



# GOVERNMENT FINANCED PRETRIAL RELEASE PROGRAMS



Left to right: Tulsa ABAT members welcoming courthouse workers to the annual lunch: Diana Baldwin, Pattie Rohling, Roxana Sellars, Joe Admire, Jr., Garrett Sellars, Frosty the Snowman!, Dennis Wharton, Karen Ringgold, and ABAT President Rusty Roberts

We have observed the resurgence in pretrial release programs across the country. This growth appears to be the result of government stimulus money and jail overcrowding partially as a result of a harsh economic recession. Nationally PBUS is monitoring the situation. We fully support the efforts of the Virginians for the Preservation of Bail and wish them luck. This will be the big topic for discussion in the Council of Presidents meeting at the PBUS meeting in Las Vegas.

Your association is monitoring the pretrial release programs in both Tulsa County and Oklahoma County. The release figures have remained relatively the same for the past two years. The sagging economy, as well as the overcrowded jails, are contributing to the rise in judicial OR's across Oklahoma. The projected \$1.3 billion state budget shortfall will likely impact our profession as well. Your Oklahoma Bondsman Association will continue to be vigilant.

Dudley Goolsby, OBA President

## TULSA'S ANNUAL COURTHOUSE LUNCH A SUCCESS!

Each year the Tulsa bail bondsmen have sponsored a lunch for Tulsa County Courthouse employees in mid-December.

This year's feed was Friday, December 18. The OBA took the opportunity to hold its December Board meeting in Tulsa and to participate in the lunch.

The Associated Bail Agents of Tulsa known as ABAT, have sponsored this annual event for several years and it seems to get bigger each year. This year they served well over 400 people a full "Christmas Lunch" with all the trimmings.

Rusty Roberts is the current ABAT President and also a Board Member representing Director at Large for the OBA.

### OBA CALENDAR

Please mark your calendars NOW for the following upcoming events:

- |                      |                                   |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| February 15-18, 2010 | PBUS Annual Convention/ Las Vegas |
| March 4 & 5, 2010    | Pre-Licensing School at OBA       |
| March 18, 2010       | OBA Monthly Board Meeting         |
| April 22, 2010       | OBA Monthly Board Meeting         |

### NEW BONDSMAN LICENSES

- Joseph Admire ..... Tulsa County
- Heston Allcorn..... Cherokee County
- Thomas Barnard..... Cherokee County
- Christy Bower ..... Tulsa County
- Eric Butler..... Tulsa County
- Lacy Clemmons..... Pontotoc County
- Alyson Hughes-Jones ... Tulsa County
- Steven Jones ..... Tulsa County
- Eugene Phillips ..... Oklahoma County
- Amy Points ..... Muskogee County
- David Robbins ..... Rogers County
- Kenneth Robinson ..... Tulsa County
- Misty Sheneman..... Muskogee County
- Candy Snelling..... Creek County
- Tommy Teague ..... Tulsa County

*Happy New Year!*

# LAPTOP THEFT:

## EVERYBODY USES A \$169,000 PENCIL

By Dan Yost, Cto, Mylaptopgps

In the olden days, folks used pencils. Today, everybody uses a laptop computer—it's the ubiquitous tool of the businessperson. The problem with this "modern pencil" is that it remembers every single word it writes, and will happily divulge this memory to whomever is holding it. What is the result? An average of \$169,000 in damage to businesses whose laptop falls into the wrong hands.

Another laptop is stolen every twelve seconds, to the tune of over 2.6 million laptop thefts worldwide per year. In 2003, the FBI estimated worldwide laptop thefts at 1 million. The next year, 2004, this figure increased 50% to 1.5 million (Infoworld, October 2004). That was five years ago—a century in computer years. Today, laptops outsell desktops, and the laptop theft epidemic has full steam.

In 2002, the Computer Security Institute/FBI Computer Crime & Security Survey reported that the theft of a single laptop computer results in an average financial loss of \$89,000. The 2003 Annual Computer Crime and Security Survey pegged the value of information on an average laptop at \$250,000 (PC World). For those laptops containing customer/employee data records such as names, addresses, Social Security Numbers, and other PII (Personally Identifying Information), the industry standard Ponemon Institute "Cost of a Data Breach" study for 2008 raised the damage benchmark to \$202 per data record breached, up from \$197 in 2007. Conservatively, then, the average laptop is the equivalent of a \$169,000 pencil!

These damages are directly caused by the pervasive "not me" myth that plagues the thinking of businesspeople around the globe. "Not me" comes in three distinct forms:

"Laptop theft happens to other people. Not me."

"Other people have important data on their laptops. Not me."

"Other people have the time or know-how to secure their laptops. Not me. I'm too busy."

The first is a blatant myth. If laptop theft only happens to "the other guy," then apparently there are 3 million "other guys" every year who beg to differ. The second myth can be trickier. It says, "I don't really have any important data on my computer. Just some email, photos, and that sort of thing." Really? Then I'll offer a deal: \$1,000 to give me one hour alone with the laptop, ready to read stored emails, view websites with saved passwords, check the browser cache, browse business documents, spreadsheets, sales forecasts and reports, CAD drawings, photos, and all the rest. There's never been a deal taker yet. The first two were easily debunked. So how can a non-technical, everyday business person protect their laptop simply and effectively, and even achieve a 99.6% theft-stopping success rate?

