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On The Level - December 2008

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The Source for Listing New Homes in the Temple & Belton Area

As you may have read in the November issue of *On the Level*, TABA has launched a "Buy Now Campaign". This campaign has been designed to include three phases. The first phase was developed to accomplish the short term goal of selling off some of our current local inventory. It included full color page advertisements in the *Temple Daily Telegram* that have been placed to coincide with high readership days and high traffic days for new home shopping. We have done quite well in addressing our immediate goal, approaching the sell of 15 percent of the intital listed inventory.

The second and most current phase of the program is designed to keep home buyers in the hunt while educating them about the positives of our local market. This phase is rolling out this month. A billboard campaign is being prepared with Lamar Outdoor Advertising. Likewise, additional *Telegram* flyers are planned to run from December through February.

The third phase of our program will be designed to accomplish our long term goal of keeping the local market fluid and keeping our builders out in front on the home buying public. We'll want to make sure that our remodelers and custom home builders are considered and included in this phase of the program.

We have created a new website www.templeareahomes.com. This website was created as a mechanism for builders that are participating in the Buy Now campaign to list their current, ready to move in inventory. It is quickly morphing into a long term solution and terrific member benefit. As the campaign progresses and our immediate goals are met, the website will be opened up to all TABA builders to list their inventory. The listing includes a user's login that allows personal administration of homes in the database. The billboards are designed as a compliment to our website with the desired goal of making templeareahomes.com **THE GO TO SITE** for local buyers in search of a new home. The website is also being advertised in the classified section of the *Temple Daily Telelgram* in bold lettering directing people to

log on and take a look at what is available for purchase.

TABA is very excited about the new website and the opportunities it creates for all of our members. While only builders can list their homes, advertising space has been allocated for members who wish to advertise on this website. If you are interested in advertising please call today for pricing and information. Space is limited and is available on a first come first serve basis. Advertisers will have the benefit of a full color and linkable ad spot.

The Buy Now Campaign has proven to be a great success thusfar and continues to develop into a long term member benefit. TABA would like to extend many thanks to *Temple Daily Telegram* and Lamar Advtvertising for working with us on this campaign.

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President's Message
Derrick Hunt

December is upon us and with that comes the close of my year as your president. The first nine months at TABA could have been described as pleasantly uneventful. The well oiled machine that this organization has become was hitting on all eight cylinders. Each of our committees were picking up where last year's left off and making each of our events just a little better than they were before. Troy and Cheryl were busy making improvements here and there to help our association run a little smoother every chance they had. In short, the experience was just what you would expect in working with an organization guided by committed professionals.

And then came the stock market meltdown and the credit crisis. Right now, we can only hope that the impact lasts no longer than a short Texas winter, but there are many out there that think that 2009 could be a tough year. Regardless of what the prognosticators and pontificators are saying, this organization took action swiftly. Within weeks, we had a "Buy Now" campaign put together to help our builders move existing inventory. I am proud to report that this campaign has already helped builders move over 10 percent of the inventory that was on the ground when our program was created.

The last three months have been anything but uneventful! However, it has been exciting to see members

come together and put forth an effort to help everyone sell some houses and get back to work. We anticipate this effort to continue at least until the Parade of Homes in April, but when it ends will be determined more by inventory levels than specific dates.

One of the byproducts of this effort is our new website, www.templeareahomes.com. This is going to be a permanent membership benefit that allows builder members to post their inventory of completed homes. It is still a work in progress, but the initial input from our members has been very positive. The site allows builders to upload pictures of their homes, make changes to available inventory, link to their own websites, advertise, and showcase their product in general. This may turn out to be one of our best membership advantages.

This month I will hand over the reigns of this organization to Chris Alexander of Texas Tradition Homes. She has served TABA for many years in various capacities and I know she is up to the challenge of leading us in 2009. I also know that Chris will appreciate all of our assistance during the coming year as we try to negotiate whatever 2009 throws at us. You never let me feel like I was on my own, so let's make sure she has the same terrific support.

Those of you that have followed this column will know that I often use this space to thank the people that make this organization work. I can't pass up this one final chance to thank all of you, our members, who so willingly give of your time and resources so that this association can continue to promote affordable home ownership for all. Without our members our voice would not be near as strong as it is today. And without our staff, we could not present the professional and unified front that we present today. Thanks Troy and Cheryl for all your help this year.

I wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a prosperous 2009.

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Troy Glasson
Executive Officer

I always enjoy taking some time in December to reflect on the accomplishments of our organization. As always, there

are many, but to me it isn't so much the accomplishments that are impressive as it is the way they come about.

Not only is your association able to provide it's membership with numerous marketing and networking opportunities throughout the year, but at the same time we are able to monitor and participate in the regulatory and political affairs that continuously impact your business.

Whether it be by participating as a stakeholder in addressing code or ordinance changes; or engaging the candidates that drive these changes—your association has been there for you at every turn.

