



GASSA

Georgia Self Storage Association

*Another Outstanding GASSA
Expo in the Books!*

NEWSLETTER
Issue 6 | November, 2016

2016 GASSA CONVENTION & EXPO

More than 165 self-storage industry members from Georgia and across the southeast gathered in Savannah, Ga. for the 2016 GASSA Convention & Expo. This marks the second year for the annual conference to be hosted in Savannah. With 9+ hours of education, 37 industry leading exhibitors and 7+ hours of tradeshow exposure, the event allowed for more networking and collaboration between exhibitors, speakers, and attendees than ever before.

Education was a major draw for conference attendees. Close to 20 experts in the industry provided managers, owners, and vendors with tips, tricks, updates, and trends across several topics. The sessions covered marketing tactics, legal considerations, telephone techniques for managers, the latest in

technology, and everything you need to know about auctions. In addition to these sessions, attendees were able to access vendor experts through roundtable sessions.

The exhibit hall consisted of 37 industry-leading exhibitors and vendors representing a variety of services to the self storage industry, like insurance, brokerage, building and construction, security, technology, and more. These companies had an opportunity to network and create and extend relationships with owners, operators, and other vendors all over the southeast.

The GASSA used this annual event to recognize self storage excellence through it's Facility of the Year and Manager of the Year awards. The Facility of year was awarded to City Storage in Savannah, GA. Facility



*Facility of the Year, City Storage
Manager of the Year, Vanessa Jackson*

of the Year award winners are judged on their overall excellence in design, construction and operations. The Manager of the Year award, designed to recognize excellence in self storage management and customer service, went to Vanessa Jackson, Manager of Keep Safe Self Storage in McDonough, Georgia. Congratulations to these two deserving groups!

This event could not have been possible without the support of the sponsors. A sincere THANK YOU to all those companies who made this event successful and who support the association and its mission!

The dates and location for the 2017 Convention & Expo will be announced in the coming months. For more information on upcoming GASSA meetings and events, visit www.gassa.org.

See more Convention & Expo photos on page 4!

2016 GASSA CONVENTION AND EXPO SPONSORS



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LEGAL CORNER - By Scott Zucker

Overtime Issues in Self Storage

An ongoing issue in the self storage industry is addressing the hours worked by managers who live on the facility premises. Although the concept of resident managers has continued to disappear over the last few years, there remain a significant number of properties that have apartments on the premises for use by their facility managers. The concept of "resident managers" was initially meant to offer customers a sense of security by having someone live where their property was being stored. Resident managers also offered a level of customer service to their tenants through their presence on the property during off hours. But along with that "live where you work" philosophy comes the risk that employers and employees may have different expectations of hours for managers to work. This issue has been addressed by the Department of Labor since it is not uniquely an issue with resident managers at self storage facilities. The issue also arises with apartment managers, fire-fighters and other jobs where employees may reside in their workplace.

The Department of Labor has relied upon the law found in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), specifically 29 CFR 785.23 which reads as follows:

§ 785.23 Employees residing on employer's premises or working at home.

An employee who resides on his employer's premises on a permanent basis or for extended periods of time is not considered as working all the time he is on the premises. Ordinarily, he may engage in normal private pursuits and thus have enough time for eating, sleeping, entertaining, and other periods of complete freedom from all duties when he may leave the premises for purposes of his own. It is, of course, difficult to determine the exact hours worked under these circumstances and any reasonable agreement of the parties which takes into consideration all of the pertinent facts will be accepted. This rule would apply, for example, to the pumper of a stripper well who resides on the premises of his employer and also to a telephone operator who has the switchboard in her own home.

Based on this rule, storage operators can set guidelines with their employees to hopefully avoid any dispute over the issue of hours to be worked, even if the employee lives on the premises. These guidelines are best covered in the employee's employment contract or employment handbook. For example, the section relating to a resident manager living in the facility's apartment may read in part as follows:

Hours: Employer and Employee hereby agree that Employee's normal hours of work are ____ to ____ Monday through Friday and ____ to ____ Saturday, with ____ minutes off for lunch, for a total of ____ work hours per week. Employer and Employee understand Employee resides on Employer's premises as a matter of convenience to Employee and that he/she will not be working all the time that he/she is on the premises.

Employer and Employee contemplate that Employee will engage in normal private pursuits and therefore have enough time for eating, sleeping, entertaining and other periods of complete freedom from all duties during much of the time that the Facility office is open. Because it is difficult to determine the exact number of hours to be worked by Employee, Employer and Employee have evaluated all of the pertinent facts surrounding Employee's work circumstances and have decided that ____ hours per week is a reasonable estimate of the number of hours Employee will work each week, considering both normal and abnormal or emergency situations. If circumstances change so that this Agreement no longer reflects a fair estimate of the number of hours that Employee works, Employee agrees to immediately notify Employer in writing of such changed conditions so that a new Employment Agreement, reflecting a fair and reasonable estimate of the number of hours Employee works per week, may be negotiated. The foregoing takes into consideration all of the pertinent facts and is expressly recognized as an agreement between Employer and Employee pursuant to 29 C.F.R. § 785.23.

By addressing this issue with the employee resident manager up front, the goal is to avoid later disputes that may arise concerning differing expectations of work to be performed. Those disputes may simmer until there is a resignation or termination and the uncertainty over unpaid overtime claims for "working at night or on weekends" can lead to significant wage and hour claims and lawsuits.

