OPINION

Guest Editorial

It's a Start, but Small Businesses Need to Hear More
By Todd Stottlemyer

When Senator John McCain delivered the keynote address at the National Federation of Independent Business 2008 National Small Business Summit last month, he did much more than speak to several hundred interested small business owners. He pushed the concerns of a significant voting bloc to the forefront of the presidential campaigns. In fact, both Sens. McCain and Barack Obama have spent much time specifically addressing the No. 1 issue among small businesses—healthcare. And it's about time.

Recognizing that healthcare costs have become unmanageable for many entrepreneurs, Sen. McCain said, if elected, his administration would introduce healthcare reform that would provide hardworking Americans more options and expand portability of coverage.

Sen. Obama, who was invited to speak at the summit but did not attend, responded to Sen. McCain's remarks by reiterating that small businesses need more options to access quality, affordable healthcare coverage. We also know both candidates recognize that implementing health information technology and addressing an inequitable tax structure should play a part in any comprehensive reform package.

Over the past few weeks, it's been encouraging to see the candidates discuss the issues facing the small business, especially the rising cost of healthcare. But they—and all of our country's leaders—must realize that entrepreneurs deserve more than just discussions. Because the truth is, these job creators, those on the front lines of the healthcare crisis, are the voters who will be electing the next president, and they are demanding the next administration and Congress implement real change that makes healthcare more affordable for working Americans.

According to a recent NFIB survey, 81 percent of small business owners and 52 percent of employees do not feel the presidential candidates are adequately addressing issues that are important to them, specifically healthcare. In fact, nearly three-quarters of those polled say fixing healthcare should be a top priority for the next president, and nearly 80 percent agree that "it is important to me to vote for a presidential candidate whose healthcare plan makes sense for small business."

A similar survey showed that the small business community comprised 43 percent of U.S. registered voters and nearly 32 percent of the electorate on Super Tuesday. These numbers prove that small business is a powerful, motivated group in a position to demand substantial solutions to the healthcare crisis from their candidates.

Both candidates are focused on reforming our ailing healthcare system and have begun to recognize that small business must be considered in any proposed legislation. The National Small Business Summit may have ended, but small business' commitment to achieving quality, affordable healthcare has not.

We're at the beginning of long and productive discussions with both candidates to ensure the needs of small businesses remain at the forefront of the healthcare debate. Because we know that solutions to America's healthcare crisis must start with small businesses, the backbone of the U.S. economy. When healthcare is fixed for small business, it will be fixed for America.

Todd Stottlemyer is president and CEO of the National Federation of Independent Business in Washington, D.C.

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Bond's Broadcast

Last Thursday was a great night for us here at the Bond household.

In fact it really personified the very reason we chose to come back to Carlisle.

We are really creatures of the front porch at the Bond household. If the weather allows we are almost always found at one time or another during the day setting up shop on our front porch on West Main Street.

Back in 2005 Marilyn and I felt like we needed a change and were trying to decide where we wanted to go and live until we are able to retire. Admittedly in today's economy retirement is a lofty goal, however that was the idea.

We talk about this for several months and as we drove from Whitley City to Las Vegas for Amy Jo's wedding.

I finally told Marilyn that I really felt like I would like to move back to Carlisle, where we had lived from late 1986 until 1991.

We talked it over and weighed a few other alternatives, however I told Marilyn I liked Carlisle, I liked the people of Carlisle and I liked how we were treated when we lived here the first time.

She offered no argument whatsoever and the rest as they say, is history.

The first time our family lived in Carlisle was when we had purchased The Carlisle Mercury from Kay and Warren Fisher.

We started out on Sycamore Hill but in short order moved to the big red house on the corner across from the old jail or Whitaker Bank or Garrett's Furniture, depending on which angle you take.

We used to make an evening of it very often. We would sit on the front porch and watch as Roy Fryman and Pedie Hardin would sit on Elm Street and chase down those who chose to not stop at the red light there at Main and Elm proper.

