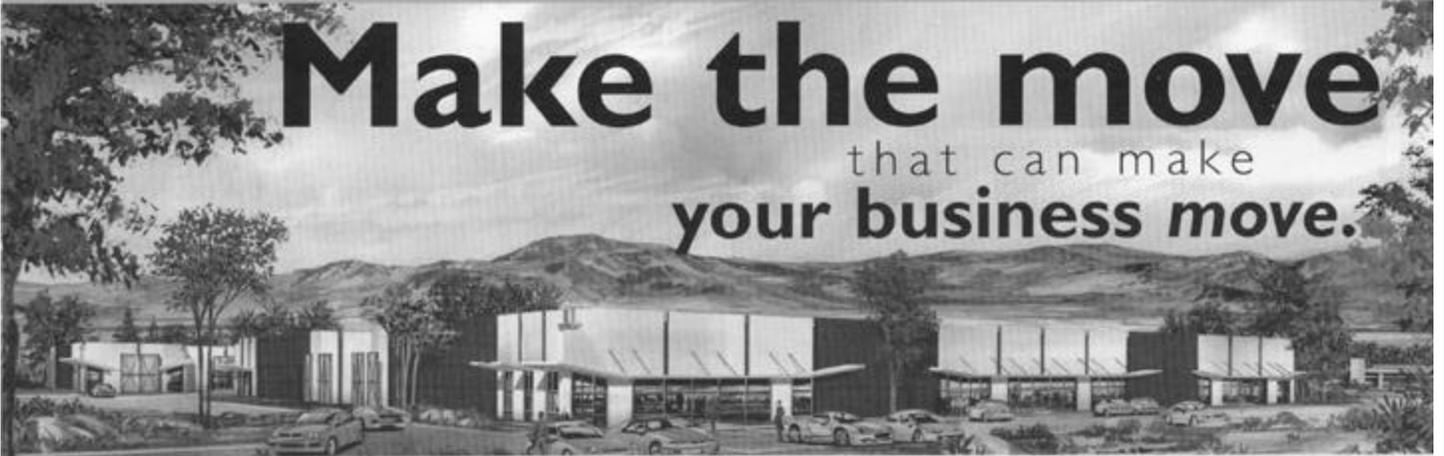


"And should there be a sudden loss of consciousness during this meeting, oxygen masks will drop from the ceiling."

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- Buildings from 12,800 to 38,000 sq. ft. and divisible in 5,000 sq. ft. increments
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- 14-ft. roll-up doors
- .33 calculated sprinkler fire prevention coverage throughout
- Contemporary architecture and fully maintained landscaping
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Privacy and your website

Consumers want privacy in retail transactions, and Congress wants to give it to them. The latest bill in the Senate will limit how businesses may use customer email addresses, phone numbers, purchase records and other personal data collected through their websites. It also requires the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) to develop privacy rules for off-line businesses. Some businesses are making the first move, though.

Peppers & Rogers Group, a customer-focused strategy consulting firm, always uses and continually monitors and improves their own best practices.

Don Peppers and Martha Rogers, Ph.D., cofounders and partners in the firm, write that "sound privacy strategies can translate into revenue when companies set out to build trusted relationships with customers."

Customer goodwill translates into profits. Privacy protection can help you earn customers' goodwill. Are your privacy practices consumer-friendly?

Evaluate your privacy strategies and find out, then take the necessary steps that may protect you from encroaching legislation and lawsuits. If a business has both web and brick and mortar locations, it needs to coordinate its online and off-line procedures.

There are some considerations that may be overlooked when evaluating your website that can contribute to the success or failure of your privacy policies. For one thing, every page of your website

needs to be connected to a single version of your privacy policy.

Do you send information to your web server using 'get forms'? Don't, say information technology (IT) experts. The 'get form' allows a customer's sensitive personal information to pass to the URL when the form is submitted. Using 'post forms' instead sends those facts outside of plain view.

