



Rental Works

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A PUBLICATION OF [THE ARA OF NEW JERSEY](#)

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President's message



Signs of an economic recovery have not been seen in my part of New Jersey yet. Our tillers, thatchers and stump grinders are hot. But our air compressor/jack hammers, backhoe and loaders have grown roots.

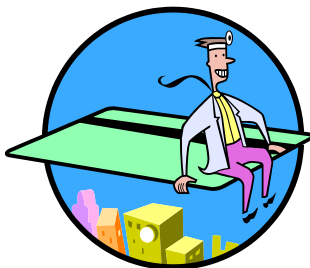
I don't know where all this stimulus money has gone. All I've seen is one road project, which has been on the schedule for two years. I wonder how many boats, RVs and special vacations have been paid for with government money. I'm not saying our government is full of crooked politicians; I am sure there are at least four or five good ones.

Talking to many customers over the last two years, I'm finding just about everyone's in the same situation. All but the alcohol business. Sale of wine, beer and liquor for home consumption are up. I talked to a man who owns a local winery and he said last year (2009) was his best year ever. So it seems when times are good people drink and when times are bad people drink. So let's all pick up our favorite beverage (soda, coffee, beer, etc.), make a toast and hope for some real economic recovery soon.

Respectfully submitted, Michael Yamrock

How to fix your credit report

In order to get the best loan rates, sometimes you need to fix your credit report. For a variety of reasons, credit reporting agencies may have bad information. To fix your credit report, follow these simple steps. Then go back and get the loan terms you deserve.



The most effective way to fix your credit report is to attack it from two directions: fix your credit report via the credit reporting agencies and fix your credit report via the creditor that

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**Upcoming
meeting
dates:**

**Night at the Races
April 8**

**Mark your
calendars.**

reported the error. First, you need to know what's wrong. If you haven't seen a recent copy of your credit report, get a free government credit report and find out what it says. The website is www.annualcreditreport.com. You can also call them at 877-322-8228 and request a free copy. Next, gather evidence that proves that a credit agency needs to fix your credit report. You'll want to make copies of related documents. You may have to try to fix your credit report several times, and you don't want to give away the originals. Send a letter with all the documentation and instructions on how they should fix your credit report. Include the following:

- Your full name, address, date of birth and Social Security number
- Any previous names or addresses used during the disputed period
- The creditor's name and details of the account in question (account number, when opened, etc.)
- Specific instructions on what is wrong and how to fix your credit report
- Notes and references to enclosed documents

Send the letter via registered mail. The credit reporting agency must investigate legitimate claims to fix your credit report within 30 days, and they will inform you of the results after that. The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has a nice sample letter on their site.

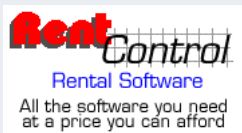
As a safeguard, it's also a good practice to fix your credit report errors with the creditor that reported them. Send them the same information you send to the credit reporting agency. After a few weeks, call and ask what the status is. This will ensure that you don't have the same problem in the future.

There are plenty of reasons that you might have to fix your credit report. Some common causes include:

- A clerical error in recording payments at one of your lenders
- An ex-spouse's credit problems are still linked to you
- Somebody else's Social Security number had digits transposed and the bad debt was linked to you
- You were a victim of identity theft and everything didn't get cleaned off

Judy Boelhouver, Friendly Rental Center

Our supporting vendors



Where did May go?



It seems like just the other day the warm weather hit and we were thinking about spring. Now summer is here full force. The days are getting longer, it's staying light until at least 8 o'clock, and our drivers are racking up the overtime. Their days are beginning at 8 in the morning and sometimes they are still at the warehouse at 8 at night. Every year when it gets super busy we wonder how we will get it all done and each week we manage to get through it. My husband, Chris, doesn't sleep well during the month of June, and I even toss and turn worrying about the upcoming weekend and its weather.

Sometimes I think there has to be an easier way to make a living. Maybe as a Walmart greeter or a hostess at a fancy restaurant or maybe a waitress in a breakfast café. Yes, I do believe these might all be less strenuous, however, maybe not as rewarding. Plus, I would be working for someone else and I would have to work when I was told to.

