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Special Article to Local HBA Publications
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Headline:

SEBC Presents Lifeline for Survival; FHBA Fights to Defeat Amendment 4

In the most challenging economic environment in two decades, the Florida Home Builders Association-sponsored Southeast Building Conference (SEBC) & Green Building Show extended a lifeline of ideas and inspiration to more than 5,000 industry survivors during its July event in Orlando.

Themed “Reboot Your Recovery,” SEBC 2010 focused on tools builders and associates need to solve the industry’s biggest challenges, including building affordable housing, creative marketing, selling against foreclosures, complying with new national health care rules, and achieving more realistic appraisal values.

Leading manufacturers and suppliers showcased over 300 displays featuring the latest in building products and services, and presented valuable seminars on subjects ranging from color trends (Sherwin Williams) to effective construction contracts (Bonded Builders Warranty Group).

For pure motivation, it was hard to beat the SEBC’s patriotic opening ceremonies, where Sgt. Matt Eversmann shared lessons in leadership based on the incredible story of a 1992 military mission in Somalia that inspired the book and movie *Black Hawk Down*. “We’ve all faced adversity and we’re facing it today as an industry,” said SEBC Chair Ann Hagen of Bonded Builders. “Sgt. Eversmann showed us that faith and perseverance makes the difference even in the most seemingly hopeless circumstances.”

SEBC delegates also heard an insightful look at the economy from Wells Fargo senior economist Dr. Eugenio Aleman – Florida housing will continue to struggle in an uncertain time for consumers – and Gulf Power Company CEO Susan Story, who said virtually all energy sources, including nuclear, will be needed to meet growing worldwide demand.

Under the leadership of state association president John C. “Chuck” Fowke of Tampa, FHBA’s summer meeting was chocked full important business and initiatives:

- FHB-PAC endorsed Bill McCollum (R) for Governor; Jeff Atwater (R) for CFO; Jeff Kottkamp (R) and Dave Aronberg (D) for Attorney General; and Adam Putnam (R) for Agriculture Commissioner.
- Working through an entity known as Florida Builders for a Better Economy, FHBA will energize its local HBAs, members and employees to defeat the

proposed constitutional amendment – Amendment 4 – more popularly known as “Hometown Democracy.”

- Highland City builder Marc Boney and Bonded Builders Warranty Group CEO/President Whit Ward were named the 2010 inductees to the Florida Housing Hall of Fame.
- Naples developer Al Zichella of KD Merick & Company was elected to the office of FHBA President-elect, setting him up to succeed Fowke on October 23, 2010 during the Annual Fall Conference at the Hyatt Coconut Point in Bonita Springs.
- Remodeler Bill Varian, CGR, CAPS, CGB of Naples won the second annual Robert & Amy Harper Award for his tireless work on behalf of the Future Builders of America (FBA) program; and Okeechobee green building specialist Cindy Hall of Cap Stone Industries in Okeechobee captured the 2010 Woman of Distinction Award.
- Generous donors contributed to net proceeds of more than \$20,000 at the Future Builders of America (FBA) Silent Auction, sponsored by Wells Fargo, with the monies funding scholarships for students pursuing careers in construction.
- Builder Bob Eaton of Artistic Homes in Spring Hill and associate members Bill Croce of Color Wheel Paints & Coatings in Tampa and Hugh Lichter of Hugh Lichter Enterprises in Palm Harbor qualified as Life Directors on the FHBA Board.
- Builder Ron Lieberman of Nu-Era Homes in Beverly Hills and associate member Patty Wedge-Ludwig of Merchant Insurance Solutions in Bonita Springs have been qualified as candidates for the FHBA senior officer positions of Secretary and Associate Vice President, respectively, for 2010-2011. The election will be held October 23, 2010 in Bonita Springs.
- FHBA Senior Officers and National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) BUILD-PAC Trustees Jay Carlson of Punta Gorda and Suzanne Graham of Port Charlotte hosted a fund-raiser at the SEBC which featured BUILD-PAC-endorsed U.S. Senate candidate and former Florida House Speaker Marco Rubio.

SEBC also hosted the 31st annual Aurora Awards. Among the winners were active FHBA leaders Mike Hickman of Lakeland, Nathan Cross of Orlando, Drew Smith of Sarasota, and Rita Williams of Jacksonville. For a complete list of Aurora winners, visit www.theauroras.com.

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