Your privacy practices may be faultless, but if you have any third parties on your site - advertisers, outside content providers, etc. - you must check them to make sure their practices are as tight as your own.

The World Wide Web Consortium has approved the Platform for Privacy Preferences, or P3P, a new technology that will let businesses

pass on some of the privacy responsibility to the consumer. P3P allows consumers to indicate how much data collection and sharing they are willing to release. The software checks the machine-readable privacy policies attached to websites as hidden tags and warns users when there isn't a match. At that point, it will be up to the users to choose to supply the information or not.

The FTC looks favorably on businesses that have already instituted best-practice privacy policies and carry through with them. Associations such as the Food Marketing Institute (FMI) and the National Retail Federation (NRF) have guidelines available on the privacy issues. The ball is in the retailer's court now.

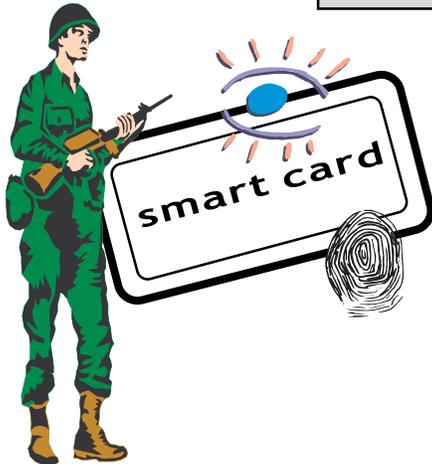
FTC tech guidelines

The 1998 FTC online privacy report highlighted five key principles that e-commerce sites should follow.

- 1. Notice** • Web firms should give consumers notice of any personally identifiable information (PII) collection practices prior to actual collection, including all parties involved in collecting, archiving or receiving PII.
- 2. Choice** • Consumers must first consent to uses of their PII. Such consent should be clear, easily available and sufficiently explanatory. Choice requires web companies to provide either an Opt-in or Opt-out method.
- 3. Access** • Consumers must have the right to access their PII and correct errors and omissions.
- 4. Security** • Web firms should have reasonable protections to prevent corruption of and inappropriate access to PII.
- 5. Enforcement** • The FTC stresses the importance of enforcement mechanisms but doesn't offer firm recommendations.

The smart card future

There are about 3 billion smart cards circulating worldwide. With smart cards, college students can charge their meals, military personnel can check out weapons, truck drivers can make deliveries, and American Express "blue" card holders can charge anything. If all goes well, every government agency will be using them. Here's a look at the current status of smart card applications.



- The **Department of Defense** (DOL) went into smart card high gear following September 11. In October, it started distributing the Common Access Card to its approximately 3.5 million troops, civilian employees and contractors and hopes to have all employees covered by October 2003. With the card, personnel can check out weapons, buy food on base and digitally encrypt their email.

- The **Federal Aviation Administration** (FAA) is launching its own smart card pilot program with distribution to all of its employees. The cards will use holograms and

WE CARD training on net

John Albrecht, senior deputy attorney general of Nevada, announced that the WE CARD program now has a training site on the Internet. The WE CARD program helps retailers comply with the law regarding tobacco product sales to minors under the age of 18.

The Internet site, <http://www.wecard.org/webtraining/index.html>, provides free training in an interactive format. A test is provided when the manager/sales staff person completes the training, and if passed, is immediately issued a proficiency certificate that can be printed or downloaded.

The website fully explains the program. If you have questions, you can call the Coalition for Responsible Tobacco Retailing at 800-934-3968.

some type of biometric technology. FAA expects smart cards to help them standardize the badge handling process and reduce the number of IDs issued, and will allow them to deactivate the cards when an employee

leaves the agency or loses the card.

- Work is afoot to create **Smart Labels** that will replace bar codes. The technology, developed during World War II and used for tracking cattle in the 70's, is expected to be the next big advance in product identification. Major retailers like Wal-Mart and Target are funding the ongoing research by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The labels could speed up checkout lines (all items in a shopping cart could be scanned in one pass) and could warn consumers when dated products have

spoiled. Retailers are enthusiastic about the concept but not about the price. The 40 cents to \$4.00 per label would mean big markups on retail prices.