Most years I have taken pictures during parades and made my way up to Main Street for the crowning of the queen (take your pick of festivities), but this year I decided to just sit on my porch.

It was not unlike the days all of my children along with Marilyn and me would sit on the porch down there at the red house.

We ordered up some of Chef Dick Garrett's fish, who by the way delivered it to the newspaper office when it was finished, and we set up the table for us to gobble down the delectable offerings of Garrett's fryer. To borrow a phrase, yum yum!!!

As some know we are longtime friends with Jason Carpintero, the new pastor at Carlisle Methodist, and when he and his wife Linda, along with daughters Sarah and Isabella, drove by we called and invited them to come join us.

Now let me be real clear there was no fish left. We had eaten it all.

About all that was left were some slaw juice and the sauce the beans had been in. I guess we could have picked up some bread and sopped it all up.

Jason and the entire crew arrived prior to the parade so we had the chance to visit and for Marilyn and I to catch up with the girls.

Becky Myers came across the street to visit and neighbors from both sides of the street either came and visited or waved as they went by.

In fact, as the parade passed we waved and yelled at a great many people.

We enjoyed it all.

Sadie Bug loves tractors – and for the most part if you are not flying on a motorcycle – she loves to listen to the roar of the engine.

Parade night though validated my memories of why I wanted to come back to Carlisle. While Marilyn fully supported me in my decision I was the one who came up with the idea to come back here.

And as I have said, it was because of, well, because it was Carlisle.

We know nearly everyone in the parade and even the ones we didn't call by name waved, smiled and if the kids were lucky threw hands full of candy toward our house.

Carol and Beth were here with Sadie Bug and Evan, plus the Carpintero girls, plus Jason and Linda. Marilyn and I pulled out our chairs and we were right there with them for the entire evening.

The band ends by playing John Phillip Sousa melodies, who was The March King from 1854 to 1932. He was a powerful influence on the world of music and is honored until this day.

Also as the parade passed, horses and tractors filed dutifully by but when it all came to an end, it was about the people.

The people who we call friends. Those who are friendly regardless of where we are (my kind of people).

Evan wanted one of those on a fire truck to blow the siren. Without hesitation Calvin Denton, who was driving the old Carlisle fire truck, let the siren wail as he passed.

It's things like that, which made it easy to come back to Carlisle to live.

I'm glad we did.

I hope to see you next year at the parade. If you don't have a place, grab a chair and pull it up in front of my house. And if it's hot we'll always offer you a swallow from the garden hose.

If you do come and join us though, you need to be ready for the group that gathers and bring you a few chairs, cause this is Carlisle and that's how it's done on parade night.

See you in 2009!!!

And so, for another week, thanks and thirty.

Veloz Viewpoints

Greetings from Nevada! I hope you are all having a great week.

I want to start this week by wishing some people I love Happy Birthday. Thursday of this week, July 10 is my Daddy's birthday. And, for the first time in I'm not sure how long, I get to spend it with him! So, Happy Birthday Daddy!

Then, on Friday of this week, July 11, is little Miss Sadie Jo's first birthday! And, I get to spend it with her. We get to watch her dive head first into her cake and open all her presents. I can't wait! So, Happy First Birthday Sadie Jo, Aunt Amy loves you!

This past weekend was a blast! Last year for the fourth of July we just stayed home and watch the fireworks from our roof while the kids slept. They were too little to take out, plus they fell asleep before they started so it wouldn't have been much fun. This year, we made a whole weekend of it.

On Friday, we went up to the mountains to stay at a family cabin that belongs to one of our friends' family. It was a very nice cabin and the property it sets on is very nice too. It is all fenced in and has grass all over. I know many of you might think, grass – who cares? But in the desert, it isn't something you come across very often, so for it to be fully grassed, it was very nice!

We spent the evening there on Friday. We put all the kids to bed around nine or nine-thirty and then the adults played a couple of games and watched a movie. We haven't been able to have adult time in a while now so it was really nice.

