

# EAGA Business Builder

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## Today's speaker was Robert Biernacki—WaterQuest Landscaping



Robert is an out-of-state native. His Father was in the Air Force and, in 1968 the family moved to Albuquerque when the elder Mr. Biernacki retired. Robert attended, and graduated from, Highland High School—the Mighty Class of 1978. He then went to UNM where he earned a Business Degree. Robert met his wife while attending UNM. He was very certain that his family would like her because it was Robert's Mom that had introduced him to the future other Mrs. Biernacki. Robert and Susan have two children. Daughter, Kate, is 26 years old and currently in her 3rd year at University of California Medical School. The Biernacki's son, Beau, is 20 years old and a recent graduate of University of Austin. He is a consultant at GQR Global Markets and must be doing quite well since he just won a ski trip to one of those famous places with snow. Robert never won a ski trip right out of college (that we know of), but he did sell insurance for about 11 years. He did pretty well with that. And he must have had an entrepreneurial reputation back then because during an annual review with one of his clients, the client asked Robert to loan him some money to purchase a landscaping company. Somewhere during the negotiations or finalizing of the process, Robert decided to buy the company himself. The plan was for the prior owner to stay around and help run the business for awhile. As is usual for most good plans...they don't usually go as expected. Robert ended up being the Landscape Guy while he was also an Insurance Guy. Tiring of the 1/2 and 1/2 careers, Robert tossed the insurance-man hat out of the closet, leaving only the landscaping hat(s). Waterquest was an irrigation repair company at first. Since Mr. Biernacki's Business Degree was 11 years old, he had understandably forgotten that it would probably be an unwise business decision to buy a landscape repair company in September. At the time, there were two employees; one regularly presentable and the other one, not so much. Going immediately into the lean time of the year, Robert felt he had to let one of the employees go. Naturally choosing to keep the one that didn't scare customers when showing up at their home, Robert terminated the scruffy looking one. The old saying, "looks aren't everything", proved to be accurate. Employee #1 left and Mr. Biernacki called back the other one. That worker turned out to be very knowledgeable on how to repair things, and after a few encounters, the customers learned to be comfortable with him as well. Robert was often asked about doing landscaping work, but would refer the jobs to others. At one point, he decided to expand the business and take on one of the landscaping jobs for a developer. The developer was quite unhappy with his current company and was looking for a replacement. Mr. Biernacki had no idea how to price the work, so he just stated that his company would provide the work, at a better quality, "for the same price as the previous company was charging". Though not a profitable job, the introduction went well, and so did Waterquest. Developer work became a big thing. In 2007, the company's business was about 70% developer driven and bringing in about \$2.7 million per year. Note that was in 2007 - right before the economic downturn. As the economy tanked, the developers stopped developing; and there was not a need for landscaping vacant lots. Frugal operation and wise adjustment got Waterquest through the dark tunnel, and in that process, they have moved away - far away - from developers. As of 2017, Waterquest's clientele is almost entirely residential. The company has also switched gears away from landscaping toward an emphasis on maintenance. Four years ago they put a person in charge of a maintenance section, and that work is now even with the landscaping segment. Things are progressing well, although Robert would like more commercial (not developer) customers. Waterquest can do grounds keeping; one-time cleanup; scheduled cleanup; with once; weekly or monthly arrangements. They can do fancy or simple landscaping work. And they have two designers on staff that can do either one. The designers not only figure out the project to your liking, but will also be the project manager through out the job. One point of contact, that knows exactly what is needed and expected. If you have a need landscaping work - well that was a silly statement. Unless you operate out of an office building, or other facility that you don't own, you are likely in need of landscape work. Even if it is just to keep the weeds out of the cracks in the asphalt. If you aren't already using Waterquest, and are unhappy with your current landscape crew, give Mr. Biernacki a call at 505-792-3600. He will help you figure out exactly what you need, and he will get it done. He will also, on the QT, come take down your Christmas lights before it gets too far into the spring time. Your wife and neighbors will be pleased.

## Business Leads:

PEOPLES BANK will become HILLCREST BANK in Albuquerque, Taos, Questa & Red River.

APEX DENTAL is opening an office at 6330 Riverside Plaza NW.

H&D SUPPLY at 6135 2ns St. NW will become CORE & MAIN.

Lionel Specter—ZEON SIGNS

## Reciprocity:

None noted today

Don't forget to use the 'Shout-Out' option on our website.

- ◆ Next Tuesday, February 13th, is the second Tuesday of the month. Don't forget to bring a business card for the exchange. Leave your card on the way in, and take a card (not yours) on the way out. Contact that member and meet for coffee, or whatever, during the month and get to know them better—outside the rails of the day-to-day business rat race.
- ◆ EAGA is in the process of verifying and updating member information so that the upcoming printed roster is completely accurate. The project is very near publication time, so it is very important that your data is accurate on our website. Please review your information and make changes as necessary—NOW. If you have any problems or questions, please contact Executive Director, Mario or President Soren.

## Badge Board Greeters

Feb 13th	Tim Baca—Kangen Water Center
Feb 20th	Terry White—Sunwest Trust
Feb 27th	Raul Rodriguez—Kings of Wrap
Mar 6th	Mark Bidwell—Rio Grande Title Company
Mar 13th	
Mar 20th	
Mar 27th	
Apr 3rd	

## Upcoming Speakers

Feb 13th	Mike Skolnick—Excalibur Realty
Feb 20th	Phil Kenny—Trucks Unique
Feb 27th	Eric Berger—American Linen & Uniform Supply
Mar 6th	Pat Maloy—Maloy Mobile Storage
Mar 13th	Manny Corrales—Vigilant Security Management
Mar 20th	Phil Houser—Document Solutions
Mar 27th	Paul Jew—Moji Studios
Apr 3rd	

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