

THE COVERED CORNER

AUGUST 2009

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

EXPOSURES FOR REALTORS TO CONSIDER 1 & 2

UPCOMING TREC MCE COURSES 2

RECIPE OF THE MONTH 3

SUGGESTED READING 3

EVENTS 4

EXPOSURES FOR REALTORS TO CONSIDER

Risk is everywhere, risk is a part of life, whether you're simply crossing a street or taking a plunge in speculative housing development. The Real Estate industry has it's own set of exposures to certain risks like any business. The primary ones you face, beyond your personal safety, are Professional Negligence, libel, slander, and various other liability risks. Risk can never be totally avoided, however it can be somewhat controlled through knowledge and some sound risk-management solutions.

YOUR #1 WITH A BULLET EXPOSURE

Do you know what your #1 liability exposure is? Don't scream out the answer if you've been to the class. Ready, driving your car. That's right. Let me ask you, do you have a magnetic sign on your car? You know, the one that has your picture perhaps and let's everyone know what you do and who you work with? Do you take clients to see prospective homes in your car? If you do, you need to call your agent and simply ask them to add the Individual Business Use endorsement to your personal auto.



This would be a great time to go over your current coverage levels and raise them up to as high as you can afford. If you currently have the state minimums of 25/50/25, your not protecting yourself. Those first two numbers are about Bodily Injury. They represent \$25,000 per person for medical costs associated with an accident you are liable for, up to a maximum of \$50,000 for two or more people.

Another couple of questions, "Do you know how much Life Flight costs?" or "Do you know what a day in an Intensive Care Unit costs?" The ride on Life Flight's around \$10,000 and a day in ICU is around \$12,000. The average increase in monthly premium, going from 25/50/25 to 500/500/100 is around \$30. That's \$500,000 as opposed to \$25,000. Something else to consider to further protect you and your family is a Personal Umbrella policy. The average cost for a one million dollar Umbrella is around \$185, annually.

PROFESSIONAL NEGLIGENCE

Everyday Real Estate Professionals are being held to ever-higher standards of practice. Your exposure to liability and lawsuits is growing.

Con't on page 2

NEXT MONTH:

- **Auto Insurance De-Mystified**

If you have an insurance question or an idea for an article, send me an email at: howard@hfiagency.com

EXPOSURES FOR REALTORS TO CONSIDER

When you help someone buy or sell a home, you are helping them with one of the most substantial financial transactions they will go through. You are expected to be a Subject Matter Expert (SME) and everything you say or do is coming under ever greater scrutiny. If you or your broker doesn't currently carry Errors & Omissions coverage I strongly urge you to call your agent and look into getting some. E&O insurance is often called "malpractice insurance for real estate brokers" and will help pay for the cost of litigation and some judgments against you if you are sued for errors in business practices.

MISREPRESENTATION

Three "to watch" areas here, the first is MLS listings, with the biggest there being Square Footage. Always quote the source, appraisal district, per owner. Experience is another one, just because I've had auto insurance since I was 16 doesn't mean I can start my professional experience in the industry from that point in my life, darn it. The third is your "Specialty". Don't tell people you specialize in River Oaks if you have to Google map it to get there. For instance, I don't specialize in Health Care, I can write it, but it's a whole different ball of wax and we have someone in the group that keeps up with that for the rest of us.

If you haven't already, consider developing lists of qualified experts in several categories most frequently requested by buyers and sellers. This will provide a valuable tool for you to provide added service and help ensure that clients receive the expert advice they require. Be sure to include at least three vendors under each category to avoid possible legal or ethical violations. Also be careful to make clear that you are not "recommending" or "endorsing" the services of any experts on your list.

"Our business in life is not to get ahead of others, but to get ahead of ourselves—to break our own records, to outstrip our yesterday by our today"

- Stewart B Johnson

AUGUST MCE CLASSES

If you want to arrange a Lunch-n-Learn for your office, give us a shout! Lunch and an Hour of MCE, very nice!

"FAQs on Homeowner's Insurance—A Realtor's Perspective" - August 11th at the Perry's Steakhouse on I-10. 11:30 am—1:30 pm. 2 MCE Hours. Call dynamic Deidra Odom at 281-550-2840 to RSVP. Lunch provided. \$20

"Flood Facts" - August 12th at Wells Fargo Building, 1 MCE hour plus Torrin Polk will discuss new gov't regs HCCA/HERA. Call delightful Deidra Odom at 281-550-2840. Lunch provided. \$10

"Are You Exposed?" - August 18th Give the wonderful Ms.. Keri Thaler of Frontier Title a call for more info at 281-391-9181. 2 MCE hours. Lunch provided.