Why are smart cards smart?

Smart cards look like credit cards but contain a microprocessor chip and a small amount of computer memory for storing bits of electronic data. Using biometrics, the smart card can identify a person by encoding digitized fingerprints and face and retina scans.

Though considered more secure than magnetic stripes, smart cards aren't foolproof, say many experts. Last month, Cambridge computer security researchers presented a paper describing how they used a \$30 camera flash attachment to extract private information from a smart card. In another study, a team of IBM researchers discovered that they could easily and quickly retrieve secret information from the G.S.M. digital cell phone and steal the users identify to make free phone calls.

FLOYD'S

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ACE HARDWARE

It's hard to think in terms of 38 years when you're talking about the longevity of a business, but that's the time frame you have to consider if you're talking about Floyd's Ace Hardware in Pahrump, NV. It may not have always carried the franchise name of Ace Hardware, but they've been doing hardware store business in the southern Nevada town since the days when it first got electricity.

It was 1960, and husband and wife Ron and Charlotte Floyd were visiting Ron's brother, Frank and wife, Carol, in Pahrump, NV, where Frank managed the W.J. Williams Ranch. It was a nice place to visit, but business opportunity was limited because the town didn't have electricity, and Ron sold and installed electric pumps.

When the visit was over, Ron and Charlotte headed home to Chowchilla, CA. Not too long after that, Frank called Ron with the good news—Pahrump was getting electricity. The business climate had changed, so the Floyds moved to Pahrump where Ron would work out of a tent to convert the farms to electric water pumps for their farming operations.

Cotton was the cash crop, along with alfalfa, in the thriving little farming community. Pahrump even had its own cotton gin, says Jeff

Rybolt, store manager of Floyd's. Ron worked nights at the gin during the first years of the pump business, while Charlotte worked in the office. But the tent was quickly becoming a retail store of sorts.

Rybolt says that farmers started visiting the tent to borrow equipment and pick up replacement parts, like belts and such, to keep the farm equipment running. The customers would just "put their money—or IOUs in a cigar box," says Rybolt. It was the kind of community we all dream about when we take a nostalgic look back to the good old days.

The business was growing of its own volition, and eventually the Floyds needed more space. They bought an old barracks building from Nellis Air Force Base in Las Vegas, set it up on West Street, and they were in the hardware business. By 1964, they needed more space. The barracks had worked, so why not buy a few more. The first smart move—starting the electric pump business in a town just getting electricity—was followed by one that is a cornerstone of business good sense—location, location, location. Ron bought more Nellis barracks and placed them on Highway 161.

The smart business decisions just don't stop. Floyd's recently

joined the Retail Association of Nevada's self insured group. Rybolt says, "It was a Godsend to us. We're very happy we signed up with Willie [Kerschner, account executive/Workers' Comp]. She always returns your calls." They really like the extras like Employer Lynx, which has already helped them screen out a couple of possible employee risks. "We're 100 percent satisfied," Rybolt says.

The business has done nothing but grow since the beginning. It became an Ace franchise in 1981, and has grown into a spacious building with a 2-1/2 acre lumberyard. And the best thing about the business, where you can find everything reasonably associated with hardware is—that you can find everything reasonably associated with hardware. It's an old-fashioned hardware store minus the creaking wood floors.

At Floyd's, you can find household goods, sporting goods, nuts and bolts, gift items, wood burning stoves, vanities, toilets, sinks and the plumbing to go with them, paint, cabinets, lighting and the tools and gadgets to repair them. In fact, if you need a replacement part for a fixture, if it exists, they'll find it for you.

continued on next page...