Owning a party rental and retail store definitely has its perks. Besides the obvious (having everything to throw the perfect party right at your fingertips), I get quite a lot of joy in helping plan weddings, birthdays, graduation celebrations and other special events. A lot of the time the customer plans their party well in advance of the date and the stress level isn't very high. They have plenty of time to make adjustments and add those items they may have forgotten. Then there is the customer who just happens to have forgotten that "oops" they are having 50 people for dinner in two days, they have to have it outside and "oh, by the way" they need a tent because it's going to rain. Everyone who has a rental business has experienced this type of customer.

I had a woman come in the other day to purchase a piñata and she was upset when I wouldn't give her money back. Her complaint was that it was empty. Now think about it. They are made in Mexico, shipped all over the United States and then hang in retail stores until they are sold. Some are months old; others are years old. What kind of candy could be in there that anyone would want after that length of time? Of course they are all empty. Give me a break!

How about the customer who was renting a hot dog cart and wanted to know if it came with rolls and hot dogs. Excuse me, I don't think so. We have a lot of appreciation for our customer base and for those people who keep coming back. We also appreciate everyone who recommends us to friends and neighbors. It is a customer service business, and we all know the customer is always right. I like being the customer sometimes. It might be the only time that I, too, am right.



La Cucina

Chilled Asparagus Salad
Judy Boelhouwer
Friendly Rental Center

Ingredients

- 6 quarts water
- Kosher salt
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 32 stalks small to medium size green asparagus, washed and ends trimmed
- 2 lemons juiced
- 2 tablespoons white wine vinegar
- 1 teaspoon honey
- 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
- 4 tablespoons olive oil

Bring water to boil in large pot. Add salt until it tastes like mild seawater. Then add the sugar.

Prepare an ice bath large enough to hold the asparagus with cold water. Add some ice cubes.

Plunge the asparagus into the ice bath before cooking. Remove from the bath, plunge them into the boiling water and cook for 2-3 minutes. Transfer immediately to ice bath.

Allow them to sit in ice bath for a few minutes. The most important step is drying the stalks so no water gets into final salad. Transfer the asparagus to a large plate lined with a kitchen towel and refrigerate.

In a medium bowl, combine the lemon juice, white wine vinegar, honey and mustard. Stir to blend. Whisk in olive oil in an even,

The month of June is always a tricky month and then there is also September. But busy is better than slow, at least at this time of year. We try to be prepared for just about everything. With wonderful dedicated employees and years of experience, I'm sure we will make it through another June. Maybe in July we will sleep better. Probably, but not until after the 4th. Sleep is overrated anyway.

By Valerie Ruch, The Party Corner

Where's the oil going?



Do you wonder what the future of oil is in this country?

At a time when Brazil, Venezuela and the Mideast are joining as powers in the oil market, what's going on in the United States?

In the U.S., we fight increasing our production because of fears that we're going to run out of oil, that we're going to pollute the atmosphere and that our oil usage will give us an unfair advantage over our fellow countries around the world. We have stopped drilling offshore, we are prevented from drilling where we have easy access to oil, we nationalize the western wilderness that has mountains of clean coal, and we shy away from nuclear power. Are we nuts? Do we think that windmills and solar power can replace all these other power sources next year or in the next decade? Are we better off using more corn to make more ethanol, which gives us no mileage benefit, and its use decreases the corn supply for food and increases the price of corn?

We have lost the big picture. Don't get me wrong, green is a good thing when it helps with clean air and water. But does it drive you crazy when you clean an "empty" peanut butter jar with soap and water — and you know it's expending more energy to clean it and recycle it than it costs to begin with?

Gas prices have come down lately. Why? It can't be that we are producing more now. There's the BP oil spill in the Gulf and drilling rigs are being shut down. We're chasing the rig owners to Brazil. Our capacity is being cut instead of increased. Perhaps it's the shrinking Euro — a stronger dollar gives us the illusion that prices are down — even in the heavy summer driving season. Don't be fooled, however, because I believe that when the Euro and dollar stabilize, and inflation shows its ugly head, oil prices will be heading up. Our increased dependency on imported oil is here and will be getting worse, even as our economy improves — in spite of the fact that we have enough oil in our backyard that we don't even need foreign oil.

With interest rates and inflation low, now is the time to increase our

steady stream. When all of the oil has been integrated, taste and adjust the seasoning, if needed. When ready to serve, remove the kitchen towel from the asparagus and simply toss the asparagus in the dressing to coat them completely.