We got up Saturday morning and Ben and I made breakfast for everyone. Then we played outside some more. The weather was so much cooler up in the mountains than down in town. We were able to be outside for quite a while without being too hot. Katie, my friend, and I went for a walk to burn off some of our breakfast. It gave us some time to talk, so that was nice too.

Later, the adults watched a movie while the kids played in the cabin. It was nice to be able to get away and relax. The kids had a great time getting into new things they don't normally have to get into and Ben and I relaxed. It was a very nice weekend.

After we ate lunch we got all packed up to come back home. We got home around four in the afternoon and everyone took a nap. After our naps we had some dinner and headed out to watch fireworks. They had the big fireworks show on Saturday this year so they could get the fireworks guy they wanted. The show was amazing.

At first, Antonio wasn't quite sure what to think of them as being so close they make a lot of noise. Analise absolutely loved them! Once I sat Antonio on Ben's lap with Analise he relaxed a little and seemed to enjoy them more. I had a great time with them watching the fireworks. I am sure they had a good time too. Next year will be the best as they will be old enough to understand a little more. Things just get more and more fun every time we do them.

I hope that statement rings true about our upcoming plane ride. Being that the kids are much more mobile now and don't really like to sit very still, I'm hoping the plane ride goes smoothly. I'll let you know next week how it went.

I just can't wait to come home!

Until next week, make it a great one!

Amy

Talkin' From The Mountains

Bits and pieces of News

A group called "Americans United For Change" brought its "Bush Legacy Bus" to Louisville recently.

The bus wanted to make Louisville one of its first stops because it said Senator Mitch McConnell has been so instrumental in helping Bush accomplish everything he has done—or not done.

Here are some of the suggestions by the sponsors of the bus and visitors as to what Bush should be remembered for:

1. Starting the devastating war in Iraq with no end in sight and no way to gain any kind of victory.
2. The high cost of prescription drugs.
3. The huge national debt.
4. 50 million Americans without health insurance.
5. The housing and credit crisis.
6. Torturing prisoners.
7. Taking away individual rights.
8. Wiretapping of average law abiding American citizens.
9. Tax cuts for the rich.
10. Abandonment of our American citizens in the Gulf Coast Area after Hurricane Katrina.
11. Vetoing of children's health insurance (SCHIP).
12. Continuing an unnecessary war while Osama Bin Laden who attacked our nation went free.
13. Lying about weapons of mass destruction and the nuclear capability of Iraq.
14. High price of gasoline.
15. Ignoring the catastrophic consequences pointing us because of climate change.
16. Allowing corporations to pollute our air and our streams.
17. Trying to destroy our national parks by fighting to drill for oil and log in our beautiful preserves and off our coast.
18. Helping make more animals extinct.
19. Wrecking almost every federal agency to the point that drugs, food and even toys are sometimes deadly, and making it impossible for the commerce department to be prepared for a census in 2010.
20. Making a majority of all the people in the world hate the United States.
21. Trying to wreck Social Security and Medicare.
22. Allowing one million Americans a year to fall from Middle Class into poverty while the rich get richer.

23. Holding people, including American citizens, at Guantanamo and in secret prisons and not giving them the rights guaranteed by our constitution.

These are only a few of the suggestions the Bush Legacy Bus has received so far. If you have more suggestions, send them to me and I will be glad to forward them on.

The bus also has some information about our own Senator Mitch McConnell. Bush could not have managed all of the things listed above without the rubber stamp approval of McConnell who chose to be accountable to George W. Bush rather than take care of the people of Kentucky and his nation. I hope you remember that in November.

Example of what the Legacy bus is talking about: On Tuesday, June 10, Democratic Senators tried to get a bill through to stop price gouging and running up the cost of gasoline but the Mitch McConnel led Republicans managed to come up with a procedural way of blocking the vote.