Floyd's Ace Hardware

continued

They sell lumber and build trusses and are opening an equipment rental center where customers can borrow everything from saws, generators, pumps and rototillers to bobcats. It's your basic full-service kind of place, with a difference. Their service is exceptional due in good part because they hire experts in each area, people who really can answer your questions about how to replace a light switch or build a new garage.

Have a gardening question? The gardening department employs a former southern Californian botanical gardener. "Bring in a leaf off your sick tree," Jeff says, and someone in gardening can help you. Other departments follow suit. There are professional electricians and electrical engineers in the electrical department and professional plumbers in the plumbing department.

Business is great, but there are challenges. Wal*Mart is coming to town, but Rybolt isn't too worried. Management is scaling back less competitive departments, while expanding others. He says the store will probably feel the impact for a few months, but as customers' curiosity is satisfied with the new place, they'll come back to get the variety and the help missing from so many big box stores.

Full, expert service is very important considering the continuing and growing trend of home improvement by do-it-yourselfers. Not only are more homeowners tackling the big jobs, Rybolt says

NRNSIG, RAN's selfinsured group, "was a Godsend to us. We're very happy we signed up with Willie [Kerschner, account executive/Workers' Comp at RAN]. We're 100 percent satisfied."

– Jeff Rybolt

that more and more women are picking up the hammers and saws and working on projects themselves. They're doing everything from cutting the lumber to installing new sinks. And they love expert help.

Ace Hardware has grown with the community. From those first days in a town of 300 people just getting electricity, to the thriving community today at 30,000 and growing who are adding on garages and hunting for one-of-a-kind screws, Floyd's will continue to play the role of the friendly neighborhood hardware store. Even though Ron and Charlotte are retired, Ron visits and drinks coffee with the customers, keeping alive the hometown friendliness, while the business thrives under the capable hands of daughter Juliana and her husband Carl, who runs the lumberyard.

• Seminars •

August - 2002

NACDS Pharmacy & Technology Conference

August 10 - 14, 2002
San Diego, CA
Contact: 703-549-3001/www.nacds.org

FMI Managing the Total Store 2002 - Operations Course

August 11 - 15, 2002
Kalamazoo, MI
Contact: 202-220-0710/jbrooms@fmi.org

September - 2002

FMI Energy & Technical Services Conference

September 15 - 18, 2002
Bal Harbour, FL
Contact: 202-220-0706/cstark@fmi.org

Thinking Globally • Working Locally: A conference on Food Safety Education

September 18 - 20, 2002
Orlando, FL
Contact: USDA, 202-314-3459/
fsis.outreach@usda.gov
Sponsored by USDA, HHS & Partnership for Food Safety Education

FMI Human Resources/Training & Development Conference

September 22 - 24, 2002
Scottsdale, AZ
Contact: 202-220-0715/gethin@fmi.org

October - 2002

FMI Internal Auditing Conference

October 6 - 9, 2002
Scottsdale, AZ
Contact: 202-220-0736/sfitz@fmi.org

Abbreviations

FMI • Food Marketing Institute
HHS • US Dept. of Health & Human Services
NACDS • National Association of Chain Drug Stores
NRF • National Retail Federation
USDA • US Dept. of Agriculture

Interviewing dos and don'ts



Interviewing applicants for a job in your company can be more stressful for you than the prospect. Not only are you trying to find a good employee to sink your training dollars into, you have to strictly follow rules and guidelines to protect yourself from lawsuits. The Nevada Association of Employers gives these tips.

- **Taking notes.**

Interviewers are encouraged to take notes during the interview but not on the application or the résumé. Take notes on a separate sheet of paper that won't be kept in a personnel file. Notes on an application or résumé could be used to support a claim of discrimination. Handwritten notes on an application may make it appear that the employer was trying to sabotage the applicant in some way. Use a separate interview sheet to record notes that are relevant to an applicant's skills and experience and that are related to the job.

- **Background checks.**

Background checks and creden-

tial verification are more critical than ever. Some recruitment firms are reporting a high level of résumé inflation from high-tech job seekers. A recent survey showed one in four contained false credentials about education, skills and/or

experience.