I am a social network believer

I consider myself to be semi-proficient when it comes to technology, although I admit that I can't program the TV remote.

I was encouraged to join Facebook a while ago and resisted for a few months. Then I decided to check it out as it seems everyone is using it and I didn't want to be left out. I finally broke down and set up an account. I now find it a good way to keep in touch with people with a minimum amount of time and effort. I've reconnected with some people I had lost touch with, and an old boss contacted me recently.

I'm embracing this new technology and am learning how to use it to grow my business. There are rental operators that I am "friends" with that I would not have made contact with were it not for the new technology.

I see many different rental company operations and all do business differently. Some have moved forward with new technology and ideas. Their

energy capacity, not shrink it. Open the doors to exploration and remove the shackles of oil czars and myths. The oil spill is a tragedy, but let BP clean it up and not have to cover their backs from the federal lawyers who are looking for the banana peel slip-up. Accept the help from nations who are willing to send their best technology to assist. Let the cleanup begin in earnest and let them burn and suck up the oil en masse. The well is going to be capped — soon, I hope. But the cleanup is a floundering mess. Washington, enough photo ops. Get out of the way! You got the \$20 billion commitment from BP. Let them draw from it to fix it.

Howard Heller, M & R Sales

The rental world and I have just lost a great partner the other day

Friday, June 4, my friend and partner Don (like the Duck) Zaleski — that's how he used to introduce himself — passed away. Don and I had a good bond, which passed through business partner to friends. Partnerships of any kind can have strains from time to time but we always ended our conversations good and otherwise by "hugging it out" along with "I love you, you know." We knew that if we both agreed on everything all the time we weren't doing our best for each other. The best part was that we did agree on the important things and made the business work for more than 15 years together.

Although Don never held an office in the rental association, it was his willingness to pick up my slack around the shop, which allowed me to be so active.

Being 15 years my senior, Don filled a great spot in my life. He used to tell me, "Trust me. Been there, done that; got the T-shirt." Don was not so much a father figure but a friendly mentor, able to mentor me both in business and family. We made it a rule to "always try to do the right thing." Watching his son, Brandon, and daughter, Brittany, grow up was like watching a nephew and niece grow to be fine young adults. Brandon and Brit are both ARA Region Two scholarship recipients. Brandon is the first person outside my family who I can say I remember the day he was born and the day he graduated from college. Watching my friend, Don, dance with his daughter at her wedding and enjoying that moment with him taught me something special about what a parent can do for their children.

Respectfully yours, Joseph Wm. Mihalko

Donald L. Zaleski, 60, died June 4, 2010, at his home. Donald lived in Hackettstown/Independence Township, N.J., and was born in New Jersey on April 21, 1950.

Husband of: Merle (Romberger) Zaleski

Son of: The late Sigmund and Helen (Sokolowski) Zaleski

business is growing. Some companies have continued to do business the "old fashioned way" or just maintained the status quo.

It seems that today, more than ever before, companies need to explore new opportunities and ways to do business. I'm not recommending that everyone sign up for a social networking group but we all need to continue to look for new ways to do business especially in today's economy.

**By Brian Higgins
HUB Insurance**

The season so far

Not sure how most are seeing the season, however, there has been a decent uptick in recent activity. The real question is whether or not it is sustainable, so our staff, the downsized crews and staff, work a bit more as we all hesitate to really take the plunge to capitalize growth. Heard an interesting interview the other day on NPR, and before you all gasp too hard, a good Republican can also listen to NPR. During the course of the discussion, it was stated that industry is sitting on \$2.5 trillion in their respective cash drawers, waiting for a government and economy that turns from business unfriendly, to the recognition that no solid, sustainable

Survived by:

*Wife: Merle (Romberger) Zaleski of Hackettstown/
Independence Township, N.J.*

Son: Brandon Zaleski of Livingston, N.J.

Daughter: Brittany (John) Pitts, of Pacific Palisades, Calif.

Sister: Barbara (Andrew) Barclay of Tom's River, N.J.

Occupation: Owner/operator of Do-It-Yourself Inc. of East Hanover, N.J., for 30 years, retiring in 2009.