This year alone, we've been at the table as the Temple Comprehensive Plan was implemented and as changes were made to the masonry, fence, and sign ordinances. We've also worked to recommend positive changes to the Temple Fire Code and have begun to press for appraisal credits for energy efficient homes. Further, we've worked to make recommendations that were adopted by both Temple and Belton as they devised their municipal storm water plans. Each of these regulatory efforts were time consuming and complicated in their own rights, but the Comprehensive Plan was a monumental undertaking that led to the creation of a document that will drive development policy in Temple for the next 20 years.

Cheryl and I would have a difficult time accomplishing all of our goals each year if it wasn't for the support of numerous volunteers. That is what the recent TABA Award's Banquet was all about. It provided an opportunity for us to thank those of you who have given so freely of your time to benefit your industry.

The Government Affairs Committee and Home PAC, TABA's political action committee, are two groups that I work with on a very regular basis.

Since government makes the rules we live and work by, it is important for us to be able to have a say in the rules that they make. On the regulatory front, the [Government Affairs Committee](#) is the group that assures that anytime new rules are considered, they receive the input of this association. Our chairman, Mike Pilkington, and 13 others meet frequently for this purpose.

I'd bet there isn't a person reading this that wasn't happy to see the 2008 elections come to an end. We've been bombarded with television commercials, ads, and even telephone calls from candidates throughout the year. Additionally, we've been to the polls multiple times this campaign season.

For most, this is where your involvement has ended. For the [Home PAC](#) trustees, they've not only spent the year working to assure we have the resources to participate in the political process, they've taken the time to meet with and get to know the candidates prior to making decisions about who best to recommend our industry support. Thanks to Chairman Dean Winkler and our Home PAC trustees for all you do.

It takes a major commitment to serve on the Government Affairs Committee at TABA or as a Home PAC trustee and I can assure you that these folks are constantly working to protect the interests of the local home building industry.

Finally, I'd like to say a special thanks to Derrick Hunt of Drews Hunt Builders for his service to TABA over the course of the year. Derrick has taken his role as president of TABA very seriously this year and has done a tremendous job focusing on member benefits and education. He has attended every TABA meeting that has been scheduled and been a leader in every sense of the word. Thanks Derrick and [2008 Board of Directors](#) for all you have done for TABA this year.

Happy Holidays everyone, I look forward to serving you in 2009. Please don't hesitate to let us know if we can assist you.

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Consolidated Reinforcement, Inc.	C R I
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Come Join Us

Thursday, December 4th from 11am - 1pm

TABA Christmas Open House

at the TABA Office (12 North 5th Street)

This is a come and go event so please stop by for a few minutes, have a few Christmas treats, drink some punch and share our holiday cheer.

The year is finally at an end and TABA wants to wish all of our members a

Very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

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Annual TABA Awards Banquet

Sponsored By:  **Compass Bank**

The TABA Awards Banquet was a night that allowed us to provide kudos for a job well done and express hopes for a great 2009 to all of our TABA leaders. It is the time every year that TABA recognizes those who went above and beyond to make our Association a better organization and help to support the local building industry.

The 2008 Board of Directors received their plaques for a year of service and the 2009 Board of Directors were sworn in and asked to take the helm on January 1st. Committee and project chairmen were

thanked for their efforts during the year and several members were given the highest honors TABA awards.

Real Estate Agency of the Year gold award was presented to RE/Max Temple-Belton
Real Estate Agency of the Year silver award was presented to Rodney Dunn Co.

Real Estate Agent of the Year gold award was awarded to Mark Mahler of Re/Max and Mary Jane Roach of Rodney Dunn

Real Estate Agent of the Year silver award was awarded to Ryan Smith and Donna Williams both of Re/Max

Sponsor of the Year gold award was presented to the *Temple Daily Telegram*

Sponsor of the Year silver award was given to Central National Bank

Presidential Awards:

Associate of the Year - Mat Naegele of Lamar Advertising

Builder of the Year - John Howe of Omega Builders

President's Award of Excellence - Debbie Swift of Kiella Homebuilders

TABA congratulates these very deserving award recipients. Take a look at our online slideshow for a pictorial of the night's events.

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BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

TABA is the primary advocate of your industry in the halls of local government. This is an invaluable service that helps keep your costs in check and assures you have the best possible working relationship with regulators. Since very few of our members have the time or the inclination to work closely with the government officials that make the rules that impact your industry, it is imperative that someone is working for you day in and day out. TABA does this! We also provide marketing and networking opportunities that are designed to help you grow your business and we promote members doing business with other members. Along with these benefits, we also offer more direct benefits such as those listed below:



The National Association of Home Builders makes 'free money' available to our members in the form of great savings on every day items and services that many businesses use.

The [Member Advantage Program](#) is designed specifically for Association members and only TABA/NAHB members can take advantage of program offerings. Special incentive programs have been arranged through agreements with companies such as GM, Dell and UPS.