Experts say relaxed restrictions on the HB-1 visa program and the prevalence of phony credentials on the Internet may have led to the increase of applicants falsifying their résumés.

Working to retain new-hires

New hires sometimes start out strong only to slow down once the initial excitement of the first few weeks of a new job begins to fade. If that happens to you, try this advice adapted from "A Compassionate Approach to Turning Around Performance Problems," by Carol James, on the Inspired Business website.

- 1. Commit yourself to helping.**

For many managers, the easiest reaction is to look for excuses to get rid of the person quickly. Resist the temptation. Remind yourself of all the reasons you hired him or her in the first place, and act from a sincere desire to help the person stay productive—and employed.

- 2. Keep the vision.**

Think of the new person's early performance, not the recent drop. Use that as a benchmark for both of you to strive toward.

- 3. Show understanding.**

You may feel angry or impatient, but when you deal with the employee, concentrate on coaching, not disciplining. Try to find out what the employee needs to get back up to par. A little compassion will go a long way toward rebuilding the employee's attitude and creating a sense of loyalty.

- 4. Focus on strengths.**

Remind the employee of what he or she has done well in the first few weeks. Don't linger over mistakes or weaknesses. Try to expand the area of what the person is doing right.

- 5. Empower the employee.**

Feelings of helplessness or defeat often create performance problems. Don't try to solve the employees' problems, but show what they can do on their own to improve.

From *Sales Management Report*, 800-878-5331, www.ragan.com.

Companies with best employee benefits win national contest

Principal Financial Group® set out to find small companies in the U.S. who provide outstanding benefits for their employees and crowned 10 winners on May 8.

Why focus on benefits? Because providing employees with a secure future helps a business secure its own future, says Carey Jury, vice president of Principal Financial Group® that sponsored the contest.

Good employees are the biggest asset that a company has. Training employees is an investment. Retaining them makes the investment pay off. Offering good benefits leads to retention, according to the companies that won the contest.

"What we found is that they do not consider their employee benefits a cost, but an investment," said Jury in a *BusinessWeek Online*, May 23 interview.

Not only do these companies have a healthy retention rate, they have a much easier time attracting and motivating employees, according to Jury.

The median employee turnover rate in the computer software and services sector is 25.2 percent. Winners of the contest show different figures. For example, over the last five years, Advanced Financial Solutions, an accounting and software systems production company with 120 employees, had a turnover rate of 1 percent, and Calence, a network systems firm had a 2 percent turnover rate.

Principal Financial Group®

invited businesses with between five and 1000 employees to enter *The Principal® 10 Best Companies for Employee Financial Security* contest. They were looking for companies that have outstanding benefits and other programs that help employees feel secure about their financial futures.

In announcing the winners, Jury said, "The 10 winners of this program recognize that their greatest assets are their people—so we're proud to recognize them with this honor."

The judging panel included business leaders and employee benefits experts working with the Saratoga InstituteSM. Winners were chosen based on how they select, manage and provide benefits and other programs that contribute to their employees' financial security.

Winners are: Advanced Financial Solutions, Inc., Applied Technology and Management, Inc.; Calence, Inc.; ECS, Inc.; FGM, Inc.; MARC, Inc.; Metropolitan Mortgage & Securities Co., Inc.; Nordic Construction Ltd.; PRE Holding, Inc. and Tiller Corporation.

A summary of best practices gleaned from the program will be available this summer. Entry forms for the 2003 contest will be available this fall.

Principal Financial Group® is a worldwide financial services company based in Des Moines, Iowa.

For more information, visit their website, www.principal.com.