Veteran Information: U.S. Army National Guard, 1972-1978

Respect or not to respect!



When I was growing up, I was told everyone and, most importantly, adults were to be respected. I think this was a good thing then and now.

Today the words "respect" and "disrespect" are not used properly. I hear it all the time, "she disrespected me," because she said this or that. When someone "says" something about you, that is slander not disrespect. And when someone writes something, that is "libel." Respect and disrespect require "action," not words. That is why the term "show some respect" was coined. Not "say" some respect.

Enough semantics. What is respect? For me, I was taught to give it automatically until someone didn't give it back and even then I wasn't to be rude but I was to try to avoid that person. Always be polite. I don't think that's the case today. Several years ago I worked with a woman who said she taught her kids, now adults, to give respect only when earned. I thought this was the stupidest theory. How does a stranger earn it? So are your kids nasty to everyone until they earn it? Why should I respect someone who is nasty to me? What qualifies earning it? Quite truthfully this is a lot of horse hockey because you can bet these same people show "respect" to their bosses whether they earned it or not. What a bunch of hypocritical nonsense.

I like what I was taught better because it's more realistic, honest and practical. Everyone should be respected until they un-earn it. Kind of like everyone should be innocent until proven guilty. When you're nasty to someone first or show disregard, it reflects on you and how you were raised. A big portion of what I learned in childhood stressed the importance of treating people well. We called adults Mr. or Mrs. and relatives aunt or uncle. There wasn't this familiarity. Simple things like this may not make sense today but make sense to how we treat each other. People were given a title solely on the basis of living and going through life. If just living life doesn't earn respect, then what does?

economic upturn can be supported without a real economic development plan that includes real support for business growth and especially small business growth. Think about what type of economic spur the entry of \$2.5 trillion would have on the economy and the job market — especially when it would not be newly printed dollars that at some point will drive inflation out of sight. Of course, there is always the theory that you should buy now, or rather finance now, and pay off with inflated dollars.

However, the real point of this message came when we bid on a job the other day with a customer with whom we have dealt for several years. We will never be the cheapest out there, but I have to say that pricing that ran 40 percent below us made me realize that some still refuse to really analyze their true costs.

Have a great summer, and lets all hope that this upturn has some legs to it.

**By Matt Holt
Celebrating 32
years in rental**

I've watched "Celebrity Apprentice" and everyone calls Donald Trump, Mr. Trump. Did he earn this title because he's rich and powerful or because he just lives life and, like all of us, should expect respect? But how can this happen when kids are taught it has to be earned? This is a paradox indeed.

Do people really expect others to earn it? No. I worked with a lady who didn't like a noisy work environment, which is kind of tough when in sales. I am loud, so she complained a lot. She wasn't respectful to me in her approach. I once told her if the owner was loud and annoyed her, she wouldn't have the guts to tell him. She said she would say something, but I told her she wouldn't say a word and finally when pushed, she concurred. So does one only earn respect when in a position of respect? When this person is out of their realm of power, how would others know they deserve respect?

Have we gotten more impressed with what people have? I find this annoying when speaking to doctors. Why should I call him/her doctor when he/she doesn't call me Mrs.?

I don't have a real resolution, so I will simply close with this. In a scene from "In the Heat of the Night," Rod Steiger's character said to Sidney Poitier's character Virgil, "So what, Virgil, do they call you back home?" Sidney Poitier replied, "They call me Mr. Tibbs." Enough said.

By Charlotte Sorrentino

Article Source:

[http://EzineArticles.com/?expert=Charlotte Sorrentino](http://EzineArticles.com/?expert=Charlotte_Sorrentino)

Can you tell me how to get to Sesame Street?

Who remembers the day back in the '80s when before you did your deliveries you got out the Hagstrom county maps and plotted a



course? Usually, the pages you needed were ripped out or missing only to be found in the back of the delivery truck. This was the way we learned directions. It was challenging and it was a great mental exercise for our brains. Not only did it teach us to read a map, but it also helped with our organizational skills, logic, reasoning, time management and efficiency.

Now, let's press the button and move to 2010. How do we get from

point A to point B today? Here is a clue; it's three letters: GPS. Most of my workers don't even know what GPS stands for. They just know that you press the buttons and it gets you there. One day I asked them what GPS stands for. A couple of noteworthy replies: "Get people somewhere," "Go places system" and my favorite answer, "Get problems solved." Just to be sure we all agree, GPS is global positioning satellite.