"Mid Summer MCE and Happy Hour Mixer" - August 19th at Jonny's Sports Bar. 3 MCE hours. Lunch provided. To get more info and to RSVP call marvelous Marilyn Smith at 281-656-3732.

"Legal Update" - August 20th at Perry's Steakhouse in Friendswood. 3 MCE Hours, lunch provided, give the exceptional Heidi Crenshaw a call at 281-316-8200

GET OUT AND SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL WCR THIS MONTH! HAVE LUNCH, BRING A FRIEND!



RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Guinness Braised Brisket

(recipe adaptation)

A twist on brisket. As hot as it's been, tough to stand all day minding a smoker so.... This is very tasty. Also, didn't know if you had heard, true, A&M scientists, I know right, stick with me, it's true, in 2008 stated that brisket is the healthiest hunk of meat on a cow. That it contains reservoirs of healthy monounsaturated fatty acids! How about that!?

Ingredients

2 cups of water
 1 cup chopped onion
 1 cup chopped carrot
 1 cup chopped celery
 1 cup Guinness stout (yes you may drink the rest)
 1/3 cup brown sugar
 1/4 tomato paste
 1 tbs dried thyme
 16oz beef broth (low sodium)
 pepper
 3 cloves of garlic (crushed)
 3 lbs beef brisket
 rye bread
 swiss cheese (if you can find it look for Kerrygold Irish Swiss Cheese)

Preparation

Put all the ingredients in a crock pot (except the bread and cheese). Cook on low for 8 hours while you swim and play instead of fussing over the temperature on the smoker. If you want you can go to High for 4-5 hours but.... Before serving, remove brisket and slice across the grain and then place the slices back in the crock pot to soak until ready to serve.

To serve, line a baking sheet with foil. Place rye bread slices on sheet and top each piece with brisket and vegetables from crock pot. Top each with a slice of cheese and then place under your broiler until cheese is melted and bubbly. Serve open faced with a nice Broccoli Slaw, the one with the roasted almonds and a side of Guinness Gravy.



SUGGESTED READING

You, Inc.: The Art of Selling Yourself—Harry Beckwith

Don't let the title scare you! I was somewhat hesitant a first but I had already read Beckwith's "The Art of Selling the Invisible" so I gave it a chance. We're in sales. We constantly should seek to gain wisdom not only about our products but about ourselves. This book contains some wonderful insights regarding personal and professional development, nothing self-serving or shady.

In the words of Jeffrey Gitomer, "All things being equal, people buy from people they like". This book makes it crystal clear that each of us must be personally and fully accountable for what our life is...and isn't, for what our life becomes...and doesn't. This book is really all about you and the way you present yourself.

"No matter how busy you think you are, you must find time for reading, or surrender yourself to self-chosen ignorance"
 - Confucius

www.hfiagency.com

**THE HOWARD FRENCH
INSURANCE AGENCY**

Nationwide Insurance & Financial Services

2616 South Loop W., Suite 597

Houston, Texas 77054

Phone: 281-677-9491

Fax: 281-677-9492

E-mail: howard@hfiagency.com

www.hfiagency.com

BIG

The Howard French Insurance Agency is a proud member of the Barhorst Insurance Group

P R O U D L Y S E R V I N G T E X A S S I N C E 1 9 9 3 !

EVENTS

Different events in the "area". If you have one you would like me to list, shoot me an email @ howard@hfiagency.com

"TREPAC Bay Area Casino Night" - August 8th,
7pm at Alex Rodriguez Mercedes Benz in League City. Call Ozzie Ramirez at 713-201-4089 for more info on attending and available sponsorships.

"InHouston Uptown Mixer" - August 12th, 3-8 at The Tasting Room in Uptown Park (Galleria)

Bay Area WCR Luncheon—August 13th,
11:30-1:00 at 4300 South Shore in League City

"Clear Lake Area Business Mixer" - August 18th,
5-8 at Bakkhus Taverna—Kemah

Houston WCR Luncheon—August 19th,
11:30 -1:00 at The Briar Club

Howard



The Howard French Insurance Agency was designed expressly to provide incomparable service to you and your clients.

We are committed to serving the needs of the Real Estate and Mortgage community by offering outstanding coverage, excellent rates and exceptional customer service that you and your clients deserve and can depend upon.

We are a full service referral only agency open from 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM Monday through Friday. We are also available evenings and weekends to fit yours and your clients busy schedules.