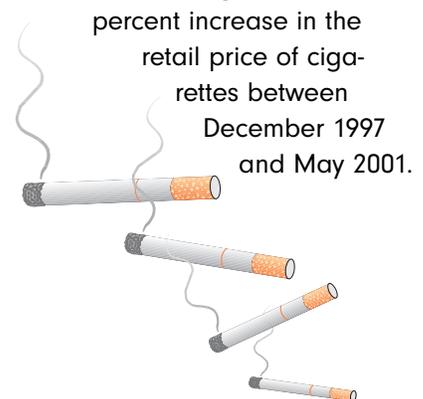
Teen Smoking

continued from page 1

Lifetime use has also declined. In 1999, CDC reported that 70.4 percent of high school students had tried cigarette smoking during their lives. By 2001, that number had fallen to 63.9 percent. The report concludes that if this pattern continues, the U.S. could achieve the 2010 national health objective of reducing current smoking rates among high school students to 16 percent or less.

"It is encouraging to see more and more teens making the right choice about smoking," said David Fleming, M.D., acting director of the CDC. "We hope this trend continues because it would mean fewer people suffering and dying from smoking-related illnesses."

The data from this report are consistent with other national surveys that suggest the dramatic increase in cigarette smoking rates among high school students during the early to mid-1990s is now being reversed. Factors that may have contributed to the decline include youth exposure to both state and national mass media smoking prevention campaigns and a 70



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- ✎ Investigation and defense of claims
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Certificate #5008



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• Membership in RAN Required •

Important Information for SIG Members

The NRS governing self insured groups requires notifying members of all new members to the Group. New members for NRNSIG for the month of May 2002, are listed below. If you would like a complete list of the members, please call RAN at 775-882-1700.

NRNSIG

- Annie the Maid Cleaning Services
- BIPIes, Inc./INT Pies Nv, Inc.
- Capital Auto Trim
- Eastern Sierra Feed
- Freeman Enterprises, Inc.
- Martin Enterprises/All Star Vending
- Mountain View Casino
- Overland Hotel & Casino
- Park Inn/Hardman House
- Professional Blind Installers
- Silver State Janitorial
- Solari Hospice, Inc.
- Sunshine Wholesale
- Unicahome, Inc.
- Wrondel Mail & Minis

NRNSIG members who wish to register a negative vote on a new group member, write NRNSIG at 810 E. Fifth St., Suite A, Carson City, NV 89701, indicating which member and the reason(s) for the negative vote.

NCNSIG members should contact Joseph Burgess at CHSI, PO Box 33250, Reno, NV 89533, indicating the member and the reason(s) for the negative vote.

NCNSIG

- Alamo Truck Plaza
- Bordertown Inc.
- Buffalo Club & Saloon
- Casino West, Inc.
- Coast Drapery Service, Inc.
- Crystal Bay Club Casino
- Delta Saloon Inc.
- Fallon Nugget/Bonanza Inn & Casino
- Farrington Productions, Inc.
- Full House, Inc.
- Gaming Ventures of Las Vegas
- Giudici's Victorian Gambling Hall
- Gold Dust West
- Hampton Inn Tropicana
- Harich Tahoe Development
- Imagination, Inc.
- Mint Casino, Inc.
- Old Reno Casino
- Pioneer Inn Hotel & Casino
- Resorts West
- Rail City Casino
- Silverado Casino
- Sobel Westex
- Sky Entertainment, Inc.
- Tahoe Biltmore Lodge/Casino
- Tahoe Nugget Inc.
- The Gambler
- The Nugget
- United Coin Machine Co.
- Western Money Systems Inc.
- Winner's Hotel & Casino Inc.

Membership Information

To find out more about RAN's self insured groups, please call us at 775-882-1700 or 800-690-5959. Don't forget our website, www.RANNV.org.

Foothill Commerce Center fills high demand for freeway frontage in Reno

New South Meadows factory showroom space last remaining freeway frontage

With a special focus on creating high-quality commercial projects, Tanamera Commercial Development (TCD) prides itself as being a leader in its respective market.