Are we relying too much on GPS to get us places? I recently read an article that a man drove his car through someone's house because his GPS told him to. (See photo above.) It seems this is not an isolated case and there are numerous stories of people blaming GPS systems for accidents and bad directions. Can you really blame your GPS? Give me a break!

Many argue that in order to use GPS you have to have the knowledge of how to work and program it. This in itself is a great mental exercise, which is supposed to make up for not learning how to read a map. I say no way! I think map reading is an important skill that should be learned by all. I personally love my GPS and use it quite often, but I always confirm on a map before I commit to its directions. Many times I don't agree with the voice commands, and I have been known to curse and throw items at it.

Our crews have become accustomed to bringing their own "TomToms" or "Garmin" to work and using them. They also have become very fluent at using Google Maps and printing directions. The problem is what are they going to do if the Internet goes down or the GPS signal fails? Will they know how to read a map? Will they drive in circles before asking for directions? Will they be late for deliveries? I believe the answers to those questions are no, yes and yes.

I do miss my ripped-out Hagstrom maps. I bet if I look hard enough I might find a couple of pages behind some old desk in the warehouse. For those of you who are interested, Sesame Street can be found in Clarksboro, N.J. That would be Hagstrom Gloucester County map, page 16, grid N-6. Even Big Bird could program a GPS for that! But a real cookie monster can read a map.

By Steve Kohn

Love your job?

In these trying economic times, it is so important to love what we do. It is extremely vital to keep a positive mind-set and approach to your business. When we do not, our not-so-positive attitude will surely reveal itself and have an effect on both employees and customers alike.

We are all feeling the effects of the current economic situation to one degree or another. This holds true for both those in the tool and the

party rental business. It is easy to get frustrated or discouraged with the lack of business, having to work a little harder or to get aggravated at customers looking for a "better price." I have been in businesses where the tension is so apparent, it is actually uncomfortable.

Ask yourself, "Is this really the climate that we want to create for our customers or our employees?"

Personally, it was the diversity of this job and the ability to problem-solve that drew me into the rental business back in the early '80s. I thoroughly enjoyed working directly with and interacting with the customers. It made the job rewarding and was what made it easy to come to work every day. Lately though, it seemed not so effortless.

Suddenly, it became more of a chore to open the doors. Customers of today tend to be more demanding and seem to have lost the ability to think for themselves. Common sense seems to have gone the way of ten-cent Cokes. I could go into a rant on my ideas why, which involve technology, GPS, big-box stores, etc. But that is a story for another day.

As customers become more challenging, due to (insert your reason here), and with the economic climate, it seems increasingly difficult to keep your cool and maintain your patience; it would benefit us to remind ourselves why we became involved in business to start with. We love being the "go to" place. We love being the problem solvers. We have a wealth of knowledge and experience to offer our customers and our employees. Remember what it was like when it was fun and why you loved your job? In order for your business to thrive and to endure the dark times, it is imperative that we project the right attitude and outlook. Your employees will imitate your can-do attitude. Your customers will want to return. As the old saying goes, if you truly love your job, you'll never have to work a day in your life.

"I feel sorry for the person who can't get genuinely excited about his work. Not only will he never be satisfied, but he will never achieve anything worthwhile."

— Walter Chrysler, founder of the Chrysler Corporation

By Vern Mott, Pioneer Rentals



Discover how ARA can help you connect with potential customers — at no cost to you

Connecting with potential customers to increase your rentals is a top priority for your rental operation. The American Rental Association has a resource to assist you in that effort — www.RentalHQ.com, the largest rental store locator that allows potential consumers to find and connect with your business.

This *free* benefit helps solve your quest to attract customers and show them what you have. On www.RentalHQ.com, you receive your own storefront that you can customize with your store information, a flexible rental reservation area that customers can complete, a link to your website and “how-to” articles for each rental industry segment. Be sure to update your inventory because that is a key way potential customers can find you and determine whether you have what they need.

Discover this and all of the other *free* benefits of membership. Just look for the “Benefit of Membership” logo in this, other ARA publications and on the ARA website. You also can call ARA Member Services at 800-334-2177.