



## Publisher's Pen

Dear Readers,

The Business of doing Business is fraught with challenges.

I continue to be amazed at how much time is consumed by doing the necessary yet unrewarding chores of a small and growing business.

All things are challenging: Keeping track of the component parts of a project when there are dozens in progress at all times; finding competent help – individuals that have a commitment to excellence rather than to being the first one out the door at “quitting time” (not certain who invented *that* concept – it’s never been part of *my* vocabulary); the balancing act of balancing business time with personal time. Even *finding* family time.

All the time and effort that goes into the creation of systems and record keeping – and then finding the \*#%\*^!\* system needs *tweaking* – or worse yet – costly and time-consuming *reinventing*. The inevitable time spent on collecting receivables. (I ask you, why is it that people do not take responsibility for their debt? Then again, that’s *another* column entirely!)

I have always had a system. My system is piles. Lots of piles. Piles on my desk. Piles on cabinet surfaces. And, as I run out of surface space on the desk and cabinets, a bridge table that is older than I am (no wise cracks here, please!) is added to the mix and installed in the one remaining

space large enough to accommodate it. Which brings us to the piles on the floor.

Hey...it works for me. Most of the time.

Vacuuming the floor and dusting the desk present certain challenges. Negotiating a path from the threshold of the office to the computer to the filing cabinets is mighty tricky.

So many of my friends and colleagues that are small business people are faced with the same challenges no matter what their endeavor or their industry. Getting up for an early morning breakfast meeting after taking care of “paperwork” until the wee hours. Not the Business of the Business. Figuring out before hitting the sack what small percentage of the “A” priority items on their “to do” lists can really take priority.

L.H. once looked at my list and marveled that no one super-human could remotely accomplish even one-half of my next day’s “to do” list in a month, no less in a day. But there she was.

Juggling is what we small business people do best. But *so many* balls in the air? There are endless issues to be addressed in order to *do* the Business of the Business – the *reason* we got into the business in the *first* place!

I’ve discussed this challenge with a broad cross-section of entrepreneurs – theatre professionals, home remodelers, pool maintenance people, financial consultants, niche market newspaper publishers, restaurateurs, computer consultants, landscape maintenance people, marketing consultants, graphic designers, realtors and the list just goes on. Across the board they find themselves bogged down in the stuff of running the business – often sapping the energy and creativity for doing the Business of the Business.

Some time back, I asked a corporate executive to fax me something. He said his secretary would do it when she gets in tomorrow. I suggested that he send

it to me himself – now. He confided that he had never used a fax machine and didn’t know how. Five-year-olds know how to send a fax! But, then again, they don’t have assistants. I must give him credit, however, for admitting his shortcoming.

Small business people multi-task endlessly without a thought. They aren’t remotely aware of how multi-talented they truly are. They do whatever. Whenever.

The more of them I meet the more I am in awe of their infinite talents and abilities. The more respect I have for their spirit of entrepreneurship and self-start-

edness – and for their passion for doing the Business of their Business.

These people are truly the backbone of our country. I am so very proud to be one of them.

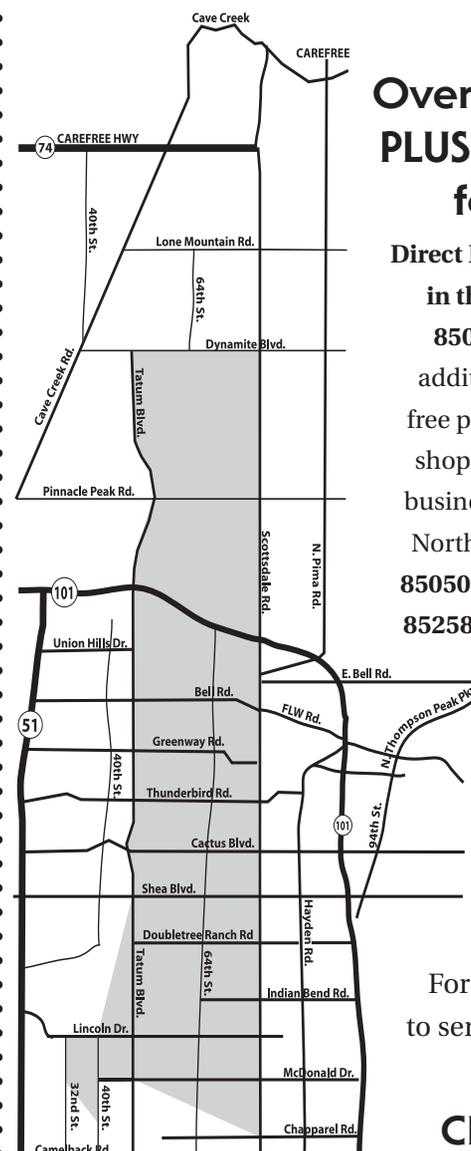
Warmest Regards,

Hope H. Ozer  
Publisher

*Editor's note: Publisher Hope H. Ozer is on a well deserved vacation. A version of this article ran originally in TheTatumSunTimes in August 2003.*

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