Tanamera Commercial Development recently announced the opening of the Foothill Commerce Center, a retail/industrial project located in the South Meadows of Reno. The new project occupies the last remaining stretch of valuable freeway frontage showroom space in South Meadows Business Park, a booming business corridor in southwest Reno.

Located along the western side of US 395 in south Reno, the Center has excellent frontage for companies who want to benefit from a showroom/warehouse.

The project will consist of 4 buildings, totaling 135,000 square feet. They are available for lease, lease-option or purchase. Purchase prices start at \$85 per square foot, and flexible tenant options are available.

Buildings range from 12,800 square feet to 47,413 square feet and are divisible. Portions can be

sold in segments starting at 2,400 square feet.

Interested parties can purchase space in buildings #1, #2 or #4 at \$85 per square foot, or lease space for \$0.65 per square foot per month, Triple Net (tenant pays utilities, janitorial service, property taxes, insurance, etc.)

Building #3 of this development offers spectacular freeway frontage exposure with prices starting at \$100.00 per square foot to purchase. Leases start at \$1.05 per square foot. Lease and purchase prices include a \$4.00 per square foot Tenant Improvement allowance to build out the space.

Tanamera Commercial Development (TCD) prides itself as being a leader in its respective market, with a special focus on creating high-quality commercial projects,

In addition to the Foothill Commerce Center, TCD is developing the Reno Tahoe Tech Center,

which will have 850,000 square feet of corporate business development. This office park will provide high-tech features throughout 43 buildings designed and built by Devcon Construction, Silicon Valley's premier tech builder.

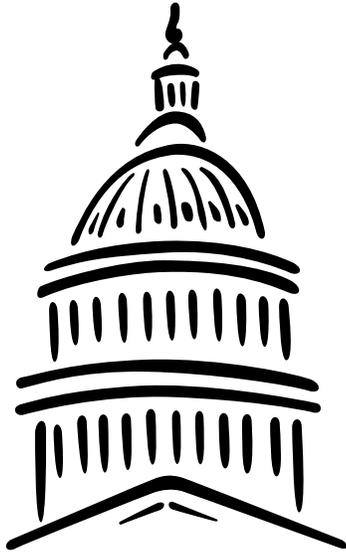
The first Tech Center building of Phase 1 was completed in May 2002, offering 60,000 square feet of Class A office space. Phase 1 is due to be completed in summer 2003, and will total 180,000 square feet.

TCD also offers the Reno Corporate Center at Rattlesnake Mountain featuring 2.5 million square feet of industrial/distribution, Class A and incubator/R&D office space with supporting arterial commercial space.

Tanamera Commercial Development (TCD) is truly raising the commercial property bar in Reno, and businesses are appreciatively responding. The result? Truckee Meadows' reputation for offering a premier business foundation is flourishing.

For more information on the Foothill Commerce Center or other projects by Tanamera Commercial Development, please contact Christianne Orear at 775-850-4242. You can also visit TCD's website at tanameracommercial.com.

Washington
Watch



Big Brother getting bigger—It's time to drag out those junior high school novels and scrutinize their pages. An Orwellian atmosphere pervades the law enforcement mentality and the public since September 11. A May 2002 article in *USA Today* says, "Privacy advocates fear that expanded police power under the Patriot Act—combined with lax oversight and increased cooperation between the government and private sector phone network and Internet gatekeepers—may be stomping on civil liberties." The Associated Press quoted a FBI computer crime investigator as saying that ISPs are gathering private information even before a warrant is approved and holding customer information

longer. Fear may have replaced reasoning, but in their cooperative zeal, businesses shouldn't be too quick to hand over the goods, says Sue Ashdown, president of the American Internet Service Providers Association. The First Amendment still exists.

The Patriot Act allows agents to subpoena customer payment records, to obtain the identity of the user of an email address, to follow where people travel on the Internet, to bypass Internet providers to capture email addresses and to read email and wiretap conversations in real time. At any time, in any jurisdiction, federal judges can approve sweeping, non-specific warrants. *Animal Farm* anyone?

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