

in this issue >>>

Tom's Thoughts

Webserver 101

Text & Messaging Scams

Tech Tips for Families

New Customer Spotlights

Featured Customer Redesign

Referrals

The Big Sky and Aggieland Report

Tips, Thoughts, Trivia and Fun

Brought to you by Big Sky Internet Design and Aggieland Website Design

Tom's Thoughts >>>

**Happy New
Year
and
Welcome
2022!**

I am not doing the traditional 'Look Back at 2021' and relive the past. Nope, not for me.

I am looking forward to 2022 with a whole lot of enthusiasm. Why?

I believe we are all figuring out what the proverbial 'New Normal' is going to be for each of us after the last couple of years. I know I am... and I really like it.

We have many cool strategy and marketing ideas planned to help better our business. In fact, this newsletter is a part of this new strategy that has already been started. Since beginning this newsletter, I have spoken with many customers that I most likely would not have. I think it helps us all to remember that we are all people trying to help others. Whether it is building a website, selling a horse, selling your products or services. The bottom line is we are all doing *something* to help others!

Until February!
Tom

PS...We are archiving all the newsletters if you are interested in looking back at them <https://bigskyinternetdesign.com/news.asp>

Webserver 101

Ever thought about where your website actually lives? In our basement, a back bedroom, our garage? Nope. Who would have guessed the answer is in Michigan? We have used Liquid Web since 2007 and one of their data centers is in Michigan.

We utilize a 'Fully Managed Dedicated Webserver', which means they take care of all the updates, support, and maintenance. That means I do not need to be an IT guy.

They take care of things like:

- Upgraded automated off-site backups. In case our server crashes, is taken hostage or is compromised in some way we can get it restored quickly. Hostage? This has happened many times recently. Heck, the city of Atlanta was held hostage.
- Denial of Service Attack prevention. This occurs when a hacker sends too many requests to a server that it locks it up.
- Upgraded Firewall. We had a 'standard' firewall until earlier this spring. We did a security audit of the webserver and websites and found some potential vulnerabilities. None were ever exploited but we upgraded to an advanced Firewall System that is continually updated to prevent attacks. An ounce of prevention.
- Virus prevention.

The benefit of a 'Dedicated Webserver' is your website is not on a public server with 1000's of other websites. Only our customer's websites are on it. This way we have complete control over everything. Plus, Liquid Web's customer support is unbelievable. Many times, they have gone above and beyond to run down some weird issue that I was not able to figure out.

All of that allows a huge peace of mind knowing that your website is in excellent hands.

I think of it this way. Your website on our webserver is our entire livelihood. We would never take that for granted.

Watch Out >>>

Text & Online Messaging Scams

Text and online messaging are a prime place for scammers to try and con you out of personal information. We often make the mistake of believing that if someone has our number, we either should know them, or our number was given to them for a good reason. Scammers take advantage of this assumption and have grown increasingly sophisticated about the way they exploit people. They will often pretend to be an acquaintance or a reputable institution like a bank.

Stay skeptical to avoid chat scams: Verify the message via a different source. If a friend, family member, bank or any other business ask you for personal information or money, validate the request by calling the company or person making the request.

Beware of unknown or strange numbers: Chances are, you already have a friend or family member stored in your phone under a familiar name.

Notice poor grammar: If the text or chat is not using proper grammar, this is often a tip off that it's a bot or a scammer operating from a foreign locale.

Don't respond: In the end, the safest response is no response at all. If the request is crucial the company or acquaintance will attempt to contact you in multiple different ways.

Source: McAfee



Tom's Martini Motor Speedway
(for those of you that asked about it from last month!)

Tips >>>

Tech Tips for Families

The internet and other forms of technology have become a part of daily family life all over the world.

For many children, it is their number one source of information as well as their preferred media consumption method for movies, music, games etc.

It is therefore vital for families to work together to make sure that everyone is engaging in online behavior that is appropriate, respectful, and safe.

One good tip is to create an environment that allows children to talk to you about their online experiences. Kids need to know they can safely open up about issues such as cyber-bullying. Share your own experiences, stay abreast of their online activities, and offer practical support and advice instead of judgment.

It is also a good idea to work with children to talk about responsible behavior when online as well as what websites and applications are appropriate for them to be using.

Jokes of the Month

Why are fish salesmen greedy?
-They are sell-fish.

What is the recipe for Honeymoon Salad?
-Lettuce alone without dressing.

What are 30 rabbits in a row marching backwards?
-A receding hare line.



2021-2022 Stallion Auction Dates

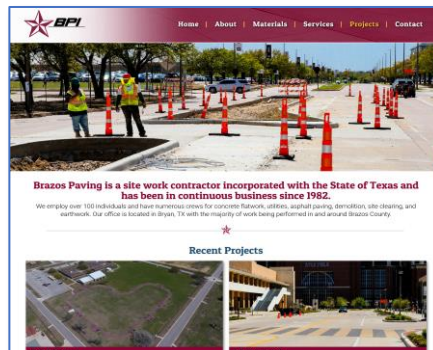
Check out StallionAuctionsOnline.com for the most up to date list! List updated 12/30/2021.