For instance, UPS, the world's largest package company, has partnered with NAHB to offer our members discounts of up to 30 percent on shipping. This benefit includes domestic air and ground, and international export and import. Visit www.savewithups.com/nahb for more information.

Additionally, GM has worked with NAHB to provide an exclusive offer to our members. TABA members can get **\$500 off their best price** on most GM passenger cars, light-duty trucks, vans and SUV's. Nameplates include Chevrolet, Pontiac, Buick, Cadillac, GMC, Saturn, Saab and HUMMER. Certain exclusions apply, check with dealer for details. For complete details about this offer visit www.gmfleet.com/nahb.

NAHB's newest partner is the famous Omaha Steak Company. Check out the Membership Advantage link at the top of this article for a list of all the NAHB partners in the Membership Advantage Program.

Shell Fuel Program - Another Member Benefit

All TABA members should have now received a marketing flyer about TABA's latest partnership with Shell Fleet. As a member of TABA you qualify for a 3 percent discount on your fuel purchases. You are invited to apply for the Shell Fleet Plus card and begin earning this discount immediately on your company's fuel purchases and with the sting at the pumps these days, 3 percent can add up to a considerable savings if you operate multiple company vehicles. If you have questions regarding this program please contact our Shell representative, Raed Salah at 972-653-3127 or by email to shellfleetcard@citigroup.com. TABA hopes this newest member benefit will help to relieve some of the costly burden of doing business.

TABA Room Rental

Do you need a place to hold a banquet, seminar or meeting? Does your organization need a comfortable room that is quiet and has plenty of amenities? Then TABA has the place for you - the newly constructed John & Suzanne Kiella Conference Room at the TABA office building on 5th and Adams Ave. We have one of the best facilities in this area for a small group event and our prices reflect what is typical for a comparable facility in our area. Best of all we provide a member discount! Check out our rates:

The room is available Monday thru Friday from 8am until 5pm only.

	Member	Non Member
1-3 Hours	\$225	\$450
3-5 Hours	\$275	\$550
Full Day	\$425	\$850

Use of the kitchen facilities, common areas, podium, projector, sound system and screen are at no additional charge.

Booking may be done by calling the TABA office and we reserve the right to book around already scheduled TABA events.

We are very excited to be able to provide this savings benefit to our TABA members and hope that our members will take advantage of this opportunity. Please call the TABA office for more information.

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EO's Comments

Cheryl Hunka
Executive Officer

Important Information about Your Lobbying Tax Deduction for 2009

Dues payments to the Temple Area Builders Association are not deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes. However, dues payments may be deductible as an ordinary and necessary business expense, subject to exclusion for lobbying activity. Because a portion of your dues is used for lobbying by NAHB and TAB, \$78.86 of your dues is not deductible for income tax purposes. If you have any questions about this please feel free to contact me.

2009 Dues Increase

As you may have read in your November issue of *On the Level*, the TABA Board of Directors has passed a dues increase effective December 1st of this year. The dues increase was passed in order for us to keep up with the cost of doing business. We are proud to remain one of the lowest dues structured associations in the state. We work very hard to make membership affordable. Beginning December 1st, associate membership increases to \$400 per year and builder membership increases to \$500 per year. Check out page 7 of the newsletter to be reminded of the many services your association provides for you.

TABA Wins Membership Recruitment Contest

I am so happy to report that TABA is one of only four associations in the state of Texas to win the Membership Recruitment contest that Texas Association of Builders held this year. TABA was awarded \$2,500 for gaining the highest percentage of new members during the contest period. Our board of directors and many members work hard every year to recruit new members and we appreciate your efforts. This was a great honor as we were one of 33 Texas locals competing for this award.

That's it from my desk. I can't believe 2008 is almost behind us and we are strapped in for a great ride for 2009. Chris Alexander is going to do a fantastic job leading us through the coming year but many thanks to Derrick Hunt. Derrick has done a phenomenal job this year bringing so much education and a few new member benefits your way. It was a honor to work for Derrick and his board. Hope to see everyone stop in for a visit at the Christmas Open House and we will definitely see everybody next year!

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The Nutcracker
 Presented by The Newcomb School of Ballet
 & Ballet Renee

December 13th at 7pm
 December 14th at 2pm

Bring the whole family to
 see this holiday tradition!

Adult \$10, Child \$5
 Azalee Marshall Cultural Activities Center
 3011 N. 3rd Temple, TX. 76501 254-773-9926

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NEW HOME STARTS

	Nov '08	Nov '07	'08 YTD	'07 YTD
Temple	11	11	380	472
Belton	2	5	68	118
Morgan's Point	0	2	17	24
Totals	13	18	465	614

ALL HOME CLOSINGS

Nov '08	107	'08 YTD	1,828
Nov '07	185	'07 YTD	2,237

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