Got to give Mitch credit, he's an expert at keeping the Senate from getting anything done for the American people. That's why he is beloved by George W. Bush and among the wealthy and the corporate world.

Meantime, in the first case of "secret evidence" against a detainee at Guantanamo, a federal appeals court said accusations against a Chinese man held for 6 years were unverifiable and there was no real evidence against him.

The court expressed anger and contempt for the Bush Administration's argument that the man was guilty just because accusations against the detainee had been expressed 3 times by the Bush Administration.

The court compared the Bush argument to the absurd declaration of a character in the Lewis Carroll poem, "the Hunting Snark": "I have said it thrice. What I tell you three time is true."

"This comes perilously close to suggesting that whatever the government says must be treated as true," said the federal court.

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OPINION

4th District Report

The Truth about Oil Shale

The national average for a gallon of regular gasoline continues to break records, crossing $4.10 over Independence Day weekend. Not only has the pain at the pump squeezed our family budgets and curbed some Fourth of July celebrations across the Commonwealth, it has also forced the Kentucky State Police to reduce patrols and caused our school districts to raise lunch prices and cut bus routes.

The United States possesses abundant domestic energy resources that hold tremendous potential to increase our energy supply, create jobs and possibly generate a third industrial revolution in our nation. Unfortunately, the Democratic Majority in Congress continues to avoid creating a comprehensive energy strategy that will increase our domestic energy supply so that we can reduce our dependence on foreign oil from unstable regions of the world.

It is past time to responsibly explore and develop the plentiful energy resources that exist on and off our nation's shores. The Interior Department estimates that there are 112 billion barrels of recoverable oil beneath U.S. federal lands and coastal waters. That estimate does not account for oil shale.

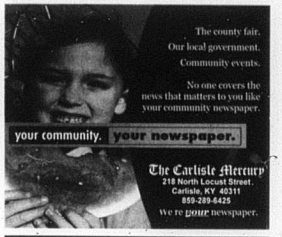
America is home to the largest oil shale deposits on Earth. The Institute for Energy Research estimates that we could extract more than seven times the amount of crude oil reserves found in Saudi Arabia from shale in our own country. This would be enough oil to meet current U.S. demand for more than 250 years.

Oil shale is a type of porous rock that contains trapped oil deposits. In the past, shale had to be mined, much like coal, and then go through extensive heat or chemical processing in order to extract the oil. Today, technology is available that allows companies to drill into oil shale and insert heating elements that bring the oil to the surface without the need for mining. This technology has eliminated the need for disruptive mining methods and lengthy industrial processing, making the process of extracting oil from shale more efficient, affordable and environmentally responsible.

In 2005, the Republican-led Congress directed the U.S. Secretary of Interior to develop a program that would facilitate the production of America's oil shale resources. However, in 2007, the Democratic Majority prohibited the Department of the Interior from completing this task by suspending funding for the project. Now is not the time to restrict our options.

As global demand for oil continues to grow dramatically, current supply cannot keep pace. We must take action to use our American energy resources in a responsible and efficient manner. Seventy-five percent of Americans support an immediate increase in oil drilling in the United States. The Democratic Majority has an obligation to the American people; they must remove unnecessary and outdated laws so that we can develop and benefit from the resources at our fingertips.

As a nation, we must evaluate all potential solutions for solving our energy crisis. In the short term, we must effectively utilize our domestic resources. In addition, we must invest in the creation of alternative fuels. A sensible energy policy must also address incentives for increased conservation and efficiency. Finally, we must make strategic investments in energy research so that the fuels of the future are safe, clean and affordable for all Americans.