Auction	Begin	End
Heritage Days Classic	10/8/21	Buy Now
Southern Cutting Futurity	11/28/21	1/31/22
National Youth Cutting Horse	11/1/21	1/31/22
National Stock Horse Assn	11/15/21	1/15/22
Cascade Cow Cutters	11/22/21	2/7/22
Cowboy State Stallion Incent.	12/1/21	1/10/22
Texas Quarter Horse (Race)	12/1/21	1/29/22
QH Racing Assn. of Indiana	12/2/21	1/12/22
National Reined Cow Horse Assn	12/10/21	1/9/22
Utah QH Racing Assn.	12/11/21	1/8/22
Alberta Reined Cow Horse Assn	12/11/21	1/8/22
Oklahoma QH Racing	12/15/21	3/15/22
Louisiana QH Breeders Assn.	12/16/21	1/28/22
Los Alamitos RTCA	12/17/21	1/21/22
Colorado Classic Stallion Incent.	12/18/21	1/11/22
Arizona QH Racing Assn.	1/1/22	1/22/22
Western States CHA	1/1/22	1/31/22
Triple Crown 100 Stallion Incentive	1/1/22	1/31/22
Valley Girls Barrel Racing Incentive	1/1/22	2/15/22
Pacific Coast Cutting Horse	1/2/22	2/5/22
Texas Quarter Horse (Barrels)	1/5/22	1/19/22
	1/14/22	2/14/22

New Customers Spotlight – Welcome!



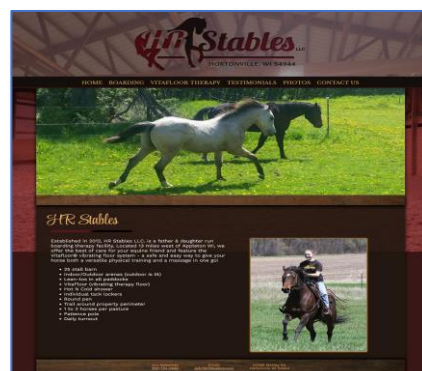
K and L Barrel Horses
KandLBarrelHorses.com
Williston, North Dakota



Brazos Paving
BPITX.com
Bryan, Texas



Highlands Townhomes
HighlandsTownhomesTX.com
Huntsville, Texas 77340



HR Stables
HRStables.com
Hortonville, Wisconsin

32 Raven Drive - Bryan, Texas 77808



Thank you for your Referrals!

Even former customers get in on the Referral Reward Action!

Thank you to Rex Byrd, a former website customer who retired a few years back.

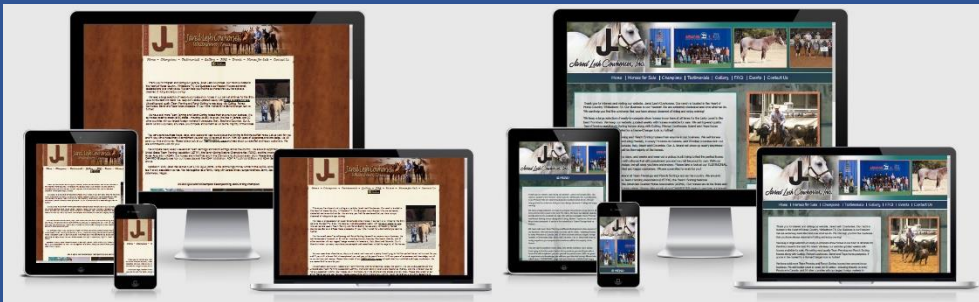
*Rex received a **\$100 Amazon Gift Card** in Appreciation ~ Thank You Rex!*

Share us with your friends and you too can get a \$100 Amazon Gift Card too!

Contact Tom - 979-776-5160

BigSkyInternetDesign.com / AggielandWebsiteDesign.com

Featured Customer Redesign – JaredLesh.com



Jared contacted us back in 2011 to design a website to help them market his high quality Team Penning, Ranch Sorting horses along with Cutting, Reined Cowhorses, Barrel and Rope horse prospects. His dedication to high quality horses is the cornerstone of his business.

Just like the horses they sell, they were ready to bring his website up to the same level of quality. It now has an eye-catching design that works perfectly on a phone with added features like displaying videos on the horse listing page, allowing people to view those quickly. Thank you, Jared!

22% off Your New Website Design in 2022!
(offer ends January 31st at 4:00 pm CST)

Got Updates?

No one wants to see old, outdated information on your website. Ask yourself this, would you come back?

Use this QR Code to easily send an update email to Debbie at Updates@BigSkyInternetDesign.com.

And remember, she will **ALWAYS** email you when the updates are complete!