Thanks to Rob Kerr from the Oklahoma Self Storage Association for asking this question.

Until next month - Happy storing!

Scott Zucker is a partner in the law firm of Weissmann Zucker Euster Morochnik P.C. in Atlanta, Georgia. Scott specializes in business litigation with an emphasis on real estate, landlord-tenant and construction law. Scott is a frequent lecturer at national conventions and is the author of *Legal Topics in Self Storage: A Sourcebook for Owners and Managers*. He is also a partner in the Self Storage Legal Network, a subscription-based legal service for self storage owners and managers. Scott can be reached at 404-364-4626 or at scott@wzlegal.com.



SPOTLIGHT –

Vanessa Jackson Manager at Keep Safe Self Storage McDonough, Georgia

Vanessa is the recent winner of the 2016 GASSA Manager of the Year award. She was recognized a couple weeks ago at the 2016 GASSA Convention & Expo in Savannah. Vanessa is well-deserving of this honor. She not only excels in customer service but she also does whatever it takes to make sure the facility is well maintained and operating efficiently.

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO ENTER THE SELF-STORAGE INDUSTRY?

To be honest, I got into the self-storage industry by seeking employment. I was working in the Architectural and Engineering industry as a Business Development/Marketing Director. I was laid off in 2009. I called my sister, Shelly Gibson, who is an Area Manager with USG to inquire about a job. She hired me as a Relief Manager. I worked in that position for about a year. Then a storage facility opening became available in McDonough, which I transferred to as the Property Manager.

I have been with the company for over 7 years and my sales and marketing skills transferred easily from the architectural industry to the self-storage industry.

TALK ABOUT SOME POSITIVE ATTRIBUTES AND SOME CHALLENGES YOU FACE AS A MANAGER IN THE INDUSTRY?

The positive attributes of being a Manager is helping people solve their storage needs.

Secondly, I am heavily involved with our Chamber and numerous nonprofit organizations. Being very visible in my community has turned into leases. We are a viable partner in the community.

WHAT HAS BEEN AN IMPORTANT LESSON YOU'VE LEARNED SINCE WORKING IN THE SELF-STORAGE INDUSTRY?

The customer is not always right.

Not every customer is a good customer

Not to let emotions get in the way of doing business.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO A NEW MANAGER?

Treat customers like you want to be treated. Be a good listener and not a big talker. Have compassion.



WHAT DOES THE FUTURE OF SELF-STORAGE LOOK LIKE FOR YOUR CITY AND YOUR COMPANY?

Our county is booming! In McDonough we are recognizing a big new construction boom. We are located in a well-established, high end residential area. Currently Storage XXtra is building another 650 unit storage facility less than a mile from us. Also U-Haul is building a 1,000 storage unit and U-Haul Center less than 2 miles from us.

IF YOU COULD GIVE ONE TIP TO OTHER MANAGERS IN TERMS OF PROVIDING EXCELLENT CUSTOMER SERVICE, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

Ability to assist all types of people. Again being a good listener.

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GASSA Board of Directors Elections

The nomination period has ended for the 2017 Board of Directors. You will receive an email soon with a list of all nominees.

Voting for the 2017 Board of Directors will begin December 5th and run until December 13th. All members in good standing will receive an electronic ballot via email on December 5th. Paper Ballots will also be available at the December 13th Atlanta Luncheon.

REMAINING 2016 GASSA MEETINGS!

DECEMBER MONTHLY LUNCHEON - DECEMBER 13TH
ATLANTA, GA

Presentation: *Legacy and Estate Planning Panel*

2017 CALENDAR COMING SOON!

2016 GASSA CONVENTION & EXPO



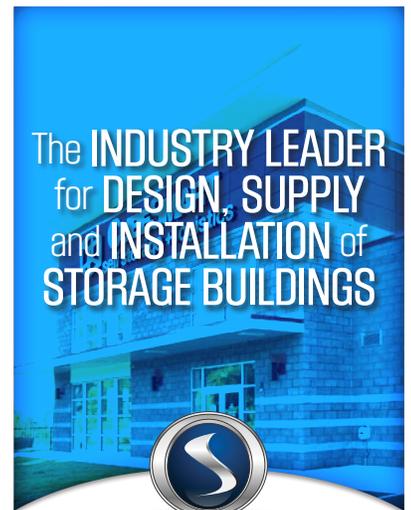
Are you a member of GASSA?

For ONLY \$300 you can join for the remaining of 2016 and all of 2017! The networking, education and legal support within the association are worth far more than that -- you won't regret it! [Click here to join!](#)

GASSA membership offers these distinctive advantages:

- Access to the Georgia Self-Storage approved rental lease – updated annually by our legal counsel.
- Access to member/vendor directories.
- Member newsletters which bring up-to-the-minute news as well as tips and features of GASSA members.
- Unparalleled networking opportunities – GASSA members gain knowledge from each other.
- Discounts on Monthly Luncheons – held the 2nd Tuesday of the month in Atlanta and periodically throughout other Georgia areas
- National SSA affiliation – GASSA partners with SSA to keep you posted on national news to enhance our statewide actions and benefits.
- Annual Expo – held in the Fall, the GASSA Convention & Expo offers networking, education and vendor meeting opportunities to help you stay competitive.
- Legislative Advocacy – representation on pertinent issues at the Georgia State Capital.

[Click here to join!](#)



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