NOTICE TO PUBLIC OF INTENT TO REQUEST A RELEASE OF FUNDS

July 9, 2008

Kentucky Housing Corporation
1231 Louisville Rd.
Frankfort, KY 40601
Mark Offerman, Chief Operating Officer

TO ALL INTERESTED AGENCIES, GROUPS AND PERSONS:

On or about July 26, 2008, Kentucky Housing Corporation (KHC) will request the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to release Federal funds for the following project:

Project: Community Ventures Corporation – CVC 2008 CHDO Homebuyer Program
Purpose: Community Ventures Corporation (CVC), a KHC-approved CHDO, proposes new construction and/or acquisition/rehab/resale of 15 single family dwellings on scattered unidentified sites within its approved service area (Adair, Anderson, Boone, Bourbon, Boyle, Campbell, Casey, Cumberland, Estill, Franklin, Gallatin, Garrard, Grant, Green, Harrison, Hart, Jessamine, Kenton, Larue, Lincoln, Marion, Mercer, Nicholas, Pendleton, Scott, Taylor, Washington and Woodford counties). The proposed CHDO program will provide homeownership opportunities for low-income families and individuals (at or below 80% area median income). CVC will either acquire unspecified vacant lots and build new affordable single-family homes for income-eligible homebuyers or will acquire, rehab and re-sell homes to income-eligible homebuyers. Additional units may be completed in the next few years if the initial project goes smoothly. The project could also, under certain conditions, assist up to three families to rehabilitate their current dilapidated housing.
Location: Scattered sites located in Adair, Anderson, Boone, Bourbon, Boyle, Campbell, Casey, Cumberland, Estill, Franklin, Gallatin, Garrard, Grant, Green, Harrison, Hart, Jessamine, Kenton, Larue, Lincoln, Marion, Mercer, Nicholas, Pendleton, Scott, Taylor, Washington and Woodford Counties, Kentucky.
Approximate HOME Funds in Project: $400,000

An Environmental Review Record respecting the within project has been made by KHC which documents the environmental review of the project. The Environmental Review Record is on file at the above address and is available for public examination and copying upon request during normal business hours.

All interested agencies, groups and persons disagreeing with this decision are invited to submit written comments for consideration by KHC to the Chief Officer, Attention: Crystal Harrod. Such written comments should be received at the above address on or before July 25, 2008. All such comments so received will be considered and KHC will not request the release of Federal funds or take any administrative action on the within project prior to the date specified in the preceding sentence.

KHC will undertake the project described above with HOME funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) under Title II of the National Affordable Housing Act of 1990. KHC is certifying that KHC as State Participating Jurisdiction consents to accept the jurisdiction of the Federal courts if an action is brought to enforce responsibilities in relation to environmental reviews, decision making, and action; and that these responsibilities have been satisfied. The legal effect of the certification is that upon its approval, KHC may use the HOME funds and HUD will have satisfied its responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and other related laws and authorities. HUD will accept an objection to its approval of the release of funds and acceptance of the certification only if it is on one of the following bases: (a) That the certification was not in fact executed by KHC's Certifying Officer; or (b) that KHC has failed to make one of the two findings pursuant to 24 CFR Part 58 Sec. 58.40 or to make the written determination required by Secs. 58.35, 58.47 or 58.53 for the project, as applicable; or (c) KHC has omitted one or more of the steps set forth at subparts E of 24 CFR Part 58 for the preparation, publication and completion of an Environmental Assessment; or (d) KHC has omitted one or more of the steps set forth at subparts F and G of 24 CFR Part 58 for the conduct, preparation, publication and completion of an Environmental Impact Statement, if applicable; or (e) KHC has committed funds or incurred costs not authorized by 24 CFR Part 58 before release of funds and approval of the environmental certification by HUD; or (f) A Federal agency acting pursuant to 40 CFR part 1504 has submitted a written finding that the project is unsatisfactory from the standpoint of environmental quality.

Objections must be prepared and submitted in accordance with the required procedure (24 CFR Part 58) and may be addressed to: Ms. Virginia Peck, Director, Office of Community Planning & Development, U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development, 601 West Broadway, Room 110, Louisville, KY 40202. Objections to the release of funds on bases other than those stated above will not be considered by HUD. No objection received after August 9, 2008 will be considered by HUD.