

## **TAX MATTERS**

**SEPTEMBER 24, 2009, Issue #09-38, by Bernard Ridens, Executive Director  
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### **REVIEW OF PAST TAX MATTERS**

#### **SEPTEMBER 17, 2009 (#09-36)**

- **TAX TOPICS**
  - The next issue of Tax Topics will be sent by e-mail and will be available on our website, [www.taxtopics.org](http://www.taxtopics.org). Free paper copies of the Fall 2009 Tax Topics issue are only available by request. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.

#### **SEPTEMBER 10, 2009 (#09-35)**

- **WASHINGTON RENOVATION**
  - The estimated costs of renovating Booker T. Washington High School. The School Board voted 6-1 Monday to move the program to South Vigo H.S.
- **BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS AND SAFETY**
  - Agenda for the Sept. 14 Board of Public Works and Safety meeting

#### **SEPTEMBER 3, 2009 (#09-34)**

- **I-FILE SURVEY**
  - Survey results of the I-File electronic tax filing system
- **FREE TAX TOPICS ADS**
  - If you want to promote your business in this month's TAX TOPICS, please send a business card (or landscape-format ad) to us before September 14, 2009
- **TAX NOTES**
  - Excerpts from the Indiana Chamber of Commerce's periodic email

The Taxpayers Association is a not-for-profit organization supported by membership dues. Any citizen or group of citizens in Vigo County may be a member. Current members are encouraged to promote membership in the organization by giving the attached application to a potential member. [See the TA application and dues structure.](#)  
**This is NOT an invoice for your dues.**

# 1. TAX TOPICS

The Fall 2009 Tax Topics is now on our web site! Follow the link here: <http://www.taxtopics.org/TaxTopicsFall2009HQ.pdf>. It is in a 2-megabyte Adobe Acrobat file.

## 2. THE BLUEBERRY STORY

By Jamie Vollmer

"If I ran my business the way you people operate your schools, I wouldn't be in business very long!" I stood before an auditorium filled with indignant teachers who were becoming angrier by the minute. I represented a Business Roundtable dedicated to improving public schools. I said that public schools were antiquated and that teachers and administrators were a major part of the problem: they resisted change, hunkered down in their feathered nests, protected by a monopoly. They needed to look to business. We knew how to produce quality. Zero defects! Continuous improvement! TQM!

As soon as I finished, a woman's hand shot up. She appeared polite, pleasant – she was, in fact, a razor-edged, high school English teacher who had been waiting to unload.

She began quietly, "We are told, sir, that you manage a company that makes good ice cream."

I smugly replied, "People Magazine chose our blueberry as 'The Best Ice Cream in America,' Ma'am."

"How nice," she said. "Is it rich and smooth?"

"Sixteen percent butterfat," I crowed.

"Premium ingredients?" she inquired.

"Superpremium! Nothing but AAA." I was on a roll. I never saw the next line coming.

"Mr. Vollmer," she said, leaning forward with a wicked eyebrow raised to the sky, "when you are standing on your receiving dock and you see an inferior shipment of blueberries arrive, what do you do?"

In the silence of that room, I could hear the trap snap. I knew I was dead, but I wasn't going to lie.

"I send them back."

"That's right!" she barked, "and we can never send back our blueberries. We take them big, small, rich, poor, gifted, exceptional, abused, frightened, confident, homeless, rude, and brilliant. We take them with ADHD, junior rheumatoid arthritis, and English as their second language. We take them all! Every one! And that, Mr. Vollmer, is why it's not a business. It's school!"

In an explosion, all 290 teachers, principals, bus drivers, aides, custodians, and secretaries jumped to their feet and yelled, "Yeah! Blueberries! Blueberries!"

And so my long transformation began.

I have learned that, unlike business, schools are unable to control the quality of their raw material, they are constantly mauled by a howling horde of disparate, competing customer groups, and they are dependent upon the vagaries of politics for a reliable revenue stream.

None of this negates the need for change. We must change what, when, and how we teach to give all children maximum opportunity to thrive in a post-industrial society. But these changes can occur only with the understanding, trust, permission, and active support of the surrounding community. For the most important thing that I have learned is that schools reflect the attitudes, beliefs, and the health of the communities they serve, and therefore improving public education means more than changing our schools, it means changing America.

*Jamie Vollmer is a presenter who speaks on the need for true public school reform. His web site is [www.jamievollmer.com](http://www.jamievollmer.com).*

### 3. WANTED: IN GOOD CONDITION

Due to the economy and a few non-renewals of TA members for 2009, we are now in a begging mode. The Taxpayers Association office is in serious need of the following items:

1. 24-inch paper cutter
2. Laptop (notebook) computer with PowerPoint and wireless capabilities
3. Black & white copier – must have 11x17 two-sided capability and computer control. We will maintain a service contract with the above.

If you can help or offer an idea on any of the above, please respond to this note. Thank you.

