

EAGA Business Builder

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Today's speaker was Robert Biernacki—WaterQuest



Mr. Biernacki is a husband, a father, an ex-insurance salesman, a sprinkler repair guy, a landscape expert, a red wine connoisseur, a pickle ball aficionado, and a semi-experienced glass blowing avoider of gluten—when he is not in a hot yoga session, away on a week-long cruise or out on the ski slopes. And you thought he was just “Cheerful Ol’ Robert. The EAGA guy”. A little over 34 years ago, Robert and Susan were married. Susan was a City Attorney back then but has since retired. It sounds like she was also the primary instigator of the family’s traveling adventures. Robert and Susan have two children that are now grown and becoming quite successful contributors of good things in the world. Daughter, Katie, recently completed her medical residency and is now an OBGYN in Phoenix, Arizona. Son, Beau, lives in Denver where he is involved in technology sales. His work is primarily with those digital screens that are everywhere in casinos and similar venues. Robert’s career path may not have involved all the sophisticated digital technologies that his son works with; and it probably isn’t as obviously life-giving as is his daughter’s work, but he has done alright anyway. After getting a degree from higher education, Robert entered the business world as a professional life insurance salesman. A couple of years into that career, Robert was having one of the standard annual insurance reviews for a client that evolved into Robert being offered an opportunity to invest in the client’s irrigation repair business. That was at a point in time when Mr. Biernacki was becoming disenchanted with the insurance job. Maybe the work had grown a bit mundane, or perhaps it was that (happily) his clients weren’t dying...but with that, he didn’t get to experience the good that beneficiaries would receive from his work. Mr. Biernacki decided not to invest in that irrigation company, but to just buy it outright. His intention was to be a sprinkler repair business owning life insurance salesman. Sort of like those old crime fighting heroes that are regular guys by day, and doers of good by night. However, plans often go awry. It wasn’t too long before the insurance sales in the morning / sprinkler repair work in the afternoon became insurance sales and sprinkler repair in the morning / sprinkler repair and yard maintenance work in the afternoon and evening. With the already waning interest in insurance sales, it was relatively easy to drop that segment of his life and go full throttle into the yard-work world. Robert has now been in the groundskeeping/landscaping business for about 30 years. Along the way the business name became WaterQuest as they branched out (no pun intended) into offering a larger variety of complementary services. As might be expected for that type of activity Mr. Biernacki has been able to work with some smooth areas as well as work through a few bumpy places. Up until 2007, things were going rather well. Then, in 2008, the economy took a dive. Early in the year, Robert noticed that the smooth footing was becoming a little spongy. But when summer came, the normal upturn in business did not come with it. Mr. Biernacki turned around to discover that he had backed into a full-blown quagmire. Before 2008, most of his business (about 85%) had been coming from home builders. New homes required new yards and a lot of landscaping. The devastated economy meant no new homes—and no new yards. WaterQuest’s revenues were off by 50% and it was getting worse. With some belt-tightening, in depth analyzing and (after receiving very beneficial advice from a fellow EAGA member) shifting of business priorities, Robert’s company is doing well these days. About 42% of their revenues are from maintenance now and only a small part of it is from commercial clients. If you would like to have some landscaping work done, need a sprinkler system repaired or could use a little (or a lot) of yard maintenance, you should call WaterQuest at (505) 792-3600. The crew over there can help with that. This morning Robert also offered a couple of valuable tips for us: 1) Fertilize lawns now. This should be the first of five times during the year. 2) If you could use some assistance with a new, or ongoing service from WaterQuest—call the office; don’t call Robert first. You will get a quicker response from the staff than you will trying to find Robert. If you don’t get a proper response from the office people, then do give Robert a call and he will get involved. Finding Robert really could be a challenge these days. He and Susan plan to take about six of the week-long cruise trips this year (that’s down from their previous nine per year plans); Robert has hot yoga sessions four or five times a week; plays pickle ball when he can; will do some skiing this season; and will continue to dabble in the art of glass blowing. All of those activities are also likely to involve red wine to one degree or another. Some other advice to take away from this morning’s presentation: Spend your time wisely; learn to delegate; and make written goals. Robert is working off a list of 101 written goals that he painstakingly made a few years ago. So far, he has completed about 60 of them. Maybe that is 61 after his informational EAGA presentation this morning.

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Leads, Reciprocity & Notes:

None submitted for today.

- ◆ Board Members please note—this month’s board meeting will be on Wednesday, February 15th. Please contact Mario, Randy or Jukka if you would like more information.
- ◆ Second announcement for a prospective new member:
Performance Ranch
Representative: Lawrence Herrera
Category: Fitness Gym
Sponsor: Brian Walden
If you have an objection to this company becoming a member, or if you have information that you feel should be considered during the review process, please contact our Membership Committee Chairman, Jack Zipper (via telephone number 505-259-5959 or email at jdzipper@comcast.net) as soon as possible.
- ◆ We are back in the “HELP! WE NEED SPEAKERS!” mode again. Meetings on Feb 28th, Mar 7th, Mar 14th and Mar 28th are all available right now. There are all the April meetings to consider too. Please sign up for one of the days right away when you arrive at the meeting next Tuesday. The sheet is easy to get to. It is right there on the badge board table.
- ◆ A couple of thoughts from an Irish philosopher (aren’t they all?):
“If you walk a mile in my shoes you will end up at the bar.”
“I’m confused, what is a wine stopper for?”
“Let’s drink to nothing in particular.”

Badge Board Greeters

Feb 14 th	Lonnie Correathers—1st Service Team
Feb 21 st	Mark Abramson— Los Ranchos Gun Shop
Feb 28 th	Herman Mitchell—Southwest Mail Center
Mar 07 th	Larry Sonntag—New Mexico Business Coalition
Mar 14 th	Bill McConnell—Window Fashions
Mar 21 st	
Mar 28 th	Chase Wilson—Essential Pest Management

Upcoming Speakers

Feb 14 th	Gary Sanchez—Why Institute
Feb 21 st	Michael Johnson—Shockwave Defense
Feb 28 th	
Mar 07 th	
Mar 14 th	
Mar 21 st	Hass Aslami—Pizza 9 Franchise System
Mar 28 th	

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