



614 Sycamore St.
 Waterloo, IA 50703
 Phone: 319-291-4000
 Fax: 319-291-3929
 Email: order@blackhawkabstract.com
 Website: www.blackhawkabstract.com

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BLACK HAWK COUNTY ABSTRACT & TITLE

Title Talk

New Plat Restriction Search Now Available

Black Hawk County Abstract & Title announces it has made available a useful tool to Realtors to find restrictive covenants in platted subdivisions. As a result of the disclosure requirement by the Iowa Real Estate Commission, Black Hawk County Abstract & Title will be providing this information to Waterloo-Cedar Falls Board of Realtors members and others, to enable them to more easily determine and provide restrictive covenants that may affect a property. To access this information go to our website and click on the "Plat Restriction Search" on our home page. The user will be directed to instructions on how to utilize this information and also directions to sign up for the email list of the new password that will be required each time the plat restriction list is updated. To be included on the email list for updated passwords you will need to send an email to: tschmitt@blackhawkabstract.com with "list password " in the subject line.

MEET KEN HUFFMAN, ASSISTANT VICE-PRESIDENT

Ken Huffman is an Assistant Vice-President of Black Hawk County Abstract & Title. Having graduated from the University of Northern Iowa in 1972 with a BA in social studies and a minor in history has proven helpful in abstracting. Ken has been with the company since August of 1976, preparing abstracts and overseeing the company's courthouse staff. Prior to coming to Black Hawk Abstract & Title, he was in the United States Air Force as a supply funds manager.

Ken and his wife, Mary, a Waterloo Schools Title I consultant, have two children. Their daughter is a pharmacy technician in Center Point and their son is a senior at West High with plans to attend the University of Iowa. In his spare time Ken enjoys bowling, fishing and watching baseball and college sports.

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Iowa Title Guaranty Announces Changes

Beginning March 1, 2006, the Iowa Title Guaranty Division of the Iowa Finance Authority (TG) made changes that will be of benefit to Iowa consumers. TG has lowered the premium to a flat \$90 for non-purchase mortgage coverage. The non-purchase mortgage certificate coverage takes advantage of using Title Reports that historically have been offered at a considerably lower cost than the nor-

mal abstracting method, and this means a savings to Iowa consumers. Black Hawk County Abstract & Title participated in assisting TG in developing the new underwriting guidelines for the non-purchase products available through TG and, as a participating Title Guaranty abstractor, Black Hawk County Abstract & Title is now offering this product alternative to lenders that-

wish to obtain a Title Guaranty certificate on their mortgage loan. For further details give us a call or visit the Title Guaranty website at the following address:

http://www.ifahome.com/tgd_progam_updates.asp

Closing Connections

RESPA Reform Update

In our Fall 2005 Newsletter, we provided information on HUD's proposal to amend RESPA (Real Estate Settlement Procedure Act). There were three informal meetings last summer and participation in these sessions were by invitation only. Consumer organizations and industry representatives exchanged ideas, but as we reported to you last fall, no one was sure where the "roadmap to reform" was headed.

To date, HUD has not released summaries of the roundtable sessions; however they remain firm to their belief that the home-buying process is too complicated and costly. Consumers complain that charges are often more than what they anticipated and they don't understand the charges. HUD's goal in reform is to create a simpler, more transparent and less expensive home-buying process that allows even more families to purchase homes or refinance existing mortgage loans.

We've been told, don't be surprised to see yet another RESPA reform proposal in the upcoming year.

Reminders

The spring promises to be exciting, and Settlement Services looks forward to the beginning of the busy home buying season. March Madness is underway as we release this newsletter, and this marks the "madness" in our business beginning as well. Here are a few reminders that will help us:

- ? Please remember to return the new order acknowledgment as timely as possible. This is critical information that assists us in the closing of your loan.
- ? When delivering abstracts to our office, please tell the staff person helping you that Settlement Services is the closing agent.
- ? Please feel free to use our website for new orders.
- ? Communication is critical in the closing process so please feel free to give us a call anytime.

Meet Dawn Athey, Post-Closing Specialist

Dawn joined Settlement Services 3 years ago and is our post-closing specialist. She's also an experienced closing agent and you'll often find her in the closing room along with Teresa and Shari during our busy days. Her background includes banking, and mortgage loan servicing at GMAC Mortgage for several years.

Dawn lives outside of Jesup with her husband and 2 sons. Please contact Dawn with any questions and she'll be glad to assist you.

Welcome Dana Halstead

Please join us in welcoming Dana to Settlement Services. She has been with us since late November and handles our new orders and file processing prior to the loan closing. She has an extensive background in loan servicing and is often the first contact you will have with our closing team. She's the friendly voice asking for the abstract and gathering the key information to lead to a smooth and efficient mortgage loan closing. Dana and her family live in Garrison.

OUR PLEDGE

We pledge our customers will always receive quality customer service and competitive pricing.