### 4. LABOR FACTS

#### May 2009 U.S. Consumer Price Index (1982-84 Base)

##### Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers

CPI: 200.487

Change/last month: +1.3

Change/last year: -2.1

##### All Urban Consumers

CPI: 205.350

Change/last month: +1.1

Change/last year: -1.7

#### Unemployment Rate

##### June 2009

Indiana: 10.7 U.S.: 9.5

##### July 2009

Indiana: NA U.S.: 9.4

#### Hours & Gross Earnings

##### May 2009

Avg. Weekly Wage: \$735.36

Avg. Weekly Hours: 38.3

Avg. Hourly Earnings: \$19.20

##### June 2009

Avg. Weekly Wage: \$736.77

Avg. Weekly Hours: 38.9

Avg. Hourly Earnings: \$18.94

Source: *IMANET*, a publication from Indiana Manufacturers Association, Aug./Sept. 2009

### 5. PUBLIC MEETINGS

The purpose of this calendar is to encourage taxpayers to attend public meetings. Taxpaying persons working at your business or living in your neighborhood should be encouraged to attend a meeting of their choice at least once per year. The date and time for the meetings listed below are always subject to change. **Organizations that are underlined have a web page that can be accessed by clicking on their respective hyperlinks.** The contact person is also listed. You should call the appropriate office and confirm the date and time if you plan to attend.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Public Meeting</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Contact Info</b>
Mon. Sep. 28	2:00 pm	<u>Board of Public Works and Safety</u>	City Hall – Board of Public Works Room	Robin 232-4767
Mon. Sep. 28	4:00 pm	<u>County Park Board</u>	County Annex	Julia 462-3391
Mon. Sep. 28	5:30 pm	<b>Terre Haute Housing Authority</b>	2001 N. 19 <sup>th</sup> Street	Jeff 232-1381
Mon. Sep. 28	7:00 pm	<u>Vigo County School Board</u>	VCSC Board Room	Judy 462-4216
Tue. Sep. 29	9:00 am	<u>County Commissioners</u>	County Annex	Judy 462-3367
Thur. Oct. 1	9:00 am	<u>City Board of Zoning Appeals</u>	City Hall – 1 <sup>st</sup> Floor Conf. Room	Judy 462-3367
Thur. Oct. 1	7:00 pm	<u>City Council – Sunshine Meeting</u>	City Hall – Courtroom	Michelle 232-3375
Mon. Oct. 5	4:00 pm	<u>Vigo County Drainage Board</u>	County Annex	David 898-2685

Mon.	Oct. 5	4:30 pm	<b>Animal Control Board</b>	City Hall – 1 <sup>st</sup> Floor		
Mon.	Oct. 5	6:30 pm	<b>Riley Town Board</b>	Riley Town Hall	Wanda	894-2410
Tue.	Oct. 6	9:00 am	<b><u>County Commissioners</u></b>	County Annex	Judy	462-3367
Tue.	Oct. 6	10:00 am	<b><u>City Board of Sanitary Commissioners</u></b>	City Hall – 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor	Sally	235-5458
Tue.	Oct. 6	4:30 pm	<b>Honey Creek Conservancy District</b>	3241 S. 3 <sup>rd</sup> Place	Craig	232-4311
Wed.	Oct. 7	7:00 pm	<b><u>County Area Planning Commission</u></b>	County Annex	Vickie	462-3354
Thur.	Oct. 8	7:00 pm	<b><u>City Council – Regular Meeting</u></b>	City Hall – Courtroom	Michelle	232-3375
Mon.	Oct. 12	2:00 pm	<b><u>Board of Public Works and Safety</u></b>	City Hall – 1 <sup>st</sup> Floor	Robin	232-4767
Mon.	Oct. 12	6:00 pm	<b>West Terre Haute Town Board</b>	500 W. Nat'l, WTH	Melody	533-2034
Tue.	Oct. 13	9:00 am	<b><u>County Commissioners</u></b>	County Annex	Judy	462-3367
Tue.	Oct. 13	4:15 pm	<b><u>Vigo County Redevelopment Commission</u></b>	County Annex	Amanda	234-2524
Tue.	Oct. 13	7:00 pm	<b>Seelyville Town Board</b>	Seelyville Water Office	Tamara	877-2665
Wed.	Oct. 14	10:00 am	<b><u>County Board of Zoning Appeals</u></b>	County Annex	Judy	462-3367
Wed.	Oct. 14	2:00 pm	<b><u>E-911 Advisory Board</u></b>	County Jail – Sheriff's Training Room	Greg	462-3226 ext. 320
Wed.	Oct. 14	4:30 pm	<b><u>City Park Board – General Meeting</u></b>	Deming Park	Eddie	232-2727
Wed.	Oct. 14	7:00 pm	<b><u>Airport Authority</u></b>	Airport	Kara	877-2524
Thur.	Oct. 15	2:00 pm	<b>Tree Advisory Board</b>	City Hall Mayor's Conf. Room	Jennifer	232-4028

## 6. TAX QUOTE OF THE WEEK

***“Why does a slight tax increase cost you two hundred dollars  
and a substantial tax cut save you thirty cents?”***

***- Peg Bracken***

**END**

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