**Assume you're next.**

This is the most important laptop theft prevention tip, bar none. If every laptop user would simply assume her laptop would be the next one stolen, twelve seconds away, laptop theft would make a very steep decline.

**Break the Twenty Second Window.**

Laptop theft is a crime of opportunity. And it's a short opportunity. A laptop thief "casing" the local Starbucks looking for a "hit" sees about 15-20 laptops at any given time. If he is to strike and get away clean, it has to be fast. He has about 20 seconds, max, to strike and escape. **We call this the Twenty Second Window.**

To break the Twenty Second Window, employ some common sense. Do not leave your laptop in a quickly-accessible area (like your table top at Starbucks). If you are in a crowded place such as an airport, keep the strap of your backpack or laptop bag looped around your shoulder or arm. If you park your car, place the laptop under a seat or in the trunk—and beware, even that is risky. Far better, do not leave a laptop in a parked car at any time. Always keep in mind that thieves don't have time to sit and analyze your laptop or admire its shiny case. Twenty seconds. Make your laptop a bad target.

**Mark your laptop.**

Thieves hate marked property. This is why ADT (alarm company) puts the little sign in your front yard. As it is said, The Sign Stops Crime. Thieves "casing" a "hit" with a twenty second window must minimize risk. Marked laptops are almost always shunned. And why not, since almost nobody marks his laptop? There are plenty of unmarked targets to choose from. Mark your laptop with a clear, bold, permanent warning that the laptop is identifiable. And if the laptop is lost, let the marking allow a finder to return it easily—it's amazingly effective.

**Track your stolen laptop.**

Install covert tracking software that allows the thief to be silently followed. This software is designed to be installed by non-technical laptop users and then left alone, running secretly at all times, a "fix it and forget it" approach. You do not have to interact with it ever again, yet in the event of a theft, police can be knocking on (or knocking down) the thief's door before he has time to settle into his easy chair.

**Recover your data right under the thief's nose.**

Install covert data recovery software. This software allows your precious data to be transmitted via an encrypted Internet channel to a secure data center, right under the thief's nose. You can log in to a website from any other computer, and download your crucial files, even preserving the folder hierarchy!

**Destroy your data right under the thief's nose.**

This is absolutely critical. Install covert data destruction software, which allows you to destroy your private data right under the thief's nose. This eliminates 99.7% of the average damage of laptop theft: stolen data. By silently destroying your data, even while in the thief's hands, you render the laptop nothing more than a piece of hardware. This is the "big red self-destruct button."

For example, MyLaptopGPSTM uses all four of these crucial methods in one package.

**Record your serial number.**

There is an interesting challenge in the law enforcement world. Officers will pull over a suspect for a routine traffic stop. In his trunk, there are seven laptop computers. These are all stolen, and the police know it full well. But in the USA, there's a little gotcha called "probable cause." The police will routinely run some of the serial numbers through their database, and guess what? Not a single one flags as stolen. Why? Because few people record their serial numbers, therefore no victim reports serial numbers

to police, and as a consequence the thief drives away scot-free, with your laptop, as the police officers watch. Record your serial number in a safe, secure location.

**Make it extremely easy for your employees to comply.**

When thinking about securing multiple laptops in a business, often the #1 enemy is the business' own employees. They will try to circumvent every security precaution that gets in the way or slows them down. Therefore, make sure that technologies and methods are extremely easy—preferably invisible. Employees won't circumvent what they never see.

**Consider encryption.**

Encryption ensures that nobody can access your data in any way without the "password," called a "key." Today's encryption is effective and virtually unbreakable. This may take some time and may require some IT skill.

**Consider locks and cables.**

Finally, consider physically locking down the laptop. True, this seems like an oxymoron—a defeat of the purpose of a mobile computer. But when possible, lock it to a desk.

Effective laptop security is simple and 99.6% successful even for non-technical people. It begins by rejecting the three "not me" myths. For more, visit [www.MyLaptopGPS.com](http://www.MyLaptopGPS.com). Protect that "pencil!"



© 2009 MyLaptopGPS. About the author: Dan Yost is Chief Technology Officer of MyLaptopGPS, a laptop security firm headquartered in Stillwater, Oklahoma with clients in 15 countries on 5 continents. His expertise has been featured twice by CXO Europe Magazine, and he has addressed various associations and institutions regarding laptop security, including the World Healthcare IT Congress (with US Congressman Newt Gingrich), Chicago Teachers Union, Oklahoma Court Reporters Association, and Oklahoma State University. Featured in Inc. Magazine and TechRepublic, Forbes.com, The Bank Fraud & IT Security Report and many others, and as the "Made In Oklahoma" feature in The Oklahoman, MyLaptopGPS can be found at [HYPERLINK "http://www.MyLaptopGPS.com" www.MyLaptopGPS.com](http://www.MyLaptopGPS.com).

# WEBSITE DO'S AND DON'TS FOR BAIL PROFESSIONALS

Most bail professionals today have websites. A quick Google of Oklahoma Bondsmen website found over 80 individual agents and many directories for bail agents in our state. There is simply no better way than a website to ensure that customers online can find you and to ensure that you have a space for attracting customers. That said, not every website markets bail professionals at the same quality. In fact, it's likely that poorly designed websites will cost your bail business. Customers often are reluctant to do business with a company that has a poor website. PBUS now offers direct assistance in helping you set up a professional website for your agency. Information about "WebSite Lite" is available on the Aboutbail.com website. It was written up in the November 2009 PBUS NOW newsletter that is posted on the Aboutbail website. You can contact PBUS for additional information at 202-783-4120 or call Aboutbail at 866-411-2245, ext. 81, for assistance. AboutBail.com is a website for professional bondsmen, and its staff has spent countless hours looking at, consulting on and building bail-related websites. Over the years they have compiled a checklist of website do's and don'ts.

## Website Do's

*If you want a website that gets great results, you should consider the following:*

**A Professional Site:** Viewers will see your website as a reflection of your company. Unprofessional language, anecdotes, political banners or statements, and family photos do not belong on your business website. Although you may know someone who knows basic web design, your business site is too important to entrust to anyone but a professional.

**A Phone Number on Top of Every Page:** The primary goal of your website is to get your potential clients to pick up the phone and call you. Putting your name and phone number in the same place on the top of every page is going to dramatically increase the chances of this.

**Useful Content:** Your website is really not about you – it is all about the viewer, your potential customer. Creating content that is useful and interesting will attract more visitors to your site and lend you credibility. Start by building pages about "The Bail Process" or include a list of jails in your areas of coverage.

**A Reason to Call:** Explain the benefits of your agency and that you make the bail process easy and that your staff is courteous. Empathize with your potential client by pointing out that sometimes



bad things happen to good people. Do not include images of someone behind bars or any imagery that is going to make light of the situation.

**A Well-Designed Space:** Good design means a website that is not cluttered and is easy to navigate. Keep it simple. When it comes to building a site, keep in mind the old adage: "Less is More."

## Website Don'ts:

**Don't Have Too Many Images:** Some search engines cannot read images and almost all images slow download time. Stick to a few images that are relevant and keep them at a reasonable size.

**Don't Have Irrelevant Content:** Don't include information that doesn't help the reader. Include enough information to motivate the reader to give you a call. This means that you should describe the process, give some sense of your rates, and demonstrate that you are a trusted professional.

**Don't Confuse Your Readers:** Make sure that everything on your website is consistent. Don't give a different phone number and address on each page. You want potential customers to know they are on the same website regardless of the page they navigate to within the site.

**Don't Add Music to Your Site:** Some of your customer may have to view your website at work. Music slows download time and can be annoying or distracting to readers. Music on sites is generally unprofessional.

**Avoid animation on your website:** While they may be cute, your clients come to your website for information, not entertainment. Erring on the side of professional and clean, and providing useful content are the best ways to make your site work.

If you want to see how your website stacks up, contact the marketing professionals at AboutBail.com for a FREE website assessment. For more information, contact Terrence Joyce at (866) 411-2245 or online at AboutBail.com. They also develop sites for bail professionals. For a no obligation quote feel free to contact them.





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## PRE-LICENSURE SCHOOLS SET FOR 2010

The OBA will conduct four pre-licensure schools for potential bondsmen during 2010. All schools are taught in the OBA building at 222 NE 27th St. in Oklahoma City. Anyone interested in attending a school should contact Cathy Guyer, OBA Executive Director at AC 405 524-5920 or AC 866 374-6257, for requirements and fee information.

**March 4 & 5, 2010**

**September 2 & 3, 2010**

**June 3 & 4, 2010**

**December 2 & 3, 2010**

## OBA DUES DUE NOW

Your OBA dues for 2010 are due now. Dues paid January 1, 2010 or later are not eligible for a discount.

**PAY \$550.00**

## OBA CONTINUING EDUCATION 2010 DATES

Mark your calendars now for the following important dates in 2010!

Monday, June 7, 2010  
Annual OBA Membership Meeting  
@3:00 p.m. in the OKC OBA building  
Elections @4:00 p.m.

Tuesday, June 8, 2010  
Continuing Education #1  
Registration open 8:00 a.m.  
Clarion Meridian Convention Center  
737 South Meridian  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma  
405 / 942-8511  
OBA Room Rate \$66.00 + tax  
Room rate cut-off date 05/07/10

Tuesday, June 29, 2010  
Continuing Education #2  
Registration open 8:00 a.m.  
Hard Rock Hotel & Casino  
I-44E at Exit 240-A  
Catoosa, Oklahoma  
800 / 760-6700  
OBA Room Rate \$99.00 + tax  
Room rate cut-off date 05/28/10

### *In Memoriam*

Janice Montgomery (10/09)  
Debra Childress (11/09)  
Gene Dowell (11/09)

## 2009 BPAC CONTRIBUTORS

Bill East  
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Dennis Wharton  
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**THANK YOU!!**