

BUSINESS

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TODAY'S BRIEFING

Your connection to Northern Nevada business

Wine-grape harvest workshop to be at WNC's Fallon campus

Western Nevada College's Specialty Crop Institute will host an all-day wine-grape harvest workshop on Sept. 10 in Fallon for those interested in expanding Nevada's viticulture and wine industry.

The workshop will combine classroom discussion at WNC's Fallon campus, 160 Campus Way, and an on-farm tour at Churchill Vineyards in Fallon.

Harvesting grapes and solving the challenges of cold hardiness will be the main topic.

Cost for the 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. workshop is \$30 and includes lunch. Registrants receive a \$5 discount if payment is made by Sept. 7. To register, call 775-423-5186 or visit www.wnc.edu/sci.

NETWORKING

Heller to speak at networking breakfast

U.S. Rep. Dean Heller, R-Nev., will be the featured speaker at the Nevada Business Connections' monthly networking breakfast on Wednesday in Carson City.

The event begins at 7:30 a.m. in the Pinion Room of the Gold Dust West, 2171 U.S. Highway 50 East.

Cost is \$20 for members and \$25 for guests. To RSVP, call 775-882-8306 or e-mail kris@nevadabusinessconnections.com.

Admittance will be on a first-come, first-served basis.

— Staff reports

JUST ANNOUNCED

Malpractice insurer to issue dividends

Nevada-based Premier Physicians Insurance Co. said Monday it will issue its first shareholder dividend in the third quarter after three years in operation.

Wholly owned by its policyholders, Premier Physicians provides medical malpractice insurance and is one of the state's largest carriers.

The company said it will begin issuing the checks, totaling hundreds of thousands of dollars, to vested shareholders starting this month.

PEOPLE

Local earns regional recognition

Jerry Morrissey of RE/MAX Premier Properties was among the top 10 RE/MAX sales producers for the southwest region for the month of June 2009.

Send news and photos of Northern Nevada business people to business@rgj.com

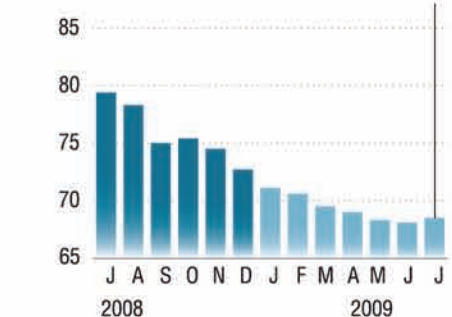
DATA SNAPSHOT

Capacity output

The capacity utilization index:

Seasonally adjusted

2002 = 100



SOURCE: Federal Reserve Board

REAL ESTATE

Housing index inches up

But builders still feel negative about market

BY JASON HIDALGO
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Builder confidence nationwide inched up in August, buoyed by positive feedback to the federal government's first-time home buyer tax credit.

The National Association of Home Builders/Wells Fargo Housing Market Index rose by one point to 18, the index's highest reading since June 2008. The West region reported a three-point gain to 17. The index measures builder outlook for sales of

new, single-family homes for the next six months.

"We're seeing a lot of inventory moving right now, and that's always a positive sign," said Mike Dillon, executive director of the Reno-based Builders Association of Northern Nevada. "But we've

still got a long ways to go."

The index's incremental gains indicate slow recovery in the market and also reflect the ongoing challenges faced by an industry still struggling to compete against previously-owned homes. A reading below 50 indicates that more builders have a negative outlook

SEE HOUSING ON 8A

SMALL-BUSINESS PROFILE

Mobile printer service 'never lost a client'



TIM DUNN/RGJ

Mark and Linda Glies own Cartridge on Wheels, suppliers of printer cartridges and other items.

Company offers lifetime service for printers

BY MARIAN BOND
business@rgj.com

CARTRIDGE ON WHEELS

ESTABLISHED: April 2008

CLIENTELE: Business community

SERVICES: Supplies toner, ink, cartridges. Services printers and fax machines. Sells printers and copiers.

PHONE: 775-787-9222

ON THE WEB: www.cartridgeonwheels.com

Mark Glies and his wife, Linda, were looking for a business that provided a needed service to a business community customer base in the Reno-Sparks-Carson City area.

In their job search they learned about Cartridge On Wheels, a franchise based in Monroe, La. Paul Moreau, president and co-founder of Cartridge On Wheels, said the company, with 16 locations in 10 states, was formed in 2008 and Glies was their first franchisee.

Glies said the company is patterned after Snap-on Tools and is a mobile warehouse of components for printers such as ink toner, laser printer supplies, fax supplies and equipment.

The Glies' 2008 Dodge Sprinter van is fully stocked to

provide all services and needed components for their customers, and all graphics on the vehicle follow the franchise model. While he runs the route to call on their clients, Linda, whose background includes electronics and distribution, works in their home office.

The couple moved to Reno in 1994 from California, where Glies worked in the software

industry.

Glies said his new business does not sell or offer services to retail customers, and the franchise operates only on a mobile basis.

"We have a 1,600-square-foot warehouse on our property where we can store the van and all of the cartridges and inks and other inventory," he said.

Basically, their service is maintaining the printers in a business on a regular route at no cost — until there is a need for supplies such as toner, ink or cartridges. At the end of the day, invoices are e-mailed to customers for any supplies or equipment.

"The key thing is, if you buy your toner from me, I will maintain your printers for free," Glies said. "If you have a problem with a paper jam, call me."

Tourism board aims for air travel

STAFF REPORT

A Nevada Commission on Tourism sales team launched a campaign Monday to stimulate travel from Chicago, Denver and Dallas, major markets that offer air service to Nevada.

The week-long campaign aimed at autumn travelers will take three commission sales staffers to the three cities that provide access to Nevada's major airports in Reno and Las Vegas.

Additionally, Denver offers air service to Ely, which benefits the eastern side of the state by reducing travel time for fly-drive visitors.

"Our sales team will promote easy air access from those cities, exclusive travel deals and new attractions in meetings with key tour operators and other influential travel industry contacts that bring business to Nevada," said Lt. Gov. Brian K. Krolicki, commission chairman. "Convenient air service generates revenue for the entire state because it encourages fly-drive travelers, who catch a flight to Las Vegas, Reno-Lake Tahoe or Ely, then jump in a car to go see historic mining towns, parks and other rural attractions."

Also involved in the campaign are officials from the Reno-Sparks Convention and Visitors Authority and Pony Express Territory.

The sales team will promote attractions throughout the state with a focus on golf, skiing and new attractions.

"There is no better way to sell Nevada as a desirable destination than to develop business relationships, deliver information in person and convey enthusiasm for our product," NCOT Director Dann Lewis said.

INSIGHT: SMALL BUSINESS

Outside resources exist to make a venture successful

You don't have to go it alone. You can find a great deal of help, much of it free, whether you're transitioning to self-employment, facing new challenges in your existing business or hoping to start or expand a company.

Over the years, I've noticed a big difference between successful entrepreneurs



RHONDA ABRAMS

and those that fail is that successful people seek out good advice and listen to it.

These are challenging times for small businesses, so it's more important than ever to get help. Here are some outstanding sources:

SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTERS

I'm listing these first, because I think SBDCs are one of the country's best-kept secrets and a terrific source of excellent quality help. In fact, I was once a client.

There are about 1,000 SBDC centers across the U.S., many

of them located at community colleges.

They provide in-depth one-on-one counseling to about a million entrepreneurs a year.

Since SBDCs are funded in part by the U.S. Small Business Administration, by law, this counseling is free.

At an SBDC, you can also take low-cost classes and workshops to help you learn how to keep your books, do your marketing, create a business plan. SBDC offices also have libraries of business information and research sources. Most SBDC counselors are

experienced business people, such as former owners or bankers who've gone through education and training to help small companies. They're dedicated, hard-working and love helping entrepreneurs succeed. It's probably the best use of your tax money you'll ever find. Take advantage of your local SBDC.

TRADE ASSOCIATIONS

If you're looking for information about your specific industry, one of the best sources is your own industry association.

No matter what type of business you're in, I'm betting there's an

association for it, especially since there are nearly 40,000 trade associations. Whether you're a caterer, consultant, cartoonist or canine cosmetologist, there's an association for you.

Trade associations generally provide training, research data, vendor information, certification programs and networking opportunities with others in your field.

I've pulled together a list of some key associations at www.PlanningShop.com/associations.

Rhonda Abrams' column appears Tuesdays in the